

EKKLESIA OF CHRIST

Christian Living: Enduring Hardship

“Endure Hardship As a Good Soldier of Jesus Christ” 2 Timothy 2:3

Soldiers serve out of devotion and duty. Certainly, our devotion and duty is due Christ, but His love for us and our love for Him is the highest calling and drawing power. The love of Christ is our greatest motivation to want to serve and build up the body of Christ. It is the love of Christ that “constrains” us, Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:14. “Constrains” is the old King James word. It is translated “compels,” “controls,” “rules,” “presses,” and “guides” in other versions. The love of Jesus helps us to endure hardships and overcome so that we might receive our heavenly crown.

Love is our motivation. “We love Him because He first loved us.” 1 John 4:19

Growing up in high school and college, I noticed a lot of young people’s Christian faith being destroyed by the worldly philosophies being taught, one of them Evolutionism. It bothered me to see God’s reputation assailed. It upset me to see souls shipwrecked by vain philosophies. I believed that God would have me to stand up for Him; to do whatever I could to defend “the faith.” Jude 3 says. “...earnestly contend for the faith once and for all delivered to the saints.”

I prepared myself to give an answer or defense. I reached out to classmates to let them know there was plenty of evidence to support creation and proof that the Bible was the “Word of God” (1 Thess. 2:13). Most importantly, I needed to live up to the standard for which I was contending and “practice what I preached.”

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I do not want to be ashamed of Jesus, and more importantly, I do not want Him to be ashamed of me! Love is the reason I am here today. Jesus said, “Freely you have received, freely give” (Matthew 10:8).

I. What Is To Be Done?

Vision: “Where there is no vision, the people perish (or cast off restraint),” Proverbs 29:18

Knowledge: “My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge,” Hosea 4:6

Understanding/Wisdom: “Men who understood the times and knew what to do,” 1 Chronicles 12:32

The Great Commission:

Matthew 28:26-28 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.”

Mark 16:15-16 15 And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”

Matthew 10:5-42, Mk. 6:7-13, Lk. 9:1-6, Sending out of the Twelve
Lk. 10:1-24, Sending out of the Seventy* (see Commentary)

II. Miscellaneous Evangelism/Soul Winning/Missionary Verses (Ideas):

“When Jesus saw the crowds He was moved with compassion” Mt. 9:36
What is our vision, what do we see?

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- The fields are white unto harvest, Pray the Lord of the harvest: Mt. 9:37-38, Lk. 10:2, “Pray, Ask...”
- Count the Cost: Lk. 14:28, A king goes to war, a builder constructs a tower. Do we have staying power?
- The Cost of Discipleship: Lk. 9:57-62, “Don’t put hand to plow... and look back...”
- Do things with all your heart”: Col. 3:22, Whatever you do, do as for the Lord” Do whatever it takes!
- “From Now On” Lk. 5:10, 2 Cor. 5:16, Jesus takes us with a “from now on” basis, don’t be discouraged, and don’t let your past hold you back!
- Be generous: “Freely you have received, freely give...” Mt. 10:8, “Those who are forgiven much, love much, those who are forgiven little, love little...” Lk. 7:47
- “As you go...” Mt. 10:7-10, Don’t overprepare, don’t worry about provisions, God will provide
- “How shall they hear unless they are sent?” Rom. 10:15, The congregation is the missions base for good works and evangelistic initiatives
- Don’t despise small things. Zech. 4:10, Rev. 5:6, 2 Chron. 16:9, Haggai 2:3: i.e., the small and weak beginnings

III. Soul Winners Must Be Backed

- “How can they believe in the One of whom they have not heard?” Rom. 10:14
- “How can they hear without someone to preach?” Rom. 10:14
- “How shall they preach unless they are sent?” Rom. 10:15
- “You have been with me from the beginning.” Jn. 15:27, Lk. 1:2-3, Acts 1:21-22, 11:15, 1 Jn. 1:1-2, Mk. 1:1

IV. The Joyful Reward/Rejoicing in Earth & Heaven

- Lk. 10:17: the seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord...”

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- Lk. 10:20: "rejoice that your names are written in heaven."
- Lk. 10:21: "Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit..." (hidden from wise, revealed to babes)
- Lk. 15:7: "joy in heaven..." (one sinner who repents)
- Lk. 15:10: "joy in the presence of God's angels..." (one sinner who repents)
- Acts 16:15: "if you have judged me to be faithful, come into my house and stay" [fellowship]

Psalm 27:4 "One thing I have asked from the LORD, that I shall seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD And to meditate in His temple."

Psalm 23:6 Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

***Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers X.**

(1) After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also.--Some MSS. of importance give "seventy-two," but the evidence preponderates in favour of the reading "seventy." The number had a threefold significance. (1) Seventy elders had been appointed by Moses to help him in his work of teaching and judging the people (Numbers 11:16), and to these the spirit of prophecy had been given that they might bear the burden with him.

In appointing the Seventy our Lord revived, as it were, the order or "school" of prophets which had been so long extinct. The existence of such men in every Church is implied in well-nigh every Epistle (e.g., Acts 13:1; Acts 15:32; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 1 Corinthians 14:29; 1 Thessalonians 5:20), and the fact that St. Paul and others join together the "Apostles and Prophets" as having been jointly the foundation on which the Church was built (Ephesians 2:20; Ephesians 3:5; Ephesians 4:11; 2 Peter 3:2), makes it probable that the latter words, no less than the former, pointed in the first instance to a known and definite body. The Seventy presented such a body.

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They, though not sharers in the special authority and functions of the Twelve, were yet endowed with like prophetic powers, and the mysteries of the kingdom were revealed to them (Luke 10:21).

(2) As the Sanhedrin or great Council of scribes and priests and elders consisted of seventy members besides the president, the number having been fixed on the assumption that they were the successors of those whom Moses had chosen, our Lord's choice of the number could hardly fail to suggest the thought that the seventy disciples were placed by Him in a position of direct contrast with the existing Council, as an assembly guided, not by the traditions of men, but by direct inspiration. (3) But the number seventy had come to have another symbolical significance which could not fail to have a special interest.

Partly by a rough reckoning of the names of the nations in Genesis 10, partly on account of the mystical completeness of the number itself, seventy had come to be the representative number of all the nations of the world; and so, in the Feast of Tabernacles, which in any harmonistic arrangement of the Gospel narrative must have almost immediately preceded the mission of the Seventy (see Note on John 7:2), a great sacrifice of seventy oxen was offered as on behalf of all the non-Israelite members of the great family of mankind (Lightfoot, Hor. Hebr. in Joann. 7).

Bearing this in mind, and remembering the words that our Lord had spoken during that feast as to the "other sheep, not of that fold" (John 10:16), which He had come to gather, we may see in what is here recorded a step full of meaning, a distinct and formal witness of the future universality of the Church of Christ. The omission, in the charge addressed to them, of the command given to the Twelve against entering into the way of the Gentiles or any city of the Samaritans (Matthew 10:5) is on this view full of interest.