**Faith and Small Steps**

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*You enlarge my steps under me, and my feet have not slipped. Psalm 18:36 NASB.*

Have you ever done any baking? Following the steps in a recipe, if you have some experience, usually isn’t too difficult. My friend sent me a “sweet bread” mix. I put it in my cupboard and it got lost with the other things for a while. As I cleaned the cupboard one day, I found it. It seemed like a good day to make it, but as I scanned the ingredients I noticed it needed 12 oz. of ginger ale. Not something I normally keep on hand. So a few weeks went by, and I remembered to pick some up.

Yesterday, I decided to make it. I got out the package and the ginger ale, thinking I was ready to go. However, as I took the label off, I found more steps to follow. First thing it said was to keep the package in the refrigerator or freezer till ready to use. Oops, already messed that one up.

As I read through the rest of the ingredients, I noticed it needed 1/4 cup melted butter. Normally a baker pre-heats the oven, so I turned it on, greasing the loaf pan, and we were ready to go. But as I poured the dry ingredients in the bowl, I found a strange foil packet. Re-reading the steps, I discovered that the packet needed to be incorporated into the rest of the dry ingredients before any liquid was added. So I opened the packet and did some stirring.

In my mind, I assumed the ginger ale and the butter would be mixed together. But as I carefully went over the steps, I was wrong. Only the ginger ale was to be mixed in. The butter was to be poured over the batter after it went into the pan. I started to put the pan directly in the oven—when I re-read the steps and discovered the pan needed to sit on the counter for 15 minutes before it went into the oven. So if I had not read the instructions, I would have messed up these simple steps. This meant my oven was pre-heating much longer than necessary.

The recipe stated we were to cook the loaf 40 to 50 minutes. Knowing my oven, I set the timer for 40 minutes, which I think over baked it. Trying it this morning, it is tough and eatable, but not super enjoyable. I am glad I followed the steps, or it might not even have been palatable!

When we walk with the Lord, the scriptures say He orders our steps. Sometimes, we make assumptions about the way He wants us to go and we mess up. We take steps out of order or add things that aren’t helpful. I know some people who are trying to follow the Lord as well as astrology! Not a good mix.

*The Lord directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives. Though they stumble, they will never fall, for the Lord holds them by the hand.* *Psalm 37:23-24 NLT.*This scripture tells us he directs the steps of the godly. The godly are those who want to do things His way, surrendering to Him as Lord. We must not assume we know exactly the way He wants to take us. Rushing ahead of Him, could get us in trouble! Waiting when He says move, also a bad idea. The perfect plan is to take the time to ask, seek and follow. My granddaughter is trying to navigate which college she should attend next year. It is not an easy decision. Her parents are very supportive, but know that she needs to make this choice. Our job as her family is to pray for her. To release our faith with hers, and trust she will follow the Lord’s direction and know His plan for her future. I know several college-age students that are in the same situation. It is not an easy choice for many. If you know of any young people who are in this valley of decision, please pray for them.

As I followed the unusual recipe steps, the bread smelled great in the oven. They have taught me you don’t over stir sweet breads, but in my zeal, I think I did. It’s tough and chewy. Only my pride is hurt. As we follow the steps of the Lord, more is at stake. However, He promises us that even though we may stumble, we won’t fall. He holds us by His hand. What a wonderful promise. I know my granddaughter will learn many lessons during this season of her life. It is my prayer that she will learn to trust Him and His leading…a good lesson for us all. It’s the small steps that take us to our future. If we lean on Him, we will get there!

*Father, I thank You for Your promise to lead and guide us in all our ways. I thank You for helping every young person who loves you be led forth in Your peace. I know that where you lead, you will provide. Thank you for leading and guiding us in our small steps, and in our large. In Jesus’ Name, amen.*