



RESURRECTION CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

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EVANGELIZING THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER

Letters of Faith

September 2010

**“...we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be...
strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might,
for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience...”**

(Colossians 1:9b & 11 NASB)

Dearly Beloved,

In this time of instability in the world, we Christians must remain steadfast, not using incidences of terrorism, pressures of religious bigotry, or shifting political and economic systems as a reason to water down our faith or our commitment to be the light and life of Christ in this world.

To be steadfast is to be faithful, constant, dedicated, dependable, unwavering, loyal, and reliable. Sometimes that is a hard assignment, but if we determine to fulfill it in His love, the Holy Spirit promises to accomplish it in us.

The power of the Holy Spirit will give us the strength and wisdom to remain steadfast when things and people are being shaken all around us. Because of His might, we can be counted on to be solidly “in Christ” when others are being **“tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine...”** (Eph.4:14) We are not to be like **“the one who doubts [who] is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind...being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways,”** (James 1:6 & 8)

In the agony of repentance, King David cried out: **“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”** (Psa. 51:10) He had lost that precious steadfastness of spirit that used to guard him against wavering in his love and awe of God. David knew that he desperately needed God’s forgiving mercy to renew that steadfast spirit within him, and so do we all.

We Christians can be steadfast in spirit because of what Jesus accomplished on the cross for us. The Apostle Paul recalled the promises of Isaiah 25:8 and Hosea 13:14 when he wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:54b-55 **“Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?”** And then he went on to explain in verses 56-58: **“The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.”**

The Apostle Paul was adamant about this victory as he exhorted the Romans: **“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.”** (Romans 8:1-2)

We no longer need fear life or death because through Jesus our eternal life is assured and we know that He is with us supporting and strengthening us as we go about living the remaining days of our lives here for His glory. Though none of us know the number of days we have left on earth, we can live life to its fullest for we cannot be shaken from the truth—Truth lives within us! Therefore, we can be steadfast and patient even when our circumstances and all those around us seem to call for a compromise in our Christian moral standards or beliefs.

Despite the threats of losing their livelihood, their homes, their families, or their lives, early Christians remained steadfast to the Truth. Their lives could have been so much easier had they just “gone along” with the Jewish religious system under the temple rule! Even some of their religious leaders recognized Jesus as a prophet, so why need they alienate them by insisting that He was divine—the Son of God?

Christians who live in Muslim countries today are being confronted with the very same argument. We were told by a devout Muslim that a whole chapter of the Koran is devoted to Jesus as a prophet. “If only you wouldn’t insist that He rose from the dead or performed miracles—His teachings are good, why make Him out to be God? That is so offensive to us.”

Pastor Mehdi Dibaj, a former Muslim, was imprisoned in Iran in 1983 for the crime of apostasy because 45 years prior he had converted to Christianity and became a Christian minister. According to the April 1994 issue of Renewal magazine, “He was systematically tortured and suffered mock executions. He spent two years in solitary confinement in a dark cell three feet by three feet.” When at last he was brought to trial (in Dec. 1993), he presented a written defense that we feel should be read from every Christian pulpit.

“Jesus Christ is our Saviour and He is the Son of God. To know Him means to know eternal life. I, a useless sinner, have believed in His beloved person and all His words and miracles recorded in the Gospel, and I have committed my life into His hands. Life for me is an opportunity to serve Him, and death is a better opportunity to be with Christ.

Therefore I am not only satisfied to be in prison for the honor of His holy Name, but am ready to give my life for the sake of Jesus my Lord and enter His kingdom sooner, the place where the elect of God enter everlasting life, but the wicked to eternal damnation.

May the shadow of God’s kindness and His hand of blessing and healing be upon you and remain forever. Amen.

With respect, your Christian prisoner, Mehdi Dibaj”

Here was a native Iranian Christian, who despite his excruciatingly painful circumstances, steadfastly remained loyal to His Master and to the Spirit of Truth. Not for a moment did he consider compromising His faith in Jesus to save his skin, because to do so would nullify the truth he spoke so passionately. This Saint who had been imprisoned and cruelly tortured ended his defense plea with a prayer for his abusers, invoking God’s kindness and blessings upon them. He had obviously spent the time in that small cubicle praying for his enemies as He knew Jesus did and still does. Because of his tenacious devotion to seek His Kingdom and righteousness, no root of bitterness sprang up from within him to defile his Christian testimony. He was released in answer to the fervent prayers of many, but shortly after his release he disappeared again. This time his mutilated body was found in a ditch. Soon after, Pastor Haik Mehr, the general secretary of the Assemblies of God in Iran, was kidnapped as well and brutally executed without even a public trial—a gruesome reminder that the enemy is not a toothless lion.

Persecution comes with the territory! It is hard to understand sometimes, but remember, the Apostle Peter was released from prison for a season while the Apostle James was put to death immediately. The Apostle Paul was imprisoned and released repeatedly, but was finally beheaded in prison.

The Apostle Paul prayed for all of God’s people to be steadfast in the face of adversity:

“...strengthened with all power...for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience...”

Let us remember the purpose of the power and anointing of God’s Holy Spirit: We are to be steadfast in the Truth, patient, and a help to those who are wobbling. And maybe even help strengthen some Saints who don’t quite understand yet where we get our “extreme” ideas of being so unshakable and steadfast with Jesus, even when our life’s situations seem so horribly hopeless from man’s viewpoint!

We pray that your steadfastness in Christ will be an inspiration to many who have not yet learned to walk upright with Jesus in this, **“...crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world...”** (Phil. 2:15)

Remember and rejoice that: **“He who is steadfast in righteousness will attain to life...”** (Proverbs 11:19a).

Bold and Courageous hugs,

