

Two main dangers for a Christian

Now you have become a Christian. Welcome to the family. It is a new world with so many things to learn and find out.

You have probably already understood the importance of spending time with Jesus both reading the Bible and speaking with Him.

It is hard to overestimate how important it is to read the Bible and to speak with Jesus.

To read the Bible and to speak with Jesus is really, really important.

Note the word “with”. Jesus wants you to speak **WITH** Him – not only speak to Him.

He wants to be your very, very best friend.

The Friend that is so close, and so near.

So why not stop now, and speak with Jesus as with your best friend – and He will become your very best friend.

2.

This is the start – not the end.

And to end well, yes, to finish the race, is what really matters, so here we will look at two main dangers that Jesus warned us for, that get people not to finish the race.

“What do you mean?” you might say, “Do you mean that not all that become Christians, stay Christians?”

Correct.

There are dangers along the road to heaven, and some jump off along the road, and others fall asleep, not realizing themselves that they are leaving Jesus.

3.

And we know that Jesus talks about people, that surely must believe that they are Christians, but not are going to heaven when saying;

“Not all they that say unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that does My Father’s will which is in heaven.

Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not in Your name prophesied?

And in Your name have we not cast out devils? And in Your name have we not done many miracles?

And then will I confess unto them, that I never knew them. Depart from Me, you workers of iniquity.” (Matthew 7:21-23)

4.

They thought that they were Christians, but Jesus said that they are not, but are people that are “workers of iniquity.”

This whilst they fooled themselves to believe that they were Christians, even calling Jesus Lord, Lord, and they are apparently shocked that Jesus is sending them to hell.

Needless to say,

it is very important, not to be among these people.

Two main dangers

There are especially two dangers along the road, that Jesus warned us of, so let's now look at them in some detail and make sure that we are not among the many that thought that they were Christians, but ended up in hell.

Jesus warned about these dangers, in the most famous, and probably also most important parable in the Bible.

The one about a sower, that went out to sow.

6.

Here one should remember that this was before sowing machines, so sowing was made by hand, throwing the seeds, so not all seeds fell in the good ground.

Jesus said:

“Behold. There went out a sower to sow.

And it happened as he sowed, that some fell by the wayside, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

Some fell on stony ground: where it had not much earth:

and by and by sprang up because it had not depth of earth:

but as soon as the sun was up it caught heat, and because it did not have rooting, withered away.

And some fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, so that it gave no fruit.

And some fell upon good ground and did yield fruit that sprang and grow, and brought forth: some thirty fold, some sixty fold and some a hundred fold.

And He said unto them: he that has ears to hear, let him hear.” (Mark 4:3-9)

Do you have ears?

Yes!

So then we know that it is very important to listen to this.

7.

“And when He was alone, they that were about Him with the twelve asked Him of the similitude.”
(Mark 4:10)

So Jesus explained:

“The sower sows the word.” (Mark 4:14)

(The word, is God’s word, or you could say the Gospel, the Good News about Jesus.)

“And they that are by the wayside, where the word is sown,

are they to whom as soon as they have heard it, satan comes immediately, and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts.” (Mark 4:15)

This is group one. They don’t even become Christians.

You have become a Christian, so you are not part of this group, so we don’t need to think about this.

8.

“And likewise they that are sown on the stony ground, are they:

which when they have heard the word, at once receive it with gladness,

yet have no roots in themselves, and so endure but a time:

and when trouble and persecution arises for the word’s sake, they fall immediately.”

These people do become Christians, but they jump off.

This is the first danger that we will look at.

9.

“And they that are sown among the thorns, are such as hear the word:

and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches and the lusts of other things, enter in

and choke the word, and it is made unfruitful.”

These people do become Christians, and they do not jump off.

But they fall asleep so to say, or actually, the word in them is choked.

This is the second danger that we will look at.

10.

“And those that were sown in good ground, are they that hear the word and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirty fold, some sixty fold, some a hundred fold.” (Mark 4:14-20)

These are the ones that avoid the dangers and make it to the end.

This is the group that we must make sure to be in.

11.

As we saw, Jesus identified two dangers, so we will now look at the first of them.

