



THE TWIZZLE LADDER FACTOR

A long time ago when funfairs were popular, I found myself at a competition booth called ‘The Twizzle Ladder’, otherwise known as the rope ladder challenge. The aim was to climb all nine rungs, angled at 45 degrees, ring the bell at the top, and claim the £10 prize. In place of fixed ends, the ladder suspends over pivoting pulleys. I have no idea how to explain what ‘pivoting pulleys’ do, but let’s just say they create the challenge and provide the fun. Make a false move as you climb, and you’ll find yourself spun upside down and thrown off the ladder – just for the price of a pound. “No, not for me, thank you very much,” and repeatedly declined the coaxing of the stallholder to try. His persistence made me wonder if the game is rigged, and because I loathe people being ripped off, I decided to stay around and watch.

Confident Barry was first on, big, both in size and personality. “No problem, any fool can do this” he exclaimed. Looking carefully at where he put his foot on each rung, up he went. Rung one, two, three, “Argh!” Onto the safety mattress, he fell with a thud. Not only was his pride bruised.

Next up was a tourist from Japan. He looked as though he’d conquer the task with technical savvy. Standing at the foot of the ladder, putting both hands on each side in a deliberately calculated position, he gripped the rope as tight as he could, closed his eyes, paused for a moment (praying perhaps?), and then was off. At each rung, he carefully watched where to place his hands to grip at the perfect point, rung one, two, three, four, five, and just as he was beginning to look good, “*Tiek rādīti rezultāti vaicājumam!*” (Japanese onomatopoeia for Argh! – trust me I checked 😊). You know the proverb, “the higher you go, the greater you fall?” I need say no more.

By this time, the crowd was getting a little restless and vocal, Barry’s friends in particular. “It’s a con, can’t be done, we want our money back!” The store-holder calmly assured them it was possible. “Don’t believe you, we’re not stupid you know, we can see this is a rip off,” they replied.

“I’ll tell you what,” said the store-holder, “I will get my daughter to show you it can be done.” Then suddenly, as if out of nowhere, his young pre-teenage daughter appeared at the foot of the ladder. Up she soared, rung one, two, three, four... eight nine and ten, ringing the bell vigorously to great cheers. How quickly the mood of a crowd can change, I thought. The stallholder couldn’t help but look smug. Barry couldn’t believe what he’d just seen, and the Japanese fellow, totally dazed, walked away with notebook in hand, scribbling a maths equation.

My mind was in a spin. The stallholder clearly on to a good thing here, raking in pound after pound, without having to reward the prize. But how did the daughter do it? Ok, so she’d practised the routine hundreds of times, but that still doesn’t explain the secret. Then it clicked, Barry and the tourist were ‘eyes down’. The daughter, from the foot of the ladder to the top, where were her eyes? Fixed, totally focussed, on the bell!

*“Let - us – keep – our – eyes - fixed - on - Jesus, on whom our faith depends from beginning to end.”
(Hebrews 12:2 GNT).*

This week's Sabbath School Bible study examines the depth and breadth of stewardship, which at its heart, is Jesus.

- **'Motives of the Heart' 3-minute video** with John Matthews, this week using an old wagon wheel, the axle illustrating how central and critical Jesus Christ is to stewardship



LESSON 10. THE ROLE OF STEWARDSHIP BY JOHN MATHEWS

WATCH VIDEO

DOWNLOAD HD VIDEO

<https://stewardship.adventist.org/online-videos?channel=1326917&video=247368313>

- **Lesson Notes (attached)**

Created for those who want to dig deeper into the Word. Authored by Shevanthi Bastiam Pillai. Class teacher or group leader? Don't miss these studies for providing both breadth and depth. With the aim of each lesson to be life-changing, from this week's notes, the concluding appeal.

"Are we faithful stewards of the mysteries of God in the end-time? Do our lives vindicate God's righteousness and justice in the Judgement? Are we daily allowing ourselves to be channels through which Christ and His glory, are revealed to the world? Do we long to see Jesus face to face because He has become dearer to us than anyone on earth?"

- **5 Q's for Life Change (attached)**

This week a paragraph from the Great Controversy to give stewardship an essential context. Could be seen as good news or bad news. Take a look and decide for yourself. The main study focus is on *Hebrews 4:14-16*. For the authentic Christ follower, what words could be more encouraging to help us on our way?

"Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Thanks Paul! Have one of the best studies together ever:

Ancient words ever true
Changing me, and changing you.
We have come with open hearts
Oh, let the ancient words impart.

Cheers and best wishes for Sabbath,

David

Faithful stewardship – more than a merely optional Christian grace.