

Resolved to Resist Mission Drift

Matthew 22:36-40, 28:18-20

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For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. (1 Timothy 4:8)

To avoid “mission drift” we must continually refocus on the vision cast for us by the Lord Jesus Himself.

I. We are to love God as fully as we are capable. (Matthew 22:36-38)

- a. God wants not just to be a (big) part of our lives but to be the core from which all our life flows.**

I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ and become one with him. (Philippians 3:7-9a NLT)

- b. This will require aligning our priorities with His.**

“If you love me, keep my commands. (John 14:15)

- c. This should be a joy and a delight not a drudge or a duty.**

I delight to do your will, O my God;
your law is within my heart.” (Psalm 40:8)

Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test? (2 Corinthians 13:5)

II. We are to love others like we love ourselves. (Matthew 22:39-40)

- a. We must strive to open up and get beyond the superficial.**

Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart. (1 Peter 1:22)

- b. We must strive to care for one another through prayer and mutual sacrifice.**

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many. (2 Corinthians 1:8-11)

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. (Galatians 6:2, 10)

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. (1 John 3:16-18)

c. We must strive to forgive one another when we are hurt or disappointed.

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. (Colossians 3:13)

So watch yourselves. "If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying 'I repent,' you must forgive them."

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" (Luke 17:3-5)

Above all keep your love for one another fervent, because love covers a multitude of sins. (1 Peter 4:8 NET)

"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector. (Matthew 18:15-17)

III. We are to both grow as disciples and encourage others as they become disciples.

(Matthew 28:18-20)

a. Spiritual growth requires discipline and diligence.

For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.
(2 Timothy 1:7)

But Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever! Amen.

(2 Peter 3:18)

b. True Spiritual growth requires us to not only increase in knowledge but also in obedience and application.

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do. (James 1:19-25)

c. Spiritual growth happens best and most quickly in the context of caring Christian relationships.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Jesus is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ.

(Colossians 1:28)

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. (James 3:1)

IV. We are to serve one another with the unique gifts God has given to each one of us.

a. God wants us to be a conduit of His grace not just recipients.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

b. God gifts each of us differently in order to fulfill our individual part of His plan.

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)

All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines. Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ...Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many. (1 Corinthians 12:11-12, 14)

c. God's gifts are given for the benefit of others to the glory of God.

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:10-11)

V. We are to prayerfully share the wonderful truth of the Gospel with those whom God has given us relationship.

a. Pray for God to open clear doors of opportunity to share about Christ and His Church.

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. (Colossians 4:2-6)

b. Pray for courage and clarity when those opportunities arise.

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should. (Ephesians 6:18-20)

c. Pray that others in the Lord's Church would do their part in God's plan.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect... (1 Peter 3:15)