Danger one – jumping off when trouble and persecution arises

Now when you have become a Christian, life is wonderful.

But you will soon find out that being a Christian, is not a dance on roses.

After all they persecuted and killed Jesus, and all the disciples were persecuted,

and one thing that you can be 100% sure about, is that trouble and persecution will come, as Jesus told us:

“If they have persecuted Me, so will they persecute you.” (John 15:20)

13.

And:

“But all these things will they do unto you for My name’s sake, because they have not known Him that sent Me.” (John 15:21)

Yes, we read about this so many places in the Bible, so let’s look at another example:

“For verily when I was with you, I told you before that we should suffer tribulation, even as it came to pass” (1 Thessalonians 3:4)

14.

But in all the trouble and persecution that we meet – Jesus is so close.

Yes one of the very last things that He said to His disciples before the cross was:

“These words have I spoken unto you, that in Me you might have peace.

For in the world shall you have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

15.

So trouble and persecution will come.

And Jesus warned us that some people have not the commitment, so they decide to jump off.

This is the first danger to watch against.

The narrow gate

I think a good way to describe it is this:

People should make a 100% commitment when becoming a Christian.

But we are not always good at knowing ourselves, so we might think that we have given 100% even though that might not be the case.

But God is good, so He lets people become Christians even though they might not actually have given 100%.

However, this does not mean that they will stay Christians, if they don't give 100%.

17.

So let's look at a practical example:

Here we have a person that has become a Christian, but has actually only given 60%.

What happens next?

God shows him or her His love. So it should be easy to give 100%.

Then as time goes, one could say that the road and the gate gets narrower and narrower until the gate is so narrow that the only option is to give 100%, or jump out.

So either he or she now gives 100% - or is out.

18.

Jesus was asked a question, when one said “unto Him; Lord, are there few that shall be saved?

And He said unto them; Strive with yourselves to enter in through the narrow gate. For many I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.” (Luke 13:23-24)

19.

Now these people knew what a narrow gate was.

Maybe the wall was old and partly had collapsed, so there now only was a narrow gate left.

Maybe they could not build it wider.

There is a saying that there was a gate in Jerusalem that was so narrow that a camel could only get through it if all load was unloaded, and the camel went through it on its knees.

20.

So when Jesus says;

“Strive with yourselves to enter in through the narrow gate. For many I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able”

this does not at all imply that some cannot get through it.

21.

As I said, these persons knew what a narrow gate was.

All humans are about the same size, so if one person could get through it, everyone could. (Maybe if someone was very fat, maybe he needed to lose some weight first, but then he could get through it.)

So it cannot mean that one person can get through it and another cannot.

22.

But not everyone wants to “Give All the Heart” and follow Jesus, no matter the cost.

And the person that is not willing to “Give All the Heart” and follow Jesus, no matter the cost, will jump out when the gate becomes too narrow.

Harder and harder tests

Another way of describing it is this:

For all of us, there will come challenges where we have to choose either to obey Jesus or disobey.

These challenges will get harder and harder, until 100% has to be given, or the person jumps out.

24.

So let's look at practical example of this:

Let say someone really wants to get married and meets a non-Christian boy.

This should not really be a hard choice, but for a person with only 60% commitment, maybe that will make her to jump out.

So now she has to either increase her commitment to, let say 70%, or jump out.
(And unfortunately I have seen people jumping out at this choice.)

25.

So to stay a Christian, now she has to increase the commitment.

Hopefully she doesn't do like the person I knew, but she increases it.

Then God will continue to show her His love, making it easy for her to give 100%.

(Which ideally should have been given to start with, but God is so good, helping people that actually have not done it.)

26.

Life goes on. Having passed this test, God gives her a good Christian husband.

After some years, God tells her husband that they have to do something so they will lose their friends.

To lose her friends is a harder challenge. Now 70% commitment won't do.

Again she has the choice to either increase the commitment, or jump out.

And so it continues until reaching 100%.

27.

In all this God is fair and I think it is clear that for children dying young, people with some mental problems and people that have low IQ, God sees the heart and can make specials.

28.

Now the right and also smartest way of doing it, is of course to give 100% to start with, and if you did not do it to start with, to do it now.

