

ENCOURAGING ESSENTIALS FOR A DYNAMIC MINISTRY

1 Corinthians 15:58; 16:13–14



LET'S BEGIN HERE

No effort we make to achieve something great for God is promised perpetual success. Why? Just as the impressive structures that marked the first-century landscape of the Holy Land have crumbled over time, it's all too easy for the slow, silent slip toward spiritual erosion to cool our love for God and diminish our effectiveness for the kingdom.

Thankfully, the Bible explains several essential ingredients that can give our lives and our ministries significance that outlives us.

In this important message, you will learn not only how to prevent erosion in your life but also how to deepen your intimacy with God in a way that will overflow to others.



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. Essential Element: Steadfast (1 Corinthians 15:58; 16:13)

Steadfastness forms the foundation of a dynamic life and ministry. There's no pizzazz in being steadfast. Nothing spectacular or sensational about being unwavering. Steadfast simply means living with solidity and consistency. Steadfast people remain watchful, keep their commitments, and remain rooted in the eternal truths of Holy Scripture. Dynamic lives and ministries remain on the alert for erosion and refuse to let down their guard.



Quotable

If we let down our guard, what was once a passionate pursuit can become a perfunctory obligation.

— Charles R. Swindoll



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2. Essential Element: Immovable (1 Corinthians 15:58; 16:13)

The original Greek term for “immovable” occurs only once in the entire New Testament (in 1 Corinthians 15:58). It means “being tightly secured, anchored to the essentials of the faith.” An immovable person works tirelessly and diligently to activate his or her faith in each of life’s endeavors. An immovable ministry remains calm in the midst of crisis, not allowing the unexpected to throw it off course. No person or ministry knows what the future holds. Immovability drives us to live with theological, financial, ethical, and moral integrity.

3. Essential Element: Abounding (1 Corinthians 15:58; 16:13)

This essential speaks to our enthusiasm and our commitment to excellence. Paul encouraged the Corinthians to *always* abound in their Christian walks—to always go the extra mile for others, to keep a positive attitude, and to say yes more than no. To remain dynamic, individuals and ministries must purge their minds of unenthusiastic attitudes like adequacy and mediocrity and replace them with friendliness, joy, adaptability, and laughter.

4. Essential Element: Confident (1 Corinthians 15:58; 16:13; Hebrews 6:10)

Hebrews 6:10 reminds us that no task done for the Lord is insignificant. God recognizes and will reward every act, every job, and every thought we undertake that is motivated by our love for Him and others. When we realize that nothing we do for Him is in vain, we will begin to live with confidence, energized to be the very best we can.



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A CLOSER LOOK

The More Excellent Way

In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul elucidated on the “more excellent way” he alluded to in 1 Corinthians 12 when he discussed spiritual gifts. First Corinthians 13 is one of the most-quoted passages of the Bible, and with good reason. Although we might often hear this chapter read at weddings, this beautiful description of love provides good instruction to all believers concerned with God’s priority when it comes to ministry: love. Love moves God to pursue and deliver and forgive. Love sent God’s Son to the world to die and pay the penalty for our sin. Love is the only motivation that counts. When we are with Jesus, we will have no more need for hope, for it will be realized, and no more necessity for faith, because our faith will be sight. But forevermore, there will be love. What is our motivation? Love should be the motivation for ministry. Love never fails.



LET’S LIVE IT

Oh, there’s one more crucial ingredient that underlies and motivates the four essentials above: love! In 1 Corinthians 16:14, Paul reminds us to do *everything* with love. Loving what we do; loving those we do it with; loving the Lord who has given us our gifts! While no ministry and no life is promised perpetual significance or success, whatever we do in love will outlive us and receive God’s commendation.

Meditate on 1 Corinthians 13:1–13. Does love motivate your ministry and energize your work? Do those you live in relationship with know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, how much you love them?



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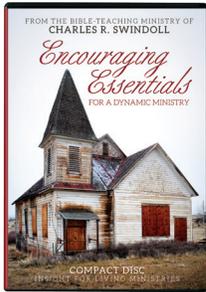
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Tools for Digging Deeper



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