

Being Established

(Acts 16:5) And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

I. Definitions.

- A. establish: To render stable or firm. a) To strengthen by material support. b) To ratify, confirm, validate. c) To confirm, settle (what is weak or wavering); to restore (health) permanently; to give calmness or steadiness (to the mind). d) To calm (anger), to settle (doubts).
- B. confirm: To make firm or more firm; to add strength to, to settle; establish firmly.
- C. enticing: That entices or instigates; insiduously attractive; alluring, beguiling, seductive.
- D. entice: 1. To stir up, incite, instigate (*to* a course of action); also to provoke (*to* anger). 2. To allure, attract by the offer of pleasure or advantage; *esp.* to allure insidiously or adroitly.
- E. allure: To attract by the offer of some advantage or pleasure; to tempt by something flattering or acceptable; to entice; to win over.
- F. insidious: Full of wiles or plots; lying in wait or seeking to entrap or ensnare...
- G. steadfast: Fixed or secure in position. Of a person, *esp.* a soldier in battle: Maintaining his ground.

II. Christians need to be *stable* or *established*. **HEB 10:23; JAM 1:5-8.**

- A. The unstable do not excel. **GEN 49:4.**
- B. The devil concentrates his attacks on *unstable* souls.
ROM 16:17-18; 2PE 2:14; 3:16-17.
- C. This beguiling is best accomplished with *enticing words*.
ROM 16:18; 2CO 11:3; COL 2:4 c/w 1CO 2:4-5.
 - 1. The beguiler's words may appeal to natural lusts. **2PE 2:18; DEU 13:6.**
 - 2. False religion is likened unto adultery in Scripture and the adulteress uses enticing speech to ignite lust to lead the simple captive. **PRO 7:7, 21.**
 - 3. A lust-oriented person is easy prey for beguilers. **2TI 3:5-6.**
 - 4. Thus, the Galatians had been *bewitched* by false teachers with a perverted gospel that catered to carnal instincts. **GAL 3:1 c/w GAL 4:8-10.**
- C. The devil is to be resisted. **JAM 4:7.**
 - 1. If you are not interested in resisting the devil, you are already his captive.
 - 2. Satan is not to be resisted on his terms (**JUDE 1:9-10**) but by steadfastness in the faith (**1PE 5:8-9**) which is through the word of God. **ROM 10:17; 1JO 2:14.**
 - 3. When Satan's enticements come in the form of novel or speculative doctrine, be not quick to jump on a bandwagon. Put the enticement to the test of Scripture. **1TH 5:21; 1JO 4:1, 6.**
 - 4. If you are unlearned, start learning. **PRO 15:28.**
 - 5. If you are lacking spiritual understanding to counter Satan personally, resist by appealing to a seasoned believer for help. **PRO 15:22.**
- D. We do well to settle in our hearts beforehand that we will not let discouragements or enticements move us. Stability discourages opposition. **RUT 1:11-18; LUK 4:1-13.**
- E. Lack of interest in doctrine makes a person open to deception. **1TI 4:1; 2TI 4:3-4.**
- F. A Christian who never advances beyond infancy in spiritual understanding is open game for the devil. **EPH 4:14; HEB 5:13-14.**
- G. Desire for the word overcomes this. **1PE 2:1-2; PRO 18:1.**
 - 1. If you have no desire for God's word, ask yourself, "Why is that?"

- a. You may be only a condemned natural man. **1CO 2:14.**
 - b. You may be overcome with cares and pleasures. **LUK 8:14.**
 - c. You may be unconvinced that there is a preserved Scripture given by God and *man's words will not profit you* (**JER 23:32 c/w HEB 4:2**). You should become familiarized with the proofs that God has given, preserved and provided His words to us.
2. Desire is one thing. Effort is another. **PRO 13:4.**

III. Strong, steadfast, stable Christians are not overcome by afflictions and obstacles.

ROM 4:18-21; 2TI 1:8, 12-13.

- A. Afflictions can actually be turned to our advantage. **2CO 12:7-10; 1PE 4:12-14.**
- B. Remember that *the joy of the Lord is your strength*. **NEH 8:10.**
- C. Resisting steadfastly in the face of afflictions yields the promise of more stability and strength. **1PE 5:9-10.**

IV. Corporate fellowship and unity play vital roles in stabilizing the child of God.

EPH 4:11-14 c/w PHIL 1:27.

V. An understanding of the work of God in salvation does much to establish our hearts. **HEB 13:9.**

- A. Years after their conversion, Paul reminded the Ephesians about the elective purpose of God's saving grace. **EPH 1:3-12; 2:1-10.**
- B. Paul confirmed the churches with grace. **ACT 15:11, 30-32, 41; 16:4-5.**
- C. A church which lacks understanding of grace destabilizes itself. There is no stability in bearing an unbearable burden, only bondage that increases. **GAL 5:1-9.**
- D. Steadfastness comes from knowing the victory is won. **1CO 15:57-58.**

VI. Stability brings assurance of salvation. **COL 1:21-23; PSA 1:1-6.**

- A. Steadfast obedience confirms to us our reservation in glory. **2PE 1:10-11.**
- B. It is wise to be reminded about these things frequently. **2PE 1:12.**

VII. **(2TH 2:16-17)** Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.