



THE LORD'S FLOCK GROWTH DIGEST

PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES

“Money Talks – The Horribleness of Stubbornness (Part 2)”

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“Money talks” refer to the temptation of material wealth over God’s work in us. It causes tension on the path of following the Lord as it oppositely directs us. The story of the prophet Balaam (Num. 22-25) helps us understand why we should be firm in our decisions to follow God and never be swayed by different material temptations. God demands that we listen to His word and walk consistently with Him to avoid repeating the mistakes that our biblical ancestors did (Eccl. 1:9).

1. We should be firm in our decision to follow the advice of God. Balak, king of Moab, feared the coming of the Israelites on their land. He was determined to remove this threat by asking Balaam to curse the Israelites. Balaam’s curse will help Balak to defeat and remove them from their land. He sent his noblemen with money to entice Balaam to do his wishes, but God advised Balaam not to accept it. However, the persistence of Balak and the enticement of material things made Balaam shaky in his decision (Num. 22:18). Our Christian life requires us to be firm in God’s word and never compromise whatever situations may come. We should, however, lift all our concerns to God and let Him work His goodness on us.

2. God intervenes for our sake to straighten our walk with Him continuously. We might not see the invisible hand of God stopping our wrong choices, but He sees the outcome of our wrong decisions. To be attuned to His plan we must:

1. *Seek God’s permission.* We must first submit our plans to God. Balaam received God’s response to Balak’s request, that is, no. God revealed to him that He blessed Israel.
2. *Remove yourself from bad company.* Bad company corrupts character (1 Cor. 15:33); we

must, including our families, choose our friends well. Moreover, St. Paul in 2nd Cor. 6:14 says do not be yoked together with unbelievers. Balaam refused initially; however, the repeated invitation along with an offer of wealth and prestige weakened his will.

3. *Do not let Satan enter our doors.* He will take all the opportunities to strain our relationship with God by disobedience and stubbornness. He knows our weaknesses and will entice us every moment especially if we do God’s work. Let us not be overconfident (1 Cor. 10:12). Learn to kick him out of our life (Lk. 10:19-20).
4. *Do not dwell on the temptation offered to us.* God never changes His decisions in our life, but He will respect our decision if we don’t follow Him completely.
5. *God will not stop leading us to the right way.* Balaam’s journey to Moab was blocked by the angel of God. Balaam’s donkey stopped walking upon the presence of the angel, and this was an opportunity for Balaam to go back but he was still stubborn.

Conclusion:

The story of Balaam reflects our life as Christians when making choices that are opposite to God’s plan. It shows how the Lord continues to guide us and protect us despite our stubbornness. Our walk with God would be easy if we choose Him faithfully.

Reflection:

1. What are the things that easily tempt you?
2. How do you plan to resist Satan’s constant temptations?
3. How do you ensure that you keep God’s instruction to you?

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