Trouble and persecution will try our hearts

We have already seen that trouble and persecution will come.

This does not mean that God sends trouble and persecution upon His children. Nowhere in the Bible do we see that God sends trouble and persecution upon us.

Contrary, God will judge the people hard, that persecute you, as we read here:

"It is verily a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you"
(2 Thessalonians 1:6)

30.

But the trouble and persecution that we have to suffer as God's children in this evil world, will also test our commitment to Jesus.

Yes, we see that in trials, our faith is "tried":

"now for a season (if need require) you are in heaviness, through manifold trials,

that your faith once tried,

being much more precious than gold that perishes (though it be tried with fire) might be found unto praise, glory, and honour at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:6-7)

31.

And we read more details about it here:

"Dearly beloved, be not troubled in this heat, which now is come among you to try you,

as though some strange thing had happened unto you:

but rejoice in as much as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings,

that when His glory appears, you may be merry and glad.

If you be railed upon for the name of Christ, happy are you.

For the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God rests upon you.

On their part He is evil spoken of: but on your part He is glorified.

See that none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

If any man suffers as a Christian man, let him not be ashamed: but let him glorify God on this behalf." (1 Peter 4:12-16)

32.

So the trouble and persecution we will meet,

will show whom has Given All the Heart and has a 100% commitment to Jesus, and whom has not.

33.

As we now have seen - jumping out at trouble and persecution is the first danger.

So how do you survive this danger?

By having enough rooting and commitment.

By making sure to have a 100% commitment!

Yes, to have Given All the Heart.

35.

So why not stop right now and make sure that you have given 100%.

One good way of doing it is to pray and think for yourself and visualize really hard situations and choices you can meet.

Like, thinking that you are taken captive and given the choice of denying Jesus or being tortured to death.

What do I do?

(Tip. A second in hell is worse than the worst torture on earth. And hell is eternal. So eternal torture.)

36.

People “having come by” the first danger, now face another, long term danger.

Danger two – the word being choked.

You have 100% commitment. That is wonderful.

But that does not mean that you are out of danger.

No, there is this other, second danger, that we really must guard against.

Actually, Jesus warns more about this danger, than for danger number one.

38.

So we should not think that once we have given 100% - now it is sorted for life.

As you remember, the very first group, never became Christians.

The second group were these who jumped out when they felt that the gate was too narrow, and the cost too high.

The third group – they where the word became choked, they became Christians.

And they did not jump out for trouble and persecution.

But instead, the word in them was choked.

How terrible.

Maybe this is why Jesus warns so much in the Bible about this danger.

39.

Jesus points out three different dangers to avoid, when He says;

“And they that are sown among the thorns, are such as hear the word:

and the cares of this world

and the deceitfulness of riches

and the lusts of other things,

enter in and choke the word, and it is made unfruitful.”

The cares of this world

The first thing that Jesus warns us for is

- the cares of this world.

41.

What are the cares of this world?

Often the cares of this world are the daily things to do, like:

work,

family,

taking care of the home and so on.

There are so many things that can be a distraction.

42.

A very good example of what the cares of this world are, was when Jesus and the disciples visited Martha and Mary.

Mary “sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His preaching.

And Martha was distracted with much serving,

and stood and said: Master, do You not care, that my sister has left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore, that she helps me. And Jesus answered, and said unto her:

Martha, Martha, you care, and are troubled about many things:

verily one is needful.

Mary has chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.” (Luke 10:39-42)

43.

Here we see that Martha was busy with the cares of this world.

Yes the very word “*care*” that Jesus uses when saying “*you care*”,

is the greek sister word, to the word “*cares*”, that Jesus uses when He says “*cares of this world.*”

44.

So what did Martha do?

Jesus and the disciples had come to visit.

Martha was busy serving. Probably with preparing food and serving food, and things like that.

It could have seemed like an important thing,

but as it distracted her from what really mattered

- the one thing that was needful -

it was a bad distraction, and not important at all.

45.

So for Martha, household work was the cares of this world.

For others it is the ordinary work.

For others taking care of the house, the car, the family and so on.

Or all of this!

46.

And we see that it was a distraction.

