

Doctrine of balance 4 supplement

Psalm 37:23-24 (NASB95)

“The steps of a man are established by the LORD, And He delights in his way. When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong, Because the LORD is the One who holds his hand.”

This passage fits beautifully into our study on the Doctrine of Balance because it addresses one of the greatest challenges believers face: maintaining spiritual equilibrium when life includes setbacks, failures, disappointments, and seasons of uncertainty.

One of the reasons these verses have always been special to me is because they were verses I posted during what I call my twenty-year desert experience.

Looking back now, I realize that even when I could not see God’s hand, He was still holding mine. Even when I stumbled, I was not abandoned. Even when I felt lost, my steps were still being directed by His grace.

That is balance.

Balance is not the absence of struggle.

Balance is learning to trust God’s faithfulness in the midst of struggle.

Contextual Analysis

Psalm 37 is a Psalm of David written to address a problem that every generation faces:

Why do the wicked appear to prosper while the righteous suffer?

The Psalm repeatedly warns believers not to become emotionally destabilized by appearances.

Notice the repeated commands throughout the chapter:

Do not fret (vv. 1, 7, 8)

Trust in the Lord (v. 3)

Delight yourself in the Lord (v. 4)

Commit your way to the Lord (v. 5)

Rest in the Lord (v. 7)

David is teaching believers how to remain spiritually balanced when circumstances tempt them toward anxiety, envy, bitterness, or discouragement.

This fits perfectly with our Doctrine of Balance series.

Many believers become spiritually unstable because they judge life by what they see instead of by what God has promised.

David says that stability comes from trusting the Lord's direction even when the path seems unclear.

Psalm 37:23-24 serves as one of the great promises of the chapter because it reminds us that God's guidance does not cease when we stumble.

Exegetical Analysis

“The steps of a man are established by the LORD”

The Hebrew word translated “established” carries the idea of being made firm, secured, or directed.

David is not teaching fatalism.

He is not saying believers are robots.

Rather, he is teaching divine providence.

God actively works within His plan to direct the lives of those who belong to Him.

This reminds us of:

Romans 8:28

“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good...”

Notice the similarity.

David says the Lord establishes the steps.

Paul says God causes all things to work together for good.

Neither passage teaches that everything is good.

Both passages teach that God is working through everything.

That is a tremendous source of balance.

“And He delights in his way”

The Hebrew verb means to take pleasure in or find satisfaction in.

Think about that.

The God of the universe delights in the progress of His children.

Not because we are perfect.

Not because we never fail.

But because we belong to Him.

Many believers wrongly assume that God is constantly frustrated with them.

The Psalm teaches the opposite.

God delights in seeing His children move forward in His plan.

This is very similar to a father teaching a child to walk.

The father celebrates progress, not perfection.

The Most Powerful Phrase

“When he falls”

Notice what David does not say.

He does not say:

“If he falls.”

He says:

“When he falls.”

That single word destroys the myth of spiritual perfectionism.

David assumes believers will stumble.

They will fail.

They will make mistakes.

They will have moments of weakness.

The Christian life is not a straight line upward.

It is a growth process.

This principle appears throughout Scripture.

Abraham stumbled.

Moses stumbled.

David stumbled.

Peter stumbled.

Yet God continued His work in their lives.

Balance means understanding that failure does not equal defeat.

A stumble is not the same thing as abandoning the plan of God.

“He Will Not Be Hurlled Headlong”

This phrase is fascinating.

The Hebrew language describes complete destruction or total collapse.

David is saying the believer may stumble, but he will not be utterly destroyed.

Why?

Because God’s grace intervenes.

This does not mean there are no consequences for bad decisions.

It means God never abandons His children.

This fits beautifully with eternal security.

The believer may fall.

The believer may fail.

The believer may experience discipline.

But the believer cannot be cast away by God.

Jesus said:

John 10:27-28 (NASB)

My sheep listen to My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give them eternal life, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.

The believer may stumble.

But he is not forsaken.

“Because the LORD Is the One Who Holds His Hand”

This is the heart of the passage.

Notice who is doing the holding.

The believer is not holding onto God.

God is holding onto the believer.

That distinction is everything.

Many believers live as though their security depends upon the strength of their grip on God.

David teaches the opposite.

Our security rests in God’s grip on us.

The imagery is beautiful.

Imagine a father walking with a small child.

The child may stumble.

The child may lose balance.

The child may trip.

But the child does not crash to the ground because the father is holding his hand.

That is exactly what David is describing.

Application to the Doctrine of Balance

One of the greatest causes of spiritual imbalance is the false expectation that mature believers never struggle.

When we adopt that expectation, every failure becomes a crisis.

Every setback becomes a catastrophe.

Every disappointment becomes a reason to quit.

David destroys that thinking.

Balance understands:

God directs our steps.

God delights in our growth.

God expects imperfections during the process.

God sustains us when we stumble.

God never lets go.

The balanced believer does not panic when he falls.

He rebounds.

He learns.

He continues moving forward.

The balanced believer understands that God's faithfulness is greater than his failures.

Doctrine of Balance Principle

Spiritual maturity is not demonstrated by never stumbling.

Spiritual maturity is demonstrated by continuing to walk because you know the Lord is still holding your hand.

That truth was evident in my life many years when I could not see what God was doing.

Looking back now, I understand something I could not fully appreciate then:

The greatest evidence of God's faithfulness was not that I never fell.

The greatest evidence of God's faithfulness was that every time I fell, He was still there holding my hand.

And He is holding yours as well