



Family Values

Virtue Realities

Steadfastness

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*When you walk down the road
Heavy burden, heavy load
I will rise
And I will walk with you. . . .
Until the sun don't even shine
Walk with you
I'll be there all the time . . .
Walk with you
I'll be there until clouds just fade away
Walk with you
I'll be there every day, every day, every day, every day . . .
I'll be with you all the while
Walk with you
Be right there through the longest mile . . .
Believe me I'll be there and I'll walk with you, yes I will*

The above lyrics from the opening song of *Touched by an Angel* are an example of steadfastness. As the song suggests, someone who is steadfast is consistent and persistent. That person is there for you no matter what. You can count on that person to be by your side through thick and thin. The steadfast person is loyal and shows patient endurance. Such is the response of God's messengers in our midst.

Steadfastness is a characteristic of God and most frequently associated with his unwavering love. The God who establishes a covenant relationship with Israel is *"abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness."* (Ex. 34:6) In a hymn of praise to God, the writer of Psalm 136 repeats the familiar refrain: *"for his steadfast love endures forever."* The response of God's people to this abundant love is echoed in another Psalm in the words, *"my heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast."* God's steadfast love becomes the anchor for a steadfast heart.

In the New Testament, steadfastness is also seen as grounded in hope and leading to hope. Paul admonishes the Romans to mutually

build up one another *"so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scripture we might have hope."* (Rom. 15:4) He adds, *"May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another. . ."* (v.5) The Christian endures because he/she hopes and in order to have hope.

When our faith is tested and we stand firm, the byproduct is steadfastness. James encourages his readers to rejoice when they face trials *"because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance: and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing."* (James 1:3-4) In response to the predator behavior of the devil, Peter insists, *"Resist him, steadfast in your faith,"* assuring the reader that God will *"restore, support, strengthen and establish you."* Paul sums it up when he says, *"Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."* (1 Cor. 15:58)

The following are ways to practice steadfastness:

1. **Pray daily for patient endurance.** Ask to remain fixed on God's purpose in your life.
2. **Welcome tests and trials.** See them as opportunities to demonstrate your steadfastness and to access God's hope.
3. **Rely on God's steadfast love.** Tap into this resource, which endures forever. There is more than enough to go around.
4. **Show steadfast love to your children.** Let God's example become a model and source of strength in your role as a parent.
5. **Reward steadfastness.** Let people know that you appreciate when they are there for you and you can count on them. Be steadfast in return. Build up one another.

Affirmation: *Today I walk with angels.*

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