

Staying Power

Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.
—Hebrews 2:1—

STAY ANCHORED TO “THE FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS” (JUDE 3).

Forty-Six Principles, Arranged in Eight Categories

CULTIVATE AND PROMOTE AN IDENTITY THAT INTERTWINES WITH BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY AND ITS TEACHINGS AND VALUES

1. Understand who you are in light of the commitment you have made to your cause, and whom you serve (Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 5:17).
2. Be confident about who you are and what you're committed to; be unashamed (Rom. 1:16; 2 Tim. 1:8-12).

STRATEGIC AND PHILOSOPHICAL

3. Embrace an objective understanding of the nature of truth and reality (Psalm 14; 100:3). For Christians, this includes a recognition of God as the source of truth, including truth in the moral and ethical realms (Ex. 20:1-17). It further includes a commitment to the Bible as the Word of God without any falsehood or error (2 Tim. 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; 3:14-16), a commitment to the truth of all the teachings of Jesus (Matt. 7:24-27) and a rejection of relativism.
4. Elaborating further on the previous item, a belief in absolute truth (Eph. 4:11-16; Heb. 13:8-9) is essential.
5. Cultivate an 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).
6. Reject a bandwagon mentality (Ex. 32:15-24; 1 Sam. 8:1-9).
7. Embrace a view that takes the long haul into account (Gen. 50:24-26; Ex. 13:19; Heb. 11:13-16, 39-40; 12:1-2).

8. Reject a shallow understanding of things. Embrace an in-depth understanding (a three-dimensional understanding vs. a two-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. See <https://t.ly/AQApc>. These priorities reflect 3-dimensional thinking and wisdom, which God promises to give to all who ask (James 1:5).

RESOLVE: INTENTIONALLY STAYING ON TRACK AND AVOIDING DERAILEMENT

9. Know what you believe (Col. 2:6-8) and why you believe it (1 Pet. 3:15-16).
10. Refuse to be driven or swayed by emotions (Prov. 14:12; 16:25; John 8:32; 1 Cor. 13:4-6; Eph. 4:15; *Esse quam videri* — to be rather than to seem; see <https://t.ly/ZTz3f>).
11. Understand how and why Jesus, who is central to Christianity, is unique (John 5:39-40; also visit <https://t.ly/xWP2E> and <https://t.ly/ocTfq>).
12. Create a formal statement of belief (1 Tim. 1:15-17; 3:1; 4:9-11; 2 Tim. 2:11-13; Titus 3:8).
13. Understand and articulate a few core principles along with a statement of purpose (1 Cor. 15:1-11).
14. Count the cost of following Jesus (Luke 14:25-34).
15. Be skeptical of claims made by popular teachers (1 John 4:1-3).
16. Expect opposition and prepare for it (2 Cor. 10:3-5; Eph. 6:10-18; 1 Pet. 5:7-9).

INSTRUCTIONAL

17. Choose carefully those you allow to teach and guide you, noting carefully their commitment to your cause and the sources they recommend and rely on when they teach (2 Tim. 3:20-17).
18. Educate others about your cause (Acts 18:24-28).
19. Disciple others in your cause (2 Tim. 2:2)
20. Learn the art of being specific and clear regarding what is most important (Acts 15:1-31).

APPRECIATION FOR HISTORY AND HERITAGE

21. Appreciate Christianity's heritage (Deut. 5:12-15; Josh. 4:1-24; Eph. 2:11-13).
22. Participate in formal observances (Ex. 12:1-28; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).
23. Engage in informal reviews (Deut. 6:4-25).
24. Cultivate a knowledge of and understanding of history (Acts 6:8-8:1).
25. Cultivate a sense of humility, an attitude manifested in a realization of the contributions of great leaders of the past; a willingness to say, *We stand on the shoulders of giants and we seek to further their work* (Prov. 4; 2 Tim. 1:3).

CHARACTER QUALITIES

26. Develop a love for the cause to which you give your effort (Rom. 8:1-39; 11:33-36; Phil. 1:19-20).
27. Exercise discipline (1 Cor. 9:24-27; 2 Tim. 2:15).
28. Remember your accountability to God (Luke 2:52; Rom. 14:12; Heb. 4:13).
29. Be intentionally resolute (Phil. 3:7-14; 2 Tim. 1:13).
30. Refuse to give up (Gal. 6:9).
31. Be vigilant (Jude 3-4). This includes making sure goals and actions align with core values.
32. Exercise a heightened sense of vigilance during transition periods, especially periods of transition in leadership (Josh. 1:1-5).
33. Be courageous (Josh. 1:6-9).

34. Be willing to admit mistakes; accept correction (2 Sam. 12:1-13; Gal. 2:11-13).
35. Be willing to call out error (Gal. 1:6-10; 3:1-4).
36. Be willing 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, when and where appropriate (2 Sam. 12:1-9; Matt. 23:1-36; Gal. 2:11-16).

INSTITUTIONAL

37. Recognize the positive effects of the work performed in, by, and through the institution (1 Cor. 3:6-8; 15:58).
38. Have confidence in, or we might say appropriate pride in, the institution and its work (Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Pet. 2:1-12).
39. 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 (1 Cor. 3:9-15)
40. Remember the institution's responsibility to people (Luke 2:52; 2 Cor. 5:16-21).
41. Be mindful of the institution's responsibility to serve with integrity and to serve as many as possible (Luke 2:52; Rom. 12:9-21; Phil. 2:14-16).
42. Be mindful of the institution's responsibility to serve with knowledge, expertise, and wisdom (Luke 2:52; 1 Cor. 10:31-33; Col. 3:23-24).

RELATIONAL / NETWORKING

43. Network with 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).
44. Be accountable to others who share your convictions and vision (Prov. 27:17; Eccl. 4:9-10; Gal. 6:1-2; 1 Thess. 5:11; Heb. 3:13; 10:24-25).
45. Express appreciation for supporters, and not just those who support financially (Ex. 18:1-27; Phil. 4:10-20).
46. Exercise discernment about those with whom one relates (2 Tim. 3:1-9, especially v. 5).