

My son has been a pastor now for seven years. He has two little churches with which he started. One of those churches seems to make great progress, and the other one lags and did not seem to go anywhere. The people did not come out the way he wanted. Some of them became quite angry at some things that happened in the church.

The other church seemed to be quite satisfactory, and it was moving along quite nicely but with this one he was really discouraged. When they would need some repairs, the other church would give readily, but in this church the money lagged behind. Seven years have passed. The church that when he went there had an average attendance of 35 last month they had an average of 102. Things are going wonderfully in this church. Many new souls have come to Christ. Great progress has been made. But in the other church things are dragging. Money is behind. New people are coming but not the way he had expected.

He finds as he goes on God gives him great successes, great victories in different spheres, and he gets success in this sphere and this one lags, and then when he brings this one up this lags. There's discouragement. There's difficulty/ there's uncertainty, as you go forward.

The number of seminary graduates, believing in Christ, sound men desiring to serve the Lord who go into the pastorate and then after a few years get discouraged and drop out and go into secular work is not small by any means. Do you have that determination to go forward to serve Christ, or will you be looking back? Discouragement. Love of ease. You see other people who have advantages you don't have. You see other people getting ahead in ways you know you might have if you had gone into that other work. Someone comes along with a very nice offer if you will go into some other line of activity instead of the pastoral work, the attempt to reach people for Christ and to help them to grow in grace and lead them.

The temptation is one that will assail you. It will assail you in seminary; it will assail you when you finish. It will assail you when you start. All through your life at time after time. You have put your hand to the plow but will you continue? Do you have the strength? Well, you don't. But God has and He will make it available for you if you look to him.

There's another quotation I would like to quote from a ch. a little further along in Coulson's book. This is quoted from a man I never heard of before--David Ogsberg. He says, When James Calvert ~~was~~ went out as a missionary to the canibals of the Peachy(?) Islands, the captain of the ship sought to turn him back. "You will loose your life, and the lives of those with you if you go among such savages," he cried. Calvert only replied, "We died before we came here." Have you died to the things of this world? Or are you trying to plow ahead for Christ and looking back, looking back and thinking of the attractiveness of other areas, other possibilities, other lines of development?