



SUNDAY MORNING

AT BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

Title: How to Finish Well

Passage: Hebrews 12:1-3

Speaker: Pastor Dan Preston

Introduction: Many believers begin the Christian life with excitement but eventually face discouragement, hardship, and opposition that tempt them to give up. The believers who first received Hebrews faced those same struggles. After pointing us to the examples of faith in Hebrews 11, the writer challenges us with an important question: not how we start the race, but how we finish it. Hebrews 12 reminds us that the Christian life requires endurance and teaches us how to finish well.

I. Run Free (Verse 1)

You cannot run well while carrying unnecessary weight.

We often combine weight and sin into one thought, but the Holy Spirit doesn't.

Sin has a way of promising freedom while producing bondage. It convinces us we're in control until we discover we're the ones being controlled.

If we're going to finish well, there are sins that simply have to be confessed, forsaken, and left behind.

Sometimes the greatest threat to your spiritual life isn't something evil. It's something heavy.



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Weights are not necessarily sinful by themselves. They simply become so heavy that they're keeping you from running the race God has called you to run.

God never intended for you to carry what He has asked you to cast on Him.

One of the greatest acts of faith is simply laying your burden down and saying, "Lord, I cannot carry this anymore. I'm giving it to You."

II. Run Focused (Verse 2)

You cannot successfully lay aside the weights of life if your eyes remain fixed on those weights.

One of the greatest struggles facing Christians today is that we are constantly looking in the wrong direction. It seems we're always looking somewhere except the one place God tells us to look.

The circumstances around us often remain the same, but when our attention shifts away from Christ, discouragement quickly fills the place where confidence once lived.

The One who called you into the race has promised to sustain you through the race and welcome you at the finish line.

Our confidence is not found in the strength of our grip on Christ. It is found in the strength of His grip on us.

God never asks us to ignore our pain. He never tells us to pretend the race is easy. He simply reminds us that today's suffering is not the end of the story.

The more we stare at the burdens of life, the heavier they become. The more we fix our eyes on Jesus, the smaller those burdens begin to appear in light of His greatness.



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You become like whatever holds your attention the longest. If your eyes are continually fixed on Christ, day after day, trial after trial, victory after victory, He will gradually shape you into His image.

III. Run Encouraged (Verses 2b-3)

When we begin to think our trial is too great, he lovingly redirects our eyes to the One who carried the greatest burden of all.

Discouragement has a way of shrinking our perspective until all we can see is our own struggle.

"But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." (Isaiah 40:31)

The answer to weariness is found in looking beyond ourselves to a greater Savior.

The more you consider Christ, the more strength you'll find to keep following Christ.

The One waiting for you at the finish line is the very One who promised never to leave you while you're running the race.

Conclusion: The Christian race is not always easy, but God has promised that we will never run it alone. One day faith will become sight and we will see our Savior face to face. Until then, let us run with endurance and keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, trusting Him to give us the grace to finish well. If you have never trusted Christ as Savior, today can be the day your race begins.



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