“Martha was distracted with much serving,”

A distraction stopping Martha from doing the one thing that really mattered!

47.

The daily things to do – they have a value (roughly) like cleaning.

You clean, and clean, and clean again.

The daily things are like cleaning.

OK, some of it are things that have to be done – **on time over** – but it must absolutely not take my time and attention away from being with Jesus.

48.

As we see here – It is one thing that is needful.

Being with Jesus!

Yes, we must not let the word in us be choked by the distractions of the cares of this world.

The deceitfulness of riches

The second thing that Jesus warns us for is

- the deceitfulness of riches.

50.

What is the deceitfulness of riches?

For many it is to want to be rich – or want to have more money than really is needed.

And for rich people, it could be to trust in their riches.

51.

Wanting to get rich is such a stupid thing.

It takes so much time and attention.

Time and attention, “stolen” from being with Jesus!

Jesus tells us about this here, when Jesus;

“said unto them:

take heed, and beware of covetousness.

For no man's life stands in the abundance of the things which he possesses.” (Luke 12:15)

52.

“And He put forth a parable unto them saying:

The ground of a certain rich man brought forth fruits plenteously, and he thought in himself saying: what shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

And he said: This will I do. I will destroy my barns, and build greater, and therein will I gather all my fruits, and my goods:

and I will say to my soul: Soul, you have much goods laid up in store for many years, take your ease: eat, drink and be merry.

But God said unto him:

You fool, this night your soul shall be required of you.

Then whose shall those things be which you have provided?

So is it with him that gathers riches, and is not rich in God.” (Luke 12:16-21)

This really describes it!

53.

And Jesus continued:

“Therefore I say unto you: take no thought for your life, what you shall eat, neither for your body, what you shall put on.” (Luke 12:22)

And:

“Consider the ravens, for they neither sow, nor reap, which neither have storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them.” (Luke 12:24)

And:

“Consider the lilies how they grow: They labour not: they spin not: and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his royalty was not clothed like to one of these.

If God then so clothes the grass which is today in the field, and tomorrow shall be cast into the furnace:

how much more will He clothe you, o you of little faith?

And ask not what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, neither climb you up on high, for all such things the heathen people of the world seek for.

Your Father knows that you have need of such things.

Wherefore seek you after the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be ministered unto you.” (Luke 12:27-31)

54.

Then Jesus points out that “where your treasure is, there will your hearts be also.” (Luke 12:34)

And instead of being busy with money making, our loins should “be girded about” and our “lights burning” (Luke 12:35)

55.

To want to be rich is very wrong focus, and it “steals” both time and attention away from Jesus.

Yes, “they that will be rich, fall into temptation, and snares, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition, and destruction.” (1 Timothy 6:9)

Yes, to want to be rich is a terrible danger, and numerous of people have fallen away from Jesus, that way.

56.

Paul was very aware of the danger of wanting to be rich.

Paul worked. A lot.

But not to make money.

When it came to making money, he only worked to have the necessities of life.

The rest of his time was spent being with God.

Spending quality time with God.

And to reach out to, and help others to learn to know our wonderful Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

57.

He tells about this in Acts 20, where he said:

“I have desired no man’s silver, gold, or apparel.

You know well that these hands have ministered unto my necessities,

and to them that were with me.” (Acts 20:34)

Yes, we even read in 2 Corinthians 11:9 that he under a period had need, and was lacking, as he spent so much time helping others.

58.

This is the attitude that we need to have.

Never seeking money.

Not wanting to be rich.

Wanting to have Jesus!

The lusts of other things

The third thing that Jesus warns us for is

- the lusts of other things.

60.

What are the lusts of other things?

This is quite self-explanatory. It could be a thousand things that people want to do or want to have or want to be.

People think:

I want a new mobile phone.

I want a new dress.

I want a new car.

I want a new bike.

I want to go on holiday.

I want to go for a walk.

I want to be famous.

I want to be popular.

I want to, I want to, I want to.

The list could be almost endless of things to want to be, or want to do, or want to have – other than seeking Jesus.

61.

Not that God does not want to bless you. He wants!

But that should not be something we strive or lust after.

