



RESURRECTION CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

1 Monarch Trace Ct. #106, Chesterfield, MO 63017-4618 - Ph: 636-778-9361 - rcmin2@charter.net

Paul and Gretel Haglin

EVANGELIZING THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER

Letters of Faith

September 2017

**“...we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be...
strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might,
for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience...”**
(Colossians 1:9b & 11)

Dearly Beloved,

In this time of instability in the world, we Christians must remain steadfast, not using incidents of terrorism, pressures of religious bigotry, or shifting political and economic systems as a reason to water down our faith or our commitment to be the light and life of Christ in this world. Sometimes that is a hard assignment, but if we determine to fulfill it in love, the Holy Spirit promises to be with us.

To be steadfast is to be faithful, constant, dedicated, dependable, enduring, spirited, unwavering, loyal, well-founded, and reliable. The Holy Spirit will empower you to walk this way!

When the Apostle Paul heard of the **“love in the Spirit”** the Colossians had, he addressed them as **“the saints and faithful brethren in Christ...”** (Col. 1:2a, 8).

The power of the Holy Spirit is able to give us the strength to remain steadfast when things and people are shaken all around us. Because of His might, we can be counted on to be there, solidly **“in Christ,”** when others are being **“tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine...”** (Ephesians 4:14). We are not like **“the one who doubts [who] is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind...being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways”** (James 1:6 & 8), for verse 7 tells us **“...let not that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord.”** How can God build character on a foundation laid on sand that shifts when the wind and the floods come?

In the agony of repentance, King David cried out: **“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”** (Psalm 51:10) He had lost that precious steadfastness that used to guard him against wavering in his love and awe of God. David knew that he desperately needed God’s mercy to renew that steadfast spirit within him. His son, Solomon, wrote many years later that **“He who is steadfast in righteousness will attain to life...”** (Proverbs 11:19a)

We Christians can be steadfast because of the sure knowledge of what Jesus accomplished for us upon the cross. The Apostle Paul was adamant about this victory as he exhorted the Romans: **“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.”** (Romans 8:1-2)

We no longer need fear life or death because through Jesus our eternal life is assured, and we know that He is with us supporting and strengthening us as we go about living the remaining days of our lives for His glory. Though none of us know the number of days we have left, we can live life to its fullness for we cannot be shaken from the truth—Truth lives within us! Therefore, we can be steadfast and patient even when our circumstances and all those around us seem to call for a compromise in our Christian moral standards or beliefs.

Mother Teresa was the featured speaker at the 1994 National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, DC. She spoke eloquently on behalf of the unborn babies who are being deliberately killed because, as she explained, they would be too much trouble for their parents to raise for one reason or another. Author Philip Yancey wrote: “In her talk, she managed to reduce the abortion controversy to its simplest moral terms: life or death, love or rejection.

President Clinton invited Yancey to ride back to the White House in the Presidential limousine for a personal interview. Yancey asked President Clinton, who is a confessed Christian, why he had shifted from his 1989 stand opposing abortion. We quote from the April 25th, 1994 issue of Christianity Today: “Clinton defends this shift by saying the approach to specific moral issues in a democracy should change as popular opinion changes.”

What a shocking statement for a Christian to make! We share this about the president not to criticize, but to encourage you to pray for all those in authority to understand God’s mandate to base our lives and morals on His Word, the Scriptures, and not on popular opinions or public pluralities.

Despite the threats of losing their livelihoods, their homes, their families, or their lives, the early Christians remained steadfast to the truth. Their lives could have been so much easier had they just “gone along” with the Jewish religious system under the temple rule! Even some of their religious leaders recognized Jesus as a prophet, so why alienate the Pharisees by insisting that He was the Son of God?

Christians who live in Muslim countries today are confronted by the very same argument. A devout Muslim told us that a whole chapter of the Koran is devoted to Jesus as a prophet. “If only you wouldn’t insist that He rose from the dead or performed miracles—His teachings are good, why make Him out to be God? It separates us because that stand is offensive to us.”

