

# “Be Ye Stedfast”

**Introduction.** The subject of 1 Corinthians 15 is the resurrection of Christians to eternal life. The apostle endeavors to prove its certainty and to demonstrate its glory, which seems to be doubted among the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 15:12). Paul reaches the climax of argument in vv. 56-57. Following this glorious outburst of eloquence, Paul concludes with a practical, down-to-earth exhortation which we will detail in this lesson.

## ***I. The Esteemed Characters Addressed***

- A. The fraternal character of Christians.
  - 1. This description of Christians as “beloved” is interesting and incredibly appropriate. The word is used dozens of times in the Bible (cp. 2 Peter 3:1, 8, 14, 17). Christians take on the nature of the relationship of Daniel to God (Daniel 9:23; 10:11, 19). They possess a oneness of nature (“one accord,” Acts 1:14; 2:1, 46; 4:24; 5:12; 8:6; 15:25) and are partakers of the same spiritual and renewed nature (Romans 8:29; 2 Peter 1:4).
  - 2. They have the same heavenly Father, whose image they bear and by whose love and sacrifice they have been born again. This holy brotherhood embraces all the children of God, of every tribe and tongue (Galatians 3:28).
- B. The affectionate character of Christians.
  - 1. They are beloved of God and the Son (John 3:16; 15:13). They are the ones involved in the scheme of redemption.
  - 2. They are also beloved of each other. This is the cement which unites them together (Romans 12:10; 1 Peter 2:17; 1 John 3:15; 4:7, 11).

## ***II. The Specific Course Recommended***

- A. Stedfastness.
  - 1. The idea behind this word means to be well-grounded or seated in one’s beliefs. They are to be built on the true foundation (Colossians 1:23; 2:6-7).
  - 2. There are some important areas in which to be stedfast:
    - a) We need to be stedfast in truth. The word of Christ must dwell within us richly (Colossians 3:16). We must buy the truth and sell it not (Proverbs 23:23). We must always walk in truth (Psalm 86:11).
    - b) We need to be stedfast in our profession. We must never swerve from a public teaching of Christ. Never evade the cross and never be ashamed to own Jesus and confess His name before men (Matthew 10:32).
    - c) We need to be stedfast in our godliness. Whether it be public or private, toward God or toward our brethren, we must walk in all His ways and adhere to Him (1 Timothy 2:2; 6:11).
- B. Immovableness.
  - 1. This term signifies perseverance or continued stability related to assault from temptation or persecution. One who is immovable has abiding firmness (Psalm 1:1-3); it is someone not capable of being moved from its place (cp. Ephesians 4:14).

2. We must not be moved by the fear of man, by the wiles and attacks of the devil, by the allurements of the world, or through the sorrows and sufferings of the calling of Christ.
- C. Abundant labor.
1. The work of the Lord includes all the duties of life, but here it may especially signify the work connected with God's kingdom and His glory (John 9:4).
  2. The work of diffusing His knowledge, extending His gospel, and promoting His cause is the most important work one can do, and we are to "abound" in it and build up the church (1 Corinthians 3:13-15; 9:1; 16:10). We are to be diligently, fully, constantly, and zealously employed (John 2:15-17). We must do this by example, influence, prayer, and meditation of the Word of God. In fact, the best answer to doubt is work.

### ***III. The Powerful Motive Assigned***

- A. We know our labor will not be in vain.
1. Our work may not prosper as we wish and to the extent that we desire, but it will not be empty or useless:
    - a) With respect to God — He will not overlook nor despise our work.
    - b) With respect to others — it will be of use either in convincing them or leaving them without excuse.
    - c) With respect to ourselves — our labor will produce spiritual profit in our souls and ensure a reward at the resurrection (John 4:34-36).
  2. This is not a matter of doubt; the very nature and assurance of the gospel renders it certain (2 Timothy 1:12).
- B. We know our labor will not be in vain in the Lord.
1. We only can be fruitful "in Him" (John 15:5). His grace must give us ability. His glory must be our constant aim and chief end.
  2. Our reward will be given to us as "heirs of Christ". If we suffer and labor with Christ, we will be glorified together (Romans 8:17-18; 1 Peter 5:10-11).

**Conclusion.** Because of Christ's resurrection and ours, we know that serving Him is not an empty, useless activity. Sometimes we become apathetic about serving the Lord because we do not see any results. Knowing that Christ has won the ultimate victory should affect the way we live right now. Do not let discouragement over an apparent lack of results keep you from doing the work of the Lord enthusiastically as you have opportunity. Our effort is invested in the Lord's winning cause, and He will reward us at His second coming (Matthew 25:21; John 5:28-29).