

Staying Power: Principles that Prevent Institutional Drifting

2 Timothy 3:1-17 ~ NKJV

Perilous Times and Perilous Men

2 Timothy 3:1 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: 2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, 4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! 6 For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, 7 always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. 8 Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; 9 but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was.

The Man of God and the Word of God

10 But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, 11 persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra— what persecutions I endured. And out of *them* all the Lord delivered me. 12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. 13 But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, 15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Qualities and Principles that Give Staying Power to Institutions, Lest They Drift Away from Their Foundational Ideals

1. Resolve, commitment (Rom. 1:16; Phil. 3:7-14; 2 Tim. 1:8-13)
2. Appreciation of heritage (Deut. 5:12-15; Josh. 4:1-24; Eph. 2:11-13)
3. Formal observances (Ex. 12:1-28; 1 Cor. 11:23-26)
4. informal reviews (Deut. 6:4-25)
5. An understanding of the nature of truth and reality (Psalm 14; 100:3)
6. A belief in absolute truth (Eph. 4:11-16; Heb. 13:8-9)
7. Recognition of the positive effects of the work performed (1 Cor. 3:6-8; 15:58)
8. Refusal to be driven or swayed by emotions (John 8:32; 1 Cor. 13:4-6; Eph. 4:15; *Esse quam videri* — to be rather than to seem)
9. Rejecting a bandwagon mentality (Ex. 32:15-24; 1 Sam. 8:1-9)
10. Ability to discern between what does good and what feels good (Prov. 10:4-5; 14:12; 16:25; Dan. 1; 3; 6; Heb. 11:24-26)

11. Networking of like-minded institutions and individuals (Acts 15:36-16:5; 2 Tim. 4:11; 2 Cor. 8:1-24; Phil. 4:10-20; 1 Thess. 4:13-18)
12. Appreciation for supporters, and not just those who support financially (Ex. 18:1-27; Phil. 4:10-20)
13. A knowledge of and understanding of history (Acts 6:8-8:1)
14. Formal statements of belief (1 Tim. 1:15-17; 3:1; 4:9-11; 2 Tim. 2:11-13; Titus 3:8)
15. Understanding and articulating a few core principles (1 Cor. 15:1-11)
16. The art or ability to be specific and clear regarding what is most important (Acts 15:1-31)
17. Educating others about your cause (Acts 18:24-28)
18. Discipling others in your cause (2 Tim. 2:2)
19. Refusing to give up (Gal. 6:9)
20. Vigilance (Jude 3-4). This includes making sure goals and actions align with core values
21. Heightened vigilance during transition periods, especially periods of transition in leadership (Josh. 1:1-5)
22. A love for the cause for which you give your effort (Rom. 8:1-39; 11:33-36; Phil. 1:19-20).
23. A view for the long haul (Gen. 50:24-26; Ex. 13:19; Heb. 11:13-16,39-40; 12:1-2).
24. Rejecting a shallow understanding of things — embracing an in-depth understanding (a 3-dimensional understanding vs. a 2-dimensional understanding) — In a sermon on godly priorities, Dr. Mark Cortis cites Bible passages that highlight the value of choosing the unseen over the seen, the eternal over the temporary, quality over quantity, and the difficult over the easy. These priorities reflect 3-dimensional thinking and wisdom.
25. A willingness to admit when one is in error (2 Samuel 12:1-13)
26. A willingness to call out error (Gal. 1:6-10; 3:1-4)
27. A willingness to name names (1 Tim. 1:18-20; 2 Tim. 2:15-18; 4:9-10,14-16; 3 John 9-10), as well as a willingness to confront directly (2 Sam. 12:1-9; Matt. 23:1-36; Gal. 2:11-16)
28. Confidence in, or we might say appropriate pride in, the institution and its work (Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Pet. 2:1-12)
29. At the same time, the leadership must see the institution as a means to a greater end, not as an end in and of itself (Matt. 7:24-27; 1 Cor. 3:9-15)
30. Courage (Josh. 1:6-9)
31. Discipline (1 Cor. 9:24-27; 2 Tim. 2:15)
32. Expecting opposition and preparing for it (Eph. 6:10-18; 1 Pet. 5:7-9)