

THE MESSENGER



"... How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!" Romans 10:15

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Never Give Up!

Editor's Note - The following is an article written by Deena Collins for the religious journal The Weaker Vessel. The journal is published and distributed by brethren in the Michigan area. Deena's article, written in the form of a letter, should be timely and encouraging to us all.

My Dear Brethren:

I write this letter out of concern for you who are thinking of "giving up" the Christian's way of life. Especially those who are new in the faith and may be having negative thoughts such as; "Christ's way is too hard;" "I cannot live up to His standards;" "There is too much to know and learn;" or "Once I do learn His way in a particular area of life it is too hard to change from my old way of doing things." My earnest plea to you is:

PLEASE DO NOT GIVE UP!

First, accept the fact that God recognizes a spiritual growth in His children (II Pet. 3:18). He does not expect you to know everything and be able to apply your knowledge maturely as soon as you are brought up out of the water at your baptism (I Pet. 2:1-2; Eph. 4:15). (We who are mature in the faith would do well to remember this fact also.) You did not go down into the water as a babe and rise as a mature Christian. You went into the water a sinner and arose with those sins washed away and a heart ready to repent of sin when you learn of it. You recognize a physical and mental growth in your children. You do not expect your two year old to be able to do the things your seven year old child does. There may be times when our patience runs thin and we forget this fact; but we can rest assured in knowing our Lord never forgets where we are in our spiritual growth (Rev. 2:2, 3, 19).

Yes, you will sin as you grow (I John 1:8-9). Repent and confess the sin and go on with the assurance that God forgave you and will help you to turn away from that sin next time it confronts you. Before you know it your sin becomes farther and farther apart! You have grown

stronger! I am not trying to make the process overly simple. It is not. At times the battle is overbearing; but the battles certainly cannot be won if you give up.

Sometimes I will hear a new Christian say, "If only I had faith like so and so (name of a strong Christian)," or "I wish I had as much knowledge as so and so (name of knowledgeable Christian)." Please realize that they (the strong Christians) have been through the same growing pains and are still growing! Use them! Ask these people their advice. Ask them to share some of their growing experiences with you. By doing this both will become stronger and definitely be encouraged. We are all in the same boat (this earth) trying to get to the same place (heaven). Yet, again I say no one gets there by giving up.

Take your Christian growth with joy DAY BY DAY. Not with the attitude of "I cannot live a Christian life," but with the attitude of "I want to live for God today." Handle your temptations daily. Try to live without sin one day at a time. You will notice a gradual distance between your sins. What used to be tempting is no longer. You have conquered that particular battle. The days will turn into months, the months to years and before you know it you are one of the strong Christians new babes are looking to for strength.

I close my letter with a story I have heard and recall when "giving up" is mentioned.

A man was given the opportunity to go to Satan's quarters and view all of his trophies. While gazing at them the man noticed one trophy that stood out far above the others. The man asked Satan's servant "For what reason did Satan earn this trophy?" The servant replied, "That trophy is Satan's most prized trophy." "He has that one to represent all the people who had accepted Christ's teachings, were living the Christian life on their way to heaven, but somewhere along the way Satan convinced them that it was too hard and giving up was the only solution."

Do not allow Satan to add your name to his prize trophy. Do not give up! God loves you and wants deeply for you to continue to strive to be His servant.

Through Christ's love,

Deena Collins

News & Notes:

Remember to check the prayer list for those with ongoing spiritual weaknesses and physical illnesses.

"...Pray for one another...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

James 5:16