For if we do, this will take both time and attention away from Jesus.

62.

Yes, if praying, to have things for our lusts, we will not receive it, as we read;

“You ask and have not, because you ask amiss, that you may consume it upon your lusts.” (James 4:3)

But as we just read:

“seek you after the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be ministered unto you.” (Luke 12:31)

Having no will of my own

When Jesus was here on earth, He only wanted to do the will of the Father.

Jesus said:

"For I came down from heaven: not to do Mine own will but, His will which has sent Me." (John 6:38)

64.

We shall have the same attitude.

We shall not want to have that,

or want to do this,

or want to be that.

65.

No, instead we shall have this attitude:

I have no will of mine own.

I only want to do God's will.

I do not want to be, or want to do or want to have other things.

Yes, I have no lust of other things.

I only want to do God's will and seek after the kingdom of God.

Yes, I have Jesus first in my life – every day!

Danger two (b) - End time special

The warnings above are for all times, but for us living in the end time, Jesus added things to think about, as we see here:

“Take heed to yourselves,

lest your hearts be weighed down with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this world:

and that, that day come on you unawares.

For as a snare shall it come on all them that sit on the face of the earth.

Watch therefore continually and pray, that you may obtain grace to flee all this that shall come, and that you may stand before the Son of Man.” (Luke 21:34-36)

67.

Here Jesus warns us that our hearts must **not be weighed down**.

68.

Jesus is warning us that we should **take heed, watch continually, and pray**, so our hearts are not weighed down and so that day does not come on us unawares.

And we know from 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4 that if “**that day**” comes upon someone unawares, it means that he is not a Christian, and will miss heaven when Jesus comes.

69.

Instead Jesus wants us to “**flee all this that shall come**” and “**stand before**” Him in heaven, when the judgment comes on earth.

So here is a very strong warning not to miss heaven!

A strong warning that people can have their hearts weighed down

– so they become non-Christians and miss heaven.

The heart

When the Bible talks about the heart, it is often the inner will, the inner attitude. What I really want.

71.

As we already have seen from danger number one – we should have hearts that really love Jesus.

Hearts that have given 100% to Him.

Yes;

A heart that really loves Jesus.

A heart that only wants to do God's will.

A heart that is longing for Jesus.

A heart that really wants to please God.

72.

But here we see that things can weigh down our hearts.

And to such a degree that people become non-Christians and miss heaven.

Killing the heart, so to say.

This is similar to the word in us being choked.

How terrible when that happens.

73.

So what is it that Jesus warns us for, for the end time?

Jesus says;

“lest your hearts be weighed down with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this world:”

Surfeiting

First Jesus warns us for

- surfeiting.

75.

What is surfeiting?

Is it surfeiting in food and drink that Jesus talks about?

For some people that could be a problem, but for most people, a much bigger problem is surfeiting in material things.

Indulging in material things.

76.

It is easy to see why Jesus added this danger for us in the end time.

200 years ago, very few could be surfeiting in material things, even remotely close to the level we see today.

Today, so many do it.

77.

Not only that it takes our time and attention.

It also costs money, so more time has to be used to make money.

So it takes our time and attention for this reason as well.

So it is a double trap of taking our time and attention away from Him that loved us enough to die for us.

78.

So this is a very real danger, and if we fall into it, it will take both our time and attention away from Jesus and weigh our hearts down.

79.

So we shall make sure not to surfeit in material things.

Instead we should be content, as it is written:

“When we have food and raiment, let us therewith be content.” (1 Timothy 6:8)

Drunkenness

Secondly Jesus warns us for

- drunkenness.

81.

What is drunkenness?

Of course alcohol is not good, but very few, if any, Christians would get drunk by alcohol.

However for many, being drunk by other things, is today a real problem.

Now, in this modern world, there are so many drugs around us like social media, internet, TV, sport, never ending news - that so easily can drug us down and make us drunk.

82.

Not only that it takes time away from Jesus.

It also takes the attention.

So in this modern world this is a very, very real danger.

83.

As always – Jesus knows everything – and He knew that whilst surfeiting and drunkenness were not a big problem before the end time, surfeiting and drunkenness would be real challenges for many in the end time.