Pastor Mehdi Dibaj, a former Muslim, was imprisoned in Iran in 1983 for the crime of apostasy because 45 years prior he converted to Christianity and became a Christian minister. According to the April 1994 issue of Renewal magazine, “He was systematically tortured and suffered mock executions. He spent two years in solitary confinement in a dark cell three feet by three feet.” When at last he was brought to trial before an Islamic court (in Dec. 1993), he presented a written defense that we feel should have at least the following concluding paragraphs read from every pulpit:

“Jesus Christ is our Saviour and He is the Son of God: To know Him means to know eternal life. I, a useless sinner, have believed in His beloved person and all His words and miracles recorded in the Gospel, and I have committed my life into His hands. Life for me is an opportunity to serve Him, and death is a better opportunity to be with Christ. Therefore I am not only satisfied to be in prison for the honour of His Holy Name, but am ready to give my life for the sake of Jesus my Lord and enter His kingdom sooner, the place where the elect of God enter everlasting life, but the wicked to eternal damnation. May the shadow of God’s kindness and His hand of blessing and healing be upon you and remain for ever. Amen.

With respect, your Christian prisoner, Mehdi Dibaj”

Here is a native Iranian Christian, who despite his excruciatingly painful circumstances, resolutely remained loyal to His Master and to the Spirit of Truth. He did not consider compromising His faith to save his skin, because to do so would nullify the truth he spoke so passionately in his letter of defense. This saint, who had been unjustly imprisoned and cruelly tortured, ended his defense plea with a prayer for his accusers, invoking God's kindness and blessings upon them. He had obviously spent the time in that small cubicle praying for his enemies as He knew Jesus did and still does. Because of his tenacious devotion to seek His Kingdom and righteousness, no root of bitterness sprang up from within him to defile his testimony.

Shortly after his release in answer to the fervent prayers of many, he disappeared again. This time his mutilated body was found in a ditch. Soon after, Pastor Haik Mehr, the outspoken general secretary of the Assemblies of God in Iran, was kidnapped and brutally executed without a public trial—a gruesome reminder that the enemy is not a toothless lion.

Persecution comes with the territory! It is hard to understand sometimes, but remember, the Apostle Peter was released from prison for a season while the Apostle James was put to death. The Apostle Paul was repeatedly imprisoned and then released, but he was finally beheaded. It takes guts to appropriate the grace to be a dedicated, steadfast Christian.

What a contrast between President Clinton's and Pastor Dibaj's stand for Christian moral standards.

The Rabbinical council of the fastest growing branch of Judaism in the USA, the Association of Conservative Hebrews (despite that name, it is very liberal), announced some years ago that because so many people in their congregations were living together before marriage, an official doctrinal change was needed so as not to lose them because of traditional Judaism's "old-fashioned stance" on what once passed as morality. The council stated that the committed unions of the couples within their synagogues needed to have their rabbi's blessing, because "many honest and moral people" have been branded and hurt by this "outdated doctrine" and have left the faith. Wow! "Already it has caused other religious organizations to rethink their stand," the newsman reported.

And Satan chuckled!

Steadfastness in the face of adversity is the Apostle Paul's prayer for all of God's people. He prayed that we may be "**strengthened with all power...for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience...**" (Colossians 1:11).

Amidst the extravagant demonstrations of the Holy Spirit that are currently evident in such abundance, let us remember the purpose of the power and anointing of God's Holy Spirit: He is filling us with the joy of the Lord, which is our strength. We are being strengthened so we can be steadfast in the truth, patient, and a help to those who are wobbling. (See Romans 14:1 and Romans 15:1) Being patient means continuing to pray for them with a holy hope, not writing them out of the Kingdom.

Heavenly Father, grant me the determination to be steadfast and patient in Jesus, and manifest these fruits of Your Spirit in me. Anoint me with the joy of the Lord by Your most precious Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit of Truth, break through any spirit of deception in me, reach my heart and mind, and grant me the grace to pray for my enemies, even as Jesus did and still does! Bless me with such a steadfast devotion to seek Your Kingdom and Your Righteousness that no root of bitterness can spring up from within me to defile my Christian testimony. Amen.

Hugs

