

"Watch Your Step"

Larry DeLong

Have you ever wondered why cowboys walk with their eyes to the ground much of the time? Walk with them in their work area just one time, and you will discover the reason! Often, if you are a newcomer to this environment, they will give you the warning, "Watch your step." If the warning is not heeded, you might find yourself stepping in the middle of a large pile of rank trouble.

As we walk through life, we must always "watch our step" in whatever we do. There are countless difficulties and hazards lurking in our work areas, recreational sites and even in our own homes, and Satan is just hoping for us to step right in the middle of a pile of trouble. Rules, regulations, and laws are designed to help us watch our step and stay safe. Traffic laws keep the roadways safe and ensure that traffic flows smoothly. Schools make rules to create an environment in which large numbers of children can learn effectively. Employers make policies in the workplace to efficiently produce a specific product or service. Parents make rules to keep peace, harmony, and respect alive in their homes. Sports officials enforce regulations to see that the games are fair and enjoyable for both teams. Anytime someone walks out of step in these areas, dire consequences can, and often do, occur.

To most people, watching our step in these areas is just plain common sense. However, many of us fail to see that we must watch our step when it comes to our walk in Christ. Too often, we fail to understand that there are rules and regulations we must follow in religion. These rules are designed to help us "walk in the steps of the Savior." Warning after warning has been given to those who seek God, that they must be watchful. Jesus told his disciples to "*watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh,*" Matthew 25:13. In other words, because it would come without warning, we must watch our step, so we don't find ourselves at variance with God when that time comes. Paul warned the Ephesian elders to "*Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers,*" that they watch for false teachers and for those who seek to destroy the flock by their false doctrines, Acts 20:28ff. Elders are to watch for the souls of those who comprise the flock, Hebrews 13:17. To the church at Corinth, Paul said, "*Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong,*" 1 Corinthians 16:13. The church is to be vigilant; to stand tall, always strong, and true to the faith. Paul warned the young evangelist, Timothy, "*But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry,*" 2 Timothy 4:5. Even evangelists must watch and be careful. Countless faithful congregations have been lost to liberalism because the preacher left the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints, Jude 3.

As Christians we must always "watch our step" so we don't find ourselves stepping in the middle of something that will make us rank before God. My desire and prayer is that each of us will "walk in the steps of the Savior" so we can dwell forever in those "mansions over the hilltop."