(Which in itself is just another proof, showing how accurate the Bible is.)

84.

So we really have to be on our guard against this, and not get drunk by mobile phones, social media, internet, TV, sport, news and so on.

Cares of this world

And we see that Jesus again warns for -

the cares of this world.

86.

As Jesus repeats this warning, we really know that the “cares of this world” is a very, very real danger.

As such we need to really, really watch against “the cares of this world”.

So how do we guard against these dangers?

Jesus told us to

take heed,

watch continually,

and pray.

88.

To pray is self-explanatory.

Being with Jesus really sorts many problems.

When praying, Jesus has both my time and attention!

So praying a lot, is a very good protection against these dangers.

89.

And Jesus told us to take heed, and then He told us to watch continually.

These are kind of synonyms, so when Jesus says this twice, we really want to make sure to do this.

So what should we watch against?

90.

We should watch and make sure not to fall into the dangers that Jesus warned us for:

the cares of this world

the deceitfulness of riches

the lusts of other things

surfeiting

drunkenness.

91.

We should watch to make sure that they do not weigh down our hearts and “kill them”, so that the love to Jesus is not burning any longer.

Watch to make sure that they don’t choke the word in us.

92.

Yes, it is super-important not to let anything steal my attention and my time from being with Jesus.

To make sure to get a lot of time with Jesus every day.

And to only do other things on time over.

It is not hard

And this is not as hard as it might seem.

You know, there are so many things that are not needed to spend time on.

Social media, internet, TV, for example - did not exist 200 years ago.

And people were doing completely fine without them, so they can easily be reduced to a minimum.

94.

Same with having a lot of material things.

It is not at all needed.

And going down in material standard means more time to spare,

as less money = less work is needed.

Just think about how much time you use on these things every day,

and you realise how much time you can actually free up and spend with Him that died that we might live.

95.

Same with the cares of this world.

There are so many things that really are not important at all.

I am not saying that you cannot paint your bedroom. But if it takes time from Jesus, then it is a bad distraction.

But if you have time over – then it does not need to be a problem.

96.

So we should focus on what really matters.

And again, what we use our time on, often takes our attention.

So by freeing up time and spending it with Jesus, this will help the focus as well.

97.

And looking again a little at the cares of this world.

They can really take our attention - so refuse to let them, and instead focus on what really matters.

Yes, do your very best and ask Jesus to help you, and He will.

98.

So as we now have seen;

One should not think – that now I am saved – Hallelujah, everything is sorted.

No – instead make sure to give 100%, and not be one of them that are without rooting in themselves.

99.

And we should not think that once we have given 100% - now it is sorted for life.

No, we do need to pray, and to take heed, yes watch continually against:

The cares of this world

The deceitfulness of riches

The lusts of other things

Surfeiting

Drunkenness

100.

Yes we need to make sure that these dangers do not weigh down our hearts and “kill them”, so that the love to Jesus is not burning any longer.

And make sure that they do not choke the word in us.

101.

And it is very important not to take things for granted, but accomplish our salvation with fear and trembling, as we see here;

“work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” (Philippians 2:12)

Now you might think that the words “work out”, sound strange, so let’s explain.

The Greek word translated “work out” is καταργάζομαι – or with English letters – katargazomai – given the number g2716 in Strong’s Greek concordance, meaning:

To work fully, i.e. accomplish. By implication: to finish.

102.

So we are instructed to accomplish / finish our salvation, with fear and trembling.

So it is very important, not to take our salvation for granted, but that we instead take heed, watch continually and pray.

Full-time Christian

We mentioned in the beginning, how important it is to spend a lot of time with Jesus both reading the Bible and speaking with Him.

Now you have seen from the Bible, that spending a lot of time with Jesus really will help against the dangers on the road to heaven.

You see, there is nothing like a part-time Christian.

It is full-time.

This does not mean that we don't need to work. We shall work to have to the necessities and so we can help others.

But we want to do as Paul and find ways to work less in making money, and work more with spreading the Good News.

104.

"How much should I pray?" you might ask.

It will vary by age and different things, so it is not a one size fits all, answer.

But the most important is to have the attitude:

I do want to be with You, Jesus!

