

Balance and Stability

If one's body is off balance, it is unstable. Balance and stability go together. If a physical object is unstable, it is because there is an imbalance somewhere. The same thing is true with regard to the spiritual man, the spiritual house. Christians and churches must develop balance and coordination or else they will be unstable.

For example: (1) Zeal And Knowledge. The Jews of Paul's day represent the classic case of zeal without knowledge (Rom.10:1-3--1 Brethren, my heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved. 2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God). Their zeal was not balanced with knowledge. This fact explains many of their actions which are recorded in the New Testament. Men and institutions whose zeal exceeds their knowledge are headed for difficulty. They tend to be identified as "cultic," "fanatical," or "radical." Their instability is the result of "having a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge."

(2) Knowledge And Judgment. Any person whose knowledge surpasses his wisdom or judgment is unstable and dangerous (James 3:13-17 13 Who is wise and understanding among you? let him show by his good life his works in meekness of wisdom. 14 But if ye have bitter jealousy and faction in your heart, glory not and lie not against the truth. 15 This wisdom is not [a wisdom] that cometh down from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. 16 For where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed. 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy). Perhaps no person in the kingdom of God needs a proper balance of knowledge and judgment more than an elder of the Lord's church. Situations constantly arise which call for the ability to discern, to judge. It is not the lack of learning or of knowledge, but the lack of judgment that may lead to ruin. Beware of the man who has all the "hard and fast" answers to any problem. He is unstable because his knowledge exceeds his judgments and discretion.

(3) Emotion And Truth. Occasionally, our emotions outweigh objective truth. Apparently, this was one of Demetrius' problems in Acts 19:24-35. His emotions and devotion for "the great goddess Diana" quenched his desire to reason. Questions pertaining to marriage and divorce or issues involving one's family provide opportunity for emotion to supersede truth. They must remain in balance or else one will become unstable.

(4) Principles And Applications. There are numerous, notable principles regarding the faith of the gospel. Principles must be preached; they must be incessantly pressed, but principles without application and implementation are "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal." Principles without incorporation produce institutional religion. It is the husk without the kernel. Preachers and churches that only preach principles without explanation and demonstration of them are unstable, off balance. The church at Ephesus was just such a church (Rev. 2:2-5 13 Who is wise and understanding among you? let him show by his good life his works in meekness of wisdom.

14 But if ye have bitter jealousy and faction in your heart, glory not and lie not against the truth. 15 This wisdom is not [a wisdom] that cometh down from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. 16 For where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed. 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy.) Their principles were right and sound, but their application was loveless and dead.

(5) Relative Areas And Tolerance, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers" is indicative of the fact that there was a time when they were not expected to be teachers (Heb.5:12-14 12 For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food. 13 For every one that partaketh of milk is without experience of the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. 14 But solid food is for fullgrown men, [even] those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil). There are areas of relative, flexible consideration. We are to grow in knowledge, temperance and patience (2 Peter 1:5-11 5 Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in [your] virtue knowledge; 6 and in [your] knowledge self-control; and in [your] self-control patience; and in [your] patience godliness; 7 and in [your] godliness brotherly kindness; and in [your] brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he that lacketh these things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins. 10 Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble: 11 for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ). These items are relative and individual in nature. An elder is not to be soon angry. There are degrees of these matters. Some are less soon or apt to be angry than others. Some grow faster in temperance and patience than others do. One who does not recognize this can manifest an intolerant attitude. In so doing, he may destroy a brother and/or a church. Why? Because relative areas are not balanced with forbearance, that is why.

(6) Tolerance And Inflexible Areas. One is either immersed or he is not. A church either worships as God directs or it does not. Some areas are not open for opposing views or for growth. Denominationalism needs this lesson in the worst way. They are out of balance. They tolerate and compromise in areas where God has left no room to bend or flex; therefore, they are unstable and wrong.

Conclusion

Reverse the first three points and think them through for yourself. A lack of balance in these areas is the cause of much strife and contention. "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."

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