

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord". I know you're used to shouting over that text, but before you dance think a minute. God-ordered steps. Who wants steps? Nobody wants steps. Steps are not beautiful. They're not attractive. Now when they put 'em in your house they try to decorate 'em, put carpet on 'em. Some people even put lights up under 'em. They try to decorate 'em, but nobody wants steps. The only reason we have steps is to get us to a higher level.

If there were a way to get upstairs without going up stairs to get there, we would take it. If we could afford an elevator, we would put one in. But if you don't have the \$60.000-\$70.000 it takes to put an elevator in your house, then guess what? You're going up the steps one at a time. I take them one at a time now. I didn't used to. I used to take two and three at a time. When I was younger I would just step over steps and just take two or three steps at a time. I did that. I ran up the steps talking on the phone. I skipped over the steps. I ignored the steps. They were no problem when I was younger.

No, no, I don't remember knees aching, back hurting, anything. I just went up the steps fast. I ran up on 'em until I tripped on 'em. As long as I had never tripped going up the steps, I ran going up the steps. I skipped over the top of 'em. It was funny to me to see somebody take one step at a time. My legs were long. My back was straight. I could expedite the process and get there quicker. Old people got on my nerves. Took 'em too long to get where they were trying to go. "Excuse me. Step aside. Move to the right, I gotta go". I'd run up the steps, until I fell on the steps, and the steps talk me to respect them.

I bust my lip on a step, and I learned respect for the process. I learned that the race is not given to the swift, nor the war to the strong, but to him that endureth to the end. I learned, as cars shot past me, and jumped in front of me, and pulled around me when I was driving, only to meet me at the red light, I learned God has ordered steps. The thing that I'm thankful for is to know that God orders the steps. It helps me to understand that I am not wandering aimlessly, that I'm not just moving on my own, that there is a course for me to take, and that

I can't graduate till I take it, that there is a path for me to trod, that God isn't making this thing up as he goes.

I thought he was making it up as he went. That's why I prayed, so he could make it up my way. I prayed to abort the process. I prayed to speed it up. I prayed to get out of things that he wanted me to stay into. I prayed that I wouldn't have to endure some things that he wanted me to endure. I was working on the destination, but he was working on me, and sometimes he made me wait. He made me slow down and said, "No, you skipped that step. Go back. Go back and do that again. If you skipped it with Jimmy, I'm gonna send it back with Freddy. If you skipped it with Willie, you're gonna have to go through it with Roger. If you skipped it with Sally, you're gonna go through it with Susie, because all of these are tools that I'm using to work on you. I'm not preparing the blessing for you. I'm preparing you for the blessing".

The blessing is already prepared. Oh, my God. The blessing is already prepared. Eyes have not seen, ears have not not heard, neither has

entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for them that love him. Did you know your blessing is already ready, that it's already in place, that God isn't fixing it up right now? It's already done, that the work doesn't have to be applied to where you're going. The work has to be applied to you so that when you get where you're going you can handle what you gotta handle and... O God, help me preach. The steps, the steps, the steps.

Touch three people and say, "The steps, the steps, the steps". You wanted a good husband, but you wasn't a good wife. You wanted children, but you wasn't a good parent. You wanted a good wife, but you wasn't a good man, and any time you get anything too soon you will trip on the steps, and so God puts us in process and orders steps. He does it by steps. He does everything by steps. He does everything by steps.

Some young pastor had gotten a hold of some of our materials that we disseminate behind the scenes for our conferences, and they said everything is regimented. At 7 o'clock the lights go up. At 7:01 the praise singers sing.

At 7:15 it's in the hand of so-and-so, and they were amazed, because they were used to going to a church that had no steps.

I explained to them when you don't have much to manage you can do it haphazardly. You can just call Sister Agnes out of the crowd and say, "I see Agnes has come in the building. Let's have Agnes come sing a solo". But when you have something massive to run you can't run it in a haphazard way. Your structure has to be different. Your order has to be different. You can't move spontaneously. You have to move a little methodically and mechanically so that you are prepared to handle it.

