

# The Bulletin

## Meeks St. Church of Christ

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September 9, 2018

### “Apostasy Versus Steadfastness #4”

By Brian Meade

The apostle Peter warns and admonishes us in 2 Peter 3:17-18, *“You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”*

We continue our study of attitudes that help us stay steadfast with God....

#### **(3) When We Genuinely Love & Appreciate God’s People.**

Once we obey the gospel and are learning our place in the local church to which we belong, we are taught to develop a love for our brethren. In 1 Peter 1:22, Peter says, *“Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart.”* To love our brethren, we must develop close relationships with those with whom we worship and serve God. The church is to be like a family to us as *“God’s household”* (1 Timothy 3:15).



To us, the best people in the world are our brothers and sisters, who are in Christ. No better people could be found that have our best interest at heart, and seek to help us be the best we can be! They are a great encouragement through the storms and trials of life!

They help keep us grounded and faithful when we are tempted to leave our faithfulness (Proverbs 9:8; James 5:19-20). They help bear our burdens (Galatians 6:2), rejoice with us in the good times, and weep with us in our times of sorrow (Romans 12:15). The bottom line is: that our brothers and sisters of our local congregation are there for us because they genuinely love us. And it goes without saying, that that kind of love is a powerful influence on us to stay strong.

And it should be that we appreciate and return, in kind, the love we receive from our church family. This is how we can stay steadfast with the Lord— by staying close to His people! Letting our fellowship be with the very salt of the earth and with those who are the light of the world (Matthew 5:13-16).

Normally, peer pressure has a bad connotation to it because it is usually the negative and bad pressure that is so often spoke of— but there is also the positive and good kind of peer pressure that comes from being among God’s people. This is where fitting in is not a bad thing at all! (1 Corinthians 1:10; 11:1; Philippians 3:16-17)

When we get to heaven, we may rightly say that it was the good influences of our brethren that made all the difference in helping us to stay *“firm unto the end.”* (Hebrews 3:6; 3:14 KJB)

#### **(4) When We Remember Who We Are As A Christian.**

Every Christian has to resolve firmly in their minds: (1) Who they are in their character. (2) What kind of life that they will choose to live.

The good character we need to have is listed in 2 Peter 1:5-8, *“Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

The apostle Peter even tells us that these qualities are needed to be productive in God’s kingdom and work. It is the Christian who desires to be effective in his work that will make every effort to add these qualities of God’s virtues to his life. He or she will know that this defines their character and they can never forget who they are, as a Christian.

That’s why, when temptations, trials, and difficulties come, we determine to remember how we should act in such circumstances. The Christian intentionally does so because heaven is too beautiful a place to miss and hell is too horrible a place to risk going to! (Matthew 25:46)

As a matter of fact, the Devil would love for us to forget who and what we are in Christ on a regular basis—but that is not the way of the child of God, who is steadfast in their walk with God.

Peter also tells us in 2 Peter 1:10-11, *“Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.”* Heaven can only be our reward, when we take care to remember who we are as a Christian, and keep our steadfast spirit of perseverance.

### **(5) When We Keep Our Strong Desire to Go to Heaven.**

Strong desire to accomplish a goal is a key ingredient for success in any endeavor. Because without a real desire to do something, we are not motivated to do whatever it takes to achieve it.

It is true that many people want to go to heaven, but few will really have strong enough desire to make any and all sacrifices to get there (Luke 13:24). To many, it is not worth giving up so much for heaven. The cares and desires of this life have a stranglehold on their life (Mark 4:19; 2 Timothy 4:10).

But the faithful Christian does not lack the desire, but even increases his desire to one day see Jesus, his master (Colossians 3:4; Titus 2:13). We can increase in zeal and dedication, as we get closer everyday to our goal (Romans 13:11).

The apostle Paul would speak of his desire to go on and be with Jesus in Philippians 1:23-24, *“But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.”* Paul wants to stay for the sake of his brethren, but he has a great desire to depart and be with Christ. We should all imitate Paul in his desire (1 Corinthians 11:1).

In conclusion, we want to close this series of lessons with the words of the Hebrew writer, *“But My righteous one shall live by faith; And if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.”*

**GOSPEL** Trey Haskett  
**MEETING** Sunday October 21st  
Monday-Friday 22nd-26th  
7:00 PM Nightly

Spotlight On A Bible Verse:

**Revelation 2:10**

*“Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”*

The Christians in the first century received a letter from Christ, written by John, in which they were encouraged to continue being faithful to God even if it meant the loss of their very lives. In this passage, the Christians at Smyrna were given this message. Often called “the poor, rich church” by some, Smyrna was encouraged to continue

to be faithful where they were even though it meant imprisonment and even the loss of life. It is far better for men to lose their lives but have their souls saved than for their lives to be saved and their souls lost (Matt. 10:39, 16:25; Mk. 8:35; Lk. 9:24, 17:33; Jn. 12:25).

Let us take the time to examine ourselves today. Are we endeavoring to stay faithful to God? We live in a land of freedom and we are not threatened with death for serving God as some are in this world today. For this reason, what is stopping us from being faithful to Him? It is not outward forces, but it very well may be inward things (Lk. 8:14; Jas. 1:14). Let us determine that we will allow nothing to stand between us and God! Let us decide today to fight Satan (Jas. 4:7), withstand temptation (Eph. 6:16), and be faithful to the Lord. We will receive a crown of life one day for being faithful for just a short time (Rom. 8:18; II Cor 4:17). Yes, let us be faithful to the very taking of our lives. Christ has done the same for us (I Pet. 2:21; II Cor 5:14-15).

Jarrold Jacobs

**News and Notes:** Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Betty Hurst, Steve Switcher, Gail Armstrong, Nicky Curtis, Martha Norvell (Mississippi Care), Charlene Newborn, Greg Fields, June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Clois Wright, Debbie Keplinger, Gaddy Hall, Madeline Flippo, Karey Trimble, Jerry Trimble, Janis Johnson, Delain Doles, and Daniel Holloway

**Our Gospel Meeting** with Trey Haskett begins Sunday—October 21st to the 26th.  
(7:00 PM Nightly— Monday thru Friday)

**Those Who Serve:**

**Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:**

**Opening Prayer:** Adam Harris  
**Preaching:** Brian Meade  
**Sermon:** "The Pathways of Life Pt. 1"

**Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am**

Fred Johnson  
The Book of John (Mike Willis)  
Page 36, Question #17

**Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:**

**Announcements:** Brian Meade  
**Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading:** Tim Harris Jr.  
*Psalm 1:1-6*  
**Song Leader:** Adam Harris  
**Lord's Table:** Fred Johnson  
**Assisting:** Dan Cottrell & Paul Busby  
**Preaching:** Brian Meade  
**Sermon:** "The Pathways of Life Pt. 2"  
**Closing Prayer:** Lee Busby

**Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.**

**September 12th:**

**Auditorium Bible Class:** Paul Busby  
1 & 2 Kings (Mike Willis)  
Page 41, Question #12  
**Invitation:** Chris Callahan  
**Song Leader:** Adam Harris  
**Closing Prayer:** Dan Cottrell