

Keys To Successful Living

Part two-dated 22/02/15

Reading : Hebrews 4:11-13

The second key is based on the experience of Israelites when they were on their journey from Egypt through the wilderness. Many of them never made it through to the promised destination—the rest God had promised them. It happened because of their **misconduct** and their **wrong attitude**. They died in the wilderness. Scriptures testifies that their corpses fell in the wilderness because of unbelief and disobedience (Read Nu14: 4-5, 11-12, **14**, 22-23, 26-35).

One again, we see that they had the externals but they did not have the great, essential, inner reality of true religion—hearing the voice of the Lord. After pointing out the flawed example of their forefathers, the writer of Hebrews goes on to say “Let us be diligent”.

I believe what he describes with the 2nd key is a natural progression. If we (present day believers) really take to heart the ***dangers of the Israelites spiritual condition***, and we respond properly with a sense of Godly fear—the next step will naturally be to become diligent(adjective...meaning careful & conscientious in a task or duties)

What is diligence (noun)??? Sometimes one way to find out the meaning of a word is to consider its opposite. One obvious opposite of diligence is Laziness (unwilling to work or use energy; showing a lack of interest, effort or care).

The Bible has not one good word to say about Laziness. As a matter of fact, this theme does not receive enough attention in contemporary (present, modern style) Christendom. Look at what the writer of the Hebrews says about it

We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure. We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.(Heb 6:11-12).

The warning here is that we need to be not only diligent, but diligent to the end. We must continue to be diligent and avoid laziness because physical laziness is always connected to the spiritual laziness.

To compare what I have said so far, Let’s see what Peter has to say in his 2nd epistle, chapter 1, verses 5-7. “For this reason, make every effort (applying all diligence-NASB) to add to your faith-goodness; and to goodness-knowledge; and to knowledge-self-control; and to self-control-perseverance; and to perseverance-godliness; and to godliness-brotherly kindness and to brotherly kindness-love”.

You see, Christian life is not a static life/condition. Rather, it’s a life of adding and multiplication. It’s a life of growth, increase, expansion, enlargement, development, extension and magnification. It’s a life of progress & advancement It involves improvement, betterment and upgrading.

To be static in the Christian life is to backslide. But to move forward and to do that adding requires diligence. It requires making every effort. Peter goes on with an if:

“ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective & unproductive, in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. BUT if anyone

does not have them, he/she is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he/she has been cleansed from his past sins".(V8-9).

Apostle Peter really sets before us two alternatives. The one is to be effective & productive in our knowledge of Lord Jesus Christ. The other is to be ineffective & unproductive which is described as being "nearsighted and blind".....I think they are strong words...Don't U think so? Do you believe that the conditions Apostle Peter describes could be possible??? Yes, most certainly because the Bible Says so.

In light of this possibility in each one of us, Peter continues in the next two verses:

"Therefore, my brothers (because of the warning given), be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"(V10-11). What Apostle Peter says here is really a good news. There are actions we can take to guarantee that we will never fall & have a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom.

So we see that basically, the condition we are warned against is laziness. I am deeply concerned about the lack of concern in Christian Circles about laziness. In closing lets see [how we can Make Diligence Practical & what is involved.](#)

Two beautiful verses in Proverbs 10 gives us a guiding light. Together they sum up the two conditions for true riches or enduring wealth. One condition is on the Lord's side; the other condition is on our side. Both conditions must be fulfilled to attain the result.

- (1) Condition on the Lords side: "It is the blessing of the LORD that makes rich, and He adds no sorrow to it"(Proverb 10:22). Clearly, the great primary condition for true riches, spiritual and otherwise, is the blessings of the Lord. We cannot count on anything really good apart from the blessings of the Lord.
- (2) Condition on our side: " Poor is he who works with a negligent hand, but the hand of the diligent makes rich"(Proverb 10:4).

First of all, the blessing of the Lord makes rich But second of all, the hand of the diligent makes rich. It takes the Lord's blessing plus our diligence to attain/achieve/gain/obtain the true wealth. It is not enough simply to expect or even receive the blessing of the Lord. It will not accomplish its purpose in our life unless we add to it our own personal diligence (Remember, diligence is the opposite of laziness). What is the underlying factor for all of this? It's our 2nd key from Hebrews....."Let us be diligent". Remember the Contrast between diligence & Laziness in Proverb 13:4

Eight Things to do Diligently:

1. Hearken to God's voice ([Deut. 28:1](#); [Exodus 15:26](#); [Jeremiah 17:24](#); [Zech.6:15](#)).
2. Keep your own soul in remembrance of things experienced ([Deut. 4:9](#)).
3. Teach God's Word to children ([Deut. 6:7](#)).
4. Keep the commandments ([Deut. 6:17](#)).
5. Hearken to commandments ([Deut. 11:13](#)).
6. Keep all the commandments ([Deut. 11:22](#)).
7. Inquire for truth ([Deut. 13:14](#); [Deut. 17:4](#)).
8. Observe proper teaching ([Deut. 24:8](#)).

May God bless us all for the hearing of His Word.....Amen.