You can't drive an 18-wheeler like you drive a Volkswagen. You can make a sudden turn in a VW, but if you're driving an 18-wheeler you got to think before you get to the turn and start shifting down and moving into position, so that when you get to the turn you are positioned to make the right turn. And if you weren't gonna do much God could jerk you quickly, but to him whom much is given much is required, and you have to go through the process to get everything lined up. Yes, you can handle it,

but can your children handle it? Yes, you can handle it, but can your spouse handle it? Yes, you can handle it, but do you have the right friends for where you're trying to go?

There has to be some adjustments on the steps before you get to the stage. You can't get to the stage without steps. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord". Even Jesus had steps. They tried to crown him too soon, and he disappeared, because they were trying to make him skip the steps. He said, "No, no, you can't crown me, before you cross me. It is my cross that makes my crown. It is my agony that makes my ecstasy. It is my sickness that makes my healing. It is my poverty that illuminates my prosperity, makes me appreciate where I am".

O God, help me. Makes me appreciate where I am right now. You don't notice good health till you've been sick. You don't even notice it. You don't even understand the words that are coming out of my mouth until you have been sick. You will never thank God for feeling good until you've felt bad. You'll never thank God for your back, for your neck, for your head, for your kidneys, for your liver until you've been

challenged, but after a while you start thanking God for crazy stuff. "Thank you 'cause I can see this morning".

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, the truth of the matter is it's a whole lotta folk in here that are thankful for stuff that they can't testify about, because people wouldn't understand your testimony. I mean dumb stuff like, "Lord, I thank you I can afford to get my hand on". Oh, y'all don't understand. Lemme talk to these people over here. "Lord, I thank you I got the book money to send the kids to school". I know that ain't a big testimony, but when you've been to hell and back you can thank God for little stuff.

I went to my oldest son's graduation. I didn't know I was gonna do it, but when they got the diploma I didn't expect I would do anything like that. When they got the diploma I cried. I tried to hide it. Couldn't help it. It wasn't the diploma that made me cry. It's all the stuff that preceded it. I know it looked kinda weak and silly for a man to cry at a graduation, but after we'd been through hell and high water, the storm, and the rain, I was

just thankful that we made it up another step. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord", and I don't have to be on the stage to be grateful. I can praise him on the step, because every time I make a make a step...

Yeah, why spend so much on a step? Why are you crying about a step? Why are you up all night over a step? Why would you be weeping and worried over one step in the whole topography of your life? You can't judge your life by where you are in this moment. Do you not know that where you are will pass, what you're worried about will pass? Don't you understand that one day you're gonna look back and laugh at the thing that kept you up all night? Don't you understand that it's not nearly as major as you thought it was?

You can live without your house. You can live without your car. You can live without your friend. You can live without your husband. You can live without your wife. Oh, y'all don't wanna talk to me. It's a step, and the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. They left because God ordered it. They helped you because God ordered it. They liked you because God

ordered it. They betrayed you because God...
oh, y'all are not gonna talk to me. Because God
ordered it. You got the job because God ordered
it. You left the job because God ordered it.

It's something he wanted you to learn. Some
things you can only learn in the hog pen. You
can't learn 'em in the palace. Some revelations
you can't get until you've done stupid thing
after stupid thing after stupid thing, and then
you wake up and say, "Wait a minute. I'm better
than that. I'm stronger than that. I'm wiser
than that". But if you hadn't done this before,
you wouldn't have that right now. The steps, of
a good man. I'm not talking about a bad man.
I'm talking about a good man. Don't you sit
there with your good self and say, "Oh, that
won't happen to me 'cause I'm good". No, it's
gonna happen to you because you're good.

