

IGNITE INSTITUTE | HOW TO GROW

CLASS 11: PERSEVERANCE

*And let us not grow weary of doing good,
for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.*

Galatians 6:9

COMMON OBSTACLES

1. Sins and Weights

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1-2)

For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. (Galatians 5:17)

→ Know your sins. Know your weights.

- “Two things bring about sin: the flesh and the enemy. These things are always at war with the spirit.”⁴⁷ (Donald Whitney)
- “Weights are not sin. The question to ask yourself is not always, “Is this good or bad?” Instead, ask yourself, “Does this help me run?”⁴⁸ (John Piper)

2. Laziness

The sluggard says, “There is a lion in the road! There is a lion in the streets! As a door turns on its hinges, so does a sluggard on his bed. The sluggard buries his hand in the dish; it wears him out to bring it back to his mouth. The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who can answer sensibly. (Proverbs 26:13-16)

→ Laziness is self-destructive.

- “In laziness, we rationalize and believe our own excuses.”⁴⁹ (John Piper)

3. Performance-Based Approach

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. (Galatians 5:1)

→ Litmus test: is your joy and assurance dependent upon how well you are practicing the disciplines or on the finished work of Jesus?⁵⁰ (Capitol Hill Baptist)

⁴⁷ Whitney, Donald S. (2014). *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*. (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress), 298-299.

⁴⁸ Piper, John (1997, Aug. 17). *Running with the Witness*, Retrieved from <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/running-with-the-witnesses>.

⁴⁹ Piper, John (2018, Oct. 20). *Are you Enslaved to Laziness?* Retrieved from <https://www.desiringgod.org/labs/are-you-enslaved-to-laziness>.

⁵⁰ Capitol Hill Baptist. “Class 13: Perseverance.” *Core Seminars | Capitol Hill Baptist*, <http://www.capitolhillbaptist.org/sermon/class-13-perseverance/>.

- Indicatives lead us to imperatives
- Why are we prone to looking at the disciplines with a performance-based approach?

4. Circumstances

Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. (Matthew 13:5-7)

→ The enemy can steal a seed with trials and prosperity.

A STRATEGY FOR ENDURANCE

1. Keep Your Eyes on Jesus

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **looking to Jesus**, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1-2)*

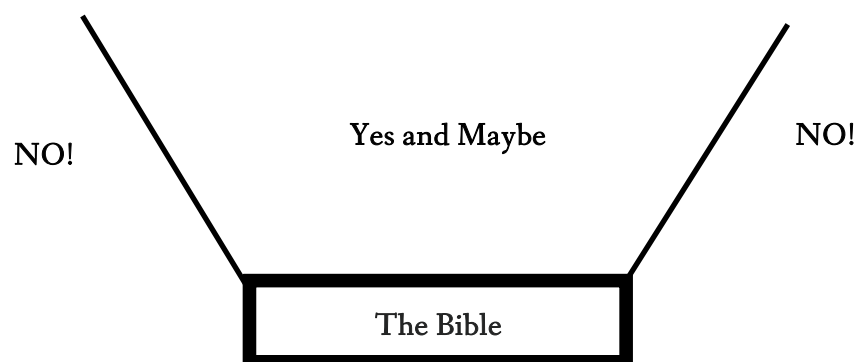
For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. (Titus 2:11-14)

→ It's all by grace.

- Grace justifies and sanctifies
- “Jesus is our rock; keep your eyes on what is sure. *Find the floor.*”⁵¹ (John Piper)

2. Strip Down the Sins and Weights

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1-2)



⁵¹ Piper, John (1988, April 17). *The Doctrine of Perseverance.*, Retrieved from <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/the-doctrine-of-perseverance>.

3. Stay Disciplined

“I’ve come to the conclusion that, with rare exceptions; the godly person is a busy person. The godly person is devoted to God and to people, and that leads to a full life.”⁵² (Donald Whitney)

→ Discipline requires practice, planning, and consistency.

- *However*, disciplines are also one of the ways the Lord helps sustain us and provides rest in the midst of our busy-ness.

4. Circumstances

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

(James 1:2-4)

→ When God is testing our faith, he is preserving our faith.

- “Faith atrophies when it goes unexercised.”⁵³ (David Mathis)

5. Remember the Role of the Holy Spirit

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. (John 16:7)

→ “We cannot make ourselves more like Jesus, only the spirit does that.”⁵⁴ (Donald Whitney)

- Hunger for holiness comes from the Holy Spirit
- The Holy Spirit *will* keep you persevering to the end, so do not harden your heart to his call

CONCLUSION

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1)

→ “Bring the gospel into every single area of your life, relentlessly.”⁵⁵ (Jared Wilson)

⁵² Whitney, Donald S. (2014). *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*. (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress), 288.

⁵³ Mathis, David (2017, Feb. 23). *The Priceless Gift in Every Trial*., Retrieved from <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-priceless-gift-in-every-trial>.

⁵⁴ Whitney, Donald S. (2014). *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*. (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress), 290.

⁵⁵ Wilson, Jared C. (2017). *The Imperfect Disciple: Grace for People Who Can't Get Their Act Together*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books), 26-27