

Things That Keep Me Going

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No person ever lived that never became discouraged, including such spiritual giants as our Lord and the apostle Paul (Mat. 23:37; Acts 28:15; 1 Cor. 2:3; et al.). When perverse men and women hate you and try to destroy you and the good work you are doing, what keeps you from just giving up? When trials are many and sore, how do the faithful keep on being faithful in spite of them? Of course, a deep faith in God and unqualified devotion to His Word are the roots of all steadfastness. However, additional factors almost always play a part in the lives of those who persevere. Below are a few of the things that “keep me going.”

A good and faithful wife: Solomon was right: “A prudent wife is from the Lord.... Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her.... She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life” (Pro. 19:14; 31:10–12). On our recently-celebrated fiftieth wedding anniversary I could not help but reflect on the many times Lavonne has kept me going when I was on the verge of despair and almost ready to give up. A godly husband or wife is one of the choicest blessings of God. One thing each should do for the other is keep each other going when discouragement threatens. I might have given up long ago without my faithful and supportive wife.

Faithful brethren: Anyone who has been a Christian (especially an elder or preacher) for several years has run into some real “stinkers” in the church who have warped doctrinal and/or ethical convictions. Such are consumed with malice for anyone who gets in their way. Paul knew what it meant to be “in perils among false brethren” (2 Cor. 11:26). Such ungodly souls would destroy our work (even our faith) if we gave in. Yet, these are the exception; there are many more who are faithful and zealous of good works. Godly elders who remained steadfast under fire have encouraged me and helped keep me going. Fellow Gospel preachers are a great source of support by their words and example. Young families who are dedicated to the Truth and are eager to serve in every way possible are an inspiration to me. Those who are older have often “picked me up” with encouraging words and deeds.

The hope of Heaven: When the going has been rough and I have been tempted to think that it is not worth the cost to my family and me to live with such stress and pain, the hope of Heaven revives me. With Paul, we must “reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward” (Rom. 8:18).

Brethren, we must not give up. Whatever trials we may have to endure, "Heaven will surely be worth it all."

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