

# “Consistency”

Proverbs 25:19

“Proverbs – short statement based on a long experience” **Prov. 20:6** talks about the Scarcity of faithful people. *“Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?”*

Confidence = fidelity in the execution of a trust. It is a virtue which men are quick to see it, and ready to reward. Trusting someone to be there and they aren't is like a broken truth or a foot out of joint... when we put any weight or stress = responsibility... it not only fails but makes us feel from it... especially in times of trouble when we most expect their support. Maybe you've had this experience; you thought that a person was trustworthy so you depended on them. That person proved otherwise and brought you strong irritation and pain.

This verse is giving us an analogy: Teeth are for taking in food... it hurts like crazy when we think a tooth is ok and we bite down with it... expecting that tooth to do its job... we can't gain nutrition, we can't increase in strength. Feet are for going somewhere... a foot holds us up... but it is painfully deceptive when it's not dependable. We can't go anywhere with it... and the “good” foot is left to wait... and be held back from doing it's job. Here's what I'm saying, “People need to stay faithful to God and stay involved in the things of God.”

**I. Society Denounces Consistency = Where are the Faithful People?** = some say, “If you don't like it, quit.” Why is consistency important?

**A. The Savior Declares It – Matt. 24:44-46** “Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.” = Jesus might come tonight – Don't base duty on feelings!

**B. Sinners Deserve It – Matt. 26:69-70** “Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.” – They Deserve Your Faithfulness. Peter had low times – it's better to admit failure down here... than up there in Heaven.

**II. Stewardship Demands Consistency – I Cor. 4:2** “Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful...”

**A. We will give an account for what He has given us... 2 things every Christian has...**

1. Our Spiritual Gifts... being used –

a. Do you know your Spiritual Gifts? Every saint has at least one. **I Cor. 12:4-6** “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.”

**V.11** “But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.”

b. One of the greatest thrills in the Christian Life = seeing your Spiritual Gifts enhancing a life and your Local Church!

2. Our opportunities... being used.

**B. We might shed some tears – at the Judgment Seat of Christ: Rom 14:10 / I Cor. 3:11-15.**

1. Tears Over... Misplaced Treasures – **Matt. 6:19-21** “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Here's 3 keys to avoiding the tears of “Misplaced Treasures...”

a. KEY 1: distinguish between needs vs. wants.

b. KEY 2: have a heart for God – not the playground of this world.

- c. **KEY 3: there's a HUGE positive here...** We need to “Get-It” – God doesn't give back by addition – by multiplication. **Luke 6:38** “Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.”
- 2. Tears Over... Misused Talents – **Matt. 25:14-15** “For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.” Everything is God's – He gives us abilities.
- 3. Tears Over... Misled Souls – **Matt. 18:6** “But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.”
  - a. Poor Testimony – Stumbling block.
  - b. Lost people are watching.
  - c. Look at them – Souls heading for Heaven or Hell.

**III. Saints Depend On Consistency – Acts 15:36-38** “And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do. And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.” **This story teaches us 3 VIP's... (Very Important Principles)**

**A. Substitution:** When we drop the ball – somebody else has to pick up the slack.

**B. Steadiness:**

- 1. Let the Holy Spirit Stir your heart for that deep desire to remain... What is “your burden?”
- 2. Keep on doing what God wants me to do – **V. 36** “...and see how they do.”

**C. Second – Chances:** John Mark failed before – God gave him a second chance.

- 1. Don't forget the brevity of life! **James 4:14** “Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”
  - a. Now is the time to accept Christ... This past Thursday, The Texas Rangers were in the second inning with the Oakland A's. Josh Hamilton had fielded a ball from Oakland's Conor Jackson who had drilled one into foul territory along the left field line and the ball ricocheted towards Hamilton, playing left field. It's normal for fans to call out to a player to toss them the ball for a souvenir and Hamilton innocently tossed it to him, up in the stands. That fan was a 39-year-old father, named Shannon Stone, a 18-year veteran fire fighter. He and his little 8-year-old boy had driven about 150 miles to watch the game and his little boy watched as his dad fell through the railings and landed on concrete 20 ft. below. As paramedics were loading him on a stretcher, a relief pitcher for Oakland was warming up in the bullpen. He heard Stone calling out, arms flailing, “My boys up there by himself... please check on him.” In the ambulance, Stone went into full cardiac arrest and was pronounced dead at a Fort Worth hospital... one hour later.
- 2. Don't Bet On Second Chances: God WILL FORGIVE but He does not PROMISE to give anyone a second chance.