Today!

105.

A practical tip is to use alarms and reminders to help to remember to take the time with Jesus, as there are so many things trying to take our attention and make us to forget it.

Even famous Christians have used this method. John Wesley is one of the best Christians the last 500 years, and he had a habit of whenever the church bell rang for a new hour, he paused to pray for 5 minutes.

And this was in the 18th century, when there was nowhere close to the number of distractions that are around us today.

So if he at that time felt a need to use a tool to help him, it is probably smart for most of us to use alarms and reminders.

And turning off notifications on your phone, except the most important notifications, is also a good idea.

Finishing our race

The Christian life is called a race, or a course.

A course to finish, and to finish with joy.

Again we see the importance of not taking things for granted, but to do our best, when we are instructed:

“Perceive you not how that they which run in a course, run all, yet but one receives the reward.

So run that you may obtain.” (1 Corinthians 9:24)

So we are instructed to run, and run as the one that wins.

And the good news, is that in the Christian race – everyone can win and receive the reward!

And that is what God wants us all to do.

107.

Paul is our example, and he finished the course.

When he spoke about that he knew that he soon was going to meet bonds and trouble, he said;

“But none of these things move me:

neither is my life dear unto myself,

that I might fulfill my course with joy,

and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus,

to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” (Acts 20:24)

This is the attitude we shall have.

It does not matter what the cost will be – our commitment to Jesus and to spread the Good News is 100%.

108.

And when Jesus explains the parable in Luke, we see the importance of finishing the race.

“That in the good ground, are they which with a good and pure heart,

hear the word, and keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.” (Luke 8:15)

We both want to keep God’s word, and to “bring forth fruit with patience.”

Please note the word patience.

This is the Greek word ὑπομονή – or with English letters – hypomonē – given the number g5278 in Strong’s Greek concordance, meaning:

Cheerful (or hopeful) endurance, constancy.

109.

Yes the importance of continuing with endurance, we see here,

where the same Greek word is used:

“Wherefore let us also (seeing that we are compassed with so great a multitude of witnesses) lay away all that presses down, and the sin that hangs on,

and let us run with patience in the battle that is set before us, looking unto Jesus,”
(Hebrews 12:1-2)

Yes, let us continue the race, yes the battle that is our life here on earth, with endurance.

And let’s look unto Jesus when doing it.

110.

Just as if you are on a very long walk over many weeks.

Don’t stop and enjoy the sun when the weather is nice.

Don’t camp at a beach.

Don’t dig down when it is a snowstorm.

No, continue, step by step, every day.

Then we will reach the goal. Heaven!

111.

And the most important of all to finish the race – is to love Jesus.

With a real, and burning love.

With a strong, strong love.

112.

And the promises when loving Jesus are enormous.

Jesus said:

“And he that loves Me, shall be loved of My Father:

and I will love him, and will show My own self unto him.” (John 14:21)

And:

“If a man loves Me, he will keep My sayings,

and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and will dwell with him.” (John 14:23)

113.

Yes, doing good works is not what it is about.

And doing things for Jesus, is not what it is about either, as we read here:

“And though I bestowed all my goods to feed the poor, and though I gave my body even that I burned, and yet had no love, it profits me nothing.” (1 Corinthians 13:3)

It is about love.

114.

Love to whom?

Love to Jesus of course!

(And then to others.)

115.

Yes, Adam and Eve were not created to do things for God – they were created to be WITH God.

This is what life is about.

Being with Jesus!

Loving Jesus!

116.

As we read here:

"This is eternal life, that they know You, the only true God and whom You have sent, Jesus Christ."
(John 17:3)

And here:

"For God is faithful, by whom you are called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord."
(1 Corinthians 1:9)

117.

So let's finish our race with joy, so we can say as Paul:

"I have fought a good fight, and have fulfilled my course, and have kept the faith.

From henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness,

which the Lord that is a righteous judge shall give me at that day:

not to me only: but unto all them that love His coming." (2 Timothy 4:7-8)

Paul did it – You can as well!

118.

Again, welcome to the family.

We are here to help. If we can be of assistance, never hesitate to contact us.

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