

Finishing Well

As racers we realize that how we finish has a huge impact on our team. A first place finish may mean a continued or even an expanded relationship with sponsors or help open doors to new ones. A good finish may mean thousands of dollars in our pocket to replenish the racing funds that have run low. If we are chasing points for a championship, a good finish may change our team's momentum and let us have a run of additional good finishes that bring us back into championship contention.

At a Men's Retreat the men from our church attended the speaker talked about the importance of staying the course before we move on: Finishing well. He explained that in a job situation we may need to stay on the job even when we are discouraged and want to quit. We may want to whine about our new boss or other circumstances but God really wants us to finish well.

A few years ago God opened a door for me to attend some night classes and change careers into the computer industry. I was so overwhelmed by all the new information I wanted to quit and drop out after just a few weeks of classes. Throughout the 16 month college degree program there were more several times I was ready to quit. It seemed like the information was coming so quickly I was literally, "Drinking water from a fire hose". Fortunately, one of my instructors kept after me to just stay the course and see things through and soon the light bulb went on for me. That was over ten years ago and I work with computers in the aerospace industry.

One of my friends married at an early age. Like many who marry young their marriage had a very rocky first few years but they stuck together. They received some well-meaning advice from others that suggested that they take the easy way out and break up, but they just hung in there. Later on they began to help care for foster children, many of whom they later adopted into their family. By finishing well they had become a blessing to many other lives.

In Jesus himself we see the example of someone who knew how to finish well. As he neared the time of His death he agonized over if the task could be taken from him but He determined that not His will but God's will be done. (Luke 22:39-44). He went to the cross for each of us that our relationship with His Father would be possible.

Obviously, our spiritual life is another area where we want to finish well. It would be easy to be dissatisfied with God or ourselves that we aren't growing fast enough or that the same sins seem to hold us back but our Heavenly Father loves us and wants us to finish well. Paul put it so well in Acts 20:24:

"However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me--the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace."

Our primary task is to just point others to Jesus and His graciousness to us. He will take it from there. Now obviously we have to live lives that show through His love and what he has done for us but beyond that perhaps, try to make it too complicated. Jesus said in John 12:32 that If we lift him up He will draw other to himself so that is all we need to be about.

A co-worker once told me he had come up with a simple two point mission statement for his life. He shared that his goal was #1 to go to Heaven and #2 to take as many others with him as possible. Now that is a mission statement of how we can truly Finish Well.

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