

Better Be Careful

When you are feeling too strong, better be careful.

Paul said, "Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed, lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12).

And when you think everyone loves and respects you, better be careful.

The Lord said, "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets" (Lk , 6: 26).

When you think you are better than someone else because you are faithfully discharging your duties, better be careful.

The Lord said, "So likewise, when ye have done all those things ... say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do" (Lk , 17:10).

- by Dee Bowman

Once for All

"Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints..." (Jude 3).

The original Greek word *hapax* translated "once for all" means that it is "of perpetual validity not requiring repetition" (Vine, pg. 819). The faith delivered to the saints is of such quality that it is complete ("perfect" James 1:25) and will not tolerate repetition or alteration. This means that any "revelations" since the faith was given "once for all" have not come from God but from the inventive minds of men. It further means that those who claim the revelations and those who believe them are condemned. The warning is clearly given, *"Whoever transgresses (goes ahead) and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son"* (II John 9).

We must recognize and respect the significance of this word translated "once for all."

- by Billy Norris

Sober Minded in Every Sense of the Term

Researchers at the University of California San Diego reviewed 14 years of accident data and found that "A blood alcohol concentration of just 0.01 percent was associated with risky behaviors such as speeding." Lead researcher, David P. Phillips, Ph.D. says, "For a 180 pound person, that translates to one glass of wine or a bottle of beer."

Even some people of the world are beginning to admit that for the person who doesn't want to make bad decisions that lead to "risky behaviors," even one drink is too much. As Christians, we have been taught by God's grace that, *"denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age"* (Titus 1:11-12). We are committed to making decisions that are pleasing to God in all things and we therefore reject anything that clouds thinking or encourages risky behavior.

The world wants us to be wise drivers. After even one drink we are not fit to drive home. Impaired thinking will not get us to an eternal home of glory either. Be wise. *"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise"* (Proverbs 20:1).

- by David Diestelkamp

The Importance of Bible Study

- a. The sacred writings are able to give us the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. 3:15).
- b. The Scriptures make us complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

- c. Faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17).
- d. The gospel is God's power to salvation (Rom. 1:16).
- e. Treasuring God's word in our hearts helps us not sin against Him (Ps. 119:11).
- f. The things written are for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope (Rom. 15:4).
- g. Not knowing the Scriptures results in erroneous thinking (Mt. 22:29).
- h. The word of God's grace is able to build us up and give us an inheritance (Acts 20:32).
- i. The word of God sanctifies us, sets us apart to Him (Jn.17:17).
- j. The truth contained in the Bible makes us free (Jn. 8:32).
- k. The word of God lives and abides forever (1 Pet. 1:22-25).
- l. The words of Jesus will judge us at the last day (Jn. 12:48).

- by Frank Himmel

We Must Succeed!

Winston Churchill said. "There is no use saying we're doing our best. We must succeed at doing what is necessary." His determined philosophy united Great Britain and produced a victory against incredible odds.

We need a huge dose of that kind of positive commitment in the Lord's service. We are in a very real war (Eph. 6:12), and our enemy is far more forceful than the dreaded Nazi army (2 Peter 5:8). We can not be content to say "we're doing the best we can". As Churchill said, we **must** succeed - and we can, with the help of our Lord (Phil. 4:13).

As significant new challenges unfold before us, let us commit ourselves to greater efforts for God. Begin with yourself, as you strive for more purity of life. Study more diligently. Pray more fervently. Work more earnestly. Then let your commitment spread its influence to others around you - to your family, to your brethren, and to those in the world.

There are many battles to be fought. Most of them are the quiet, personal ones of our every day lives. Each of them is urgently important. We **must** succeed!

"We're doing the best we can" is really a "cop out". It never makes things any better. And, even more importantly, it shows a distinct lack of faith in God.

Many new tests await us. How will you answer? Think!

- by Greg Gwin