The steps of a good man are ordered, ordered by
the Lord. Not offered, ordered. He ordered you
to go up the steps. He wouldn't let you bypass
the process. All those people who offered you
quick deals, the reason the deal went down is
because God ordered you to go up the steps. He
didn't intend for you to go up the elevator. He

knew if you got there too fast you wasn't gonna be ready for it. He slowed down your process. He let the deal go down. It wasn't time yet. When it's time it's gonna happen. When it's time it's gonna come to pass. When it's time you're coming outta trouble. When it's time can't no grave hold your body down. When it's time God is gonna resurrect you. When it's time... oh, y'all don't hear what I'm saying.

So, what I do? What do I do? What do I do in the meantime? In the meantime, while I wait to reach my destination, the only thing I have to worry about is, "Lord, let me stay on track". They met Brother Job one day, and they said, "Job, your children are dead. Your cattle are dead. Your wife has despised you. Your name has gone down". He said, "That's all right. I'm right on track. The Lord knows the way that I take, and when he has tried me I shall come forth as pure gold". I don't know who God wanted me to preach to this morning, but the Lord sent me to tell you you're right on track. Having done all to stand, stand therefore anyway, and whatever happens just say, "Lord, I thank you, you ordered this step. I won't murmur in it. I won't complain in it. I won't

be fearful. I won't be frightened in it. I'm right on track".

High-five somebody and say, "I'm right on track". I'm right where God wants me to be. I'm doing what God wants me to do. I know what God wants me to know. I understand what God wants me to understand. I can't get there before God wants me to get there. When the time is right I will get there. Stay on track. The enemy is trying to seduce you off track, because if he can get you off track you'll lose your blessing. The thing you're worried about right now is nothing but a distraction. If I'm preaching to you give God a praise. Hallelujah. Yeah! Yeah!

So, the battle is to stay on track. I used to wonder, Dion, why did God say put on the whole armor? The helmet of salvation. The breastplate of righteousness. Feet shod with the preparation of the gospel. Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Shield of faith. Why did he have me put on all that stuff and then tell me stand? Why you putting shoes on and then tell me to be still? Why you give me a sword and a shield and tell me to stand? He

said, "It's gonna take all of that stuff for you to stay on track. I gave you all of that equipment for you to just fight the good fight of faith".

The fight is to stay on track. "A thousand may fall on your right side, ten thousand may fall on your left side; but they shall not come nigh thee". "For the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way". And all you gotta do to get outta this is stay on track. Say it. Stay on track. Say it again. Stay on track. Say it again. Stay on track. Give him a praise! I'm starting to get it now. I'm starting to get it now. I didn't get it till I got in my 50s. I didn't begin to catch on till I got in my 50s.

See, it's like the children of Israel going through the Red Sea. Y'all always shout about that, but that text make me nervous, 'cause if the Lord blew back the Red Sea for miles and there were walls of water on both sides, and they was walking through the water. And they were looking at what could happen, and what might happen, and how close they were to

destruction, how, "At any moment all of this could fall apart, and we could all die".

That's what life is like. I don't care how blessed you are. You are also threatened. If you can live with the threat, if you can live every day knowing you might die and know it and still live. You understand what I'm saying to you? If you can know it and still live, if you can know it could fall apart at any moment and keep on walking, if you can walk while they talk about you, if you can walk while they despise you, if you can walk while others faint and fall apart, if you can just stay on track. All the children of Israel had to do to get through the Red Sea was stay on track.

I'm walking by faith, not by sight. If I looked at it I'd give up, if I looked at it I would quit, if I looked at it I would faint, but I'm walking by faith, not by sight. And every step I take I'm getting closer to my destination, closer to my destination, closer to my destination. And when I got about 50 I looked back and said, "Devil, if you was gonna kill me you should have done it a long time ago, cause I'm too close. I'm too close".

He said, "Don't you hear what they say"? I said, "Yeah, I'm used to that now". "Don't you know what could happen"? I said, "Yeah, I already saw that". "Don't you know what might happen"? "Yeah, I know that, too", but I learned that if you keep on walking you can get through anything: depression, fear, grief, pain, agony. I don't know who I'm talking to, but the Lord brought you here this morning for you to get this Word. Right in the middle of your process God said, "Keep it moving, baby. Keep it moving, baby". Who am I preaching to?

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