

HOW TO STAY THE COURSE

Hebrews 12:1-2, *“Wherefore, since we are surrounded with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which does so easily embarrass us, and let us pursue with constancy the course that is proposed to us: having Jesus in our view, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God.”*

These are difficult times in which we live! Times that make us want to give up on our dreams; give up on looking for a job; give up on finding the right mate; give up on trying to live healthy; give up on buying a home; give up on improving our lives. But I want to encourage you today, do not give up. Stay the course! The game is not over, until God says it is over. A good coach encourages his team to never quit trying, never quit playing. You do not know what will happen to your opponent. A lot of Games have been won in the last minute. Your victory is just around the next corner. Your deliverance may come with the sunrise. Your answer may come with the next prayer! Your healing might be in your next praise. Winners never quit - quitters never win! Stay in the Game and do not give up!

God is calling you to be a champion!

God has picked you to be a winner!

God has named you for his winning team!

God has already proclaimed you Victorious through Jesus Christ; who is the author and finisher of our Faith. If God says you are a winner, who can convince you that you are defeated? If God says you are the chosen one, who can make you a loser?

1 Corinthians 15:57 says, ***“But thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*** If God has already given us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, then why in the world would you ever even consider giving up? Stay the course! Run to the finish line!

Sometimes the game looks as if you are so far behind, you cannot possibly win. But fear not....

You are part of a comeback team!
You are part of a comeback people!
You are part of a comeback church!

When it looks like things are hopeless, watch out, it's time for a comeback. When the enemy seems to be getting ahead of you, watch out, God is getting you ready for a comeback. The writer of book of Hebrews, lists a whole group of comeback saints, in what we have come to know as the hall of faith. He seems to be saying, you belong to a long line of people who have comeback from being under-dogs. They came back from some unbelievable odds, some helpless and in the midst of hopeless situations, but because of faith, because they did not give up, because they stayed the course, they came back and were victorious.

With God on your side anything is possible. With faith in God, you can win every time. Your dreams can come true. You can overcome against impossible odds.1 John 5:4 says, ***“For whatsoever is born of God overcomes the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.”***

If you are a Born again believer, your faith in God has given you victory over the world. Faith empowers you to become a comeback kid! Able had faith and was commended by God because he offered a more excellent sacrifice Cain. Enoch did not see death because he had faith to stay the course. Noah had faith, believed God, and stayed in the Ark building business, even when folk thought he was crazy! People will tell you it is crazy to dream big in hard times, but stay the course!

Abraham had faith in God, and came back from old age to become the father of many nations. When he thought about giving up on himself, when he thought it was all over, God remembered him, and he became the comeback father of faith! It might feel like you are too old to compete, but stay the course. Isaac was Abraham's only son, and was about to be offered up as a sacrifice, but God stepped in and showed him a ram in the bush. He came back from being tied up on an altar with a knife at his throat, to being one of the blessed fathers of faith. It might look like you are about to get your throat cut, but stay the course. Don't give up! Remember Rahab the prostitute on the wall of Jericho? God was able to use a prostitute to save her whole family. She came back from being a street walker, to be a faith talker. Stay the course - don't give up!

Look at all the heroes of faith. Through it all they stayed the course and kept the faith. They did not let sin stop them. They did not let the past hinder them. They did not let the enemy deny them. They kept on running! They saw Jesus, and endured the race, knowing the crown that awaits them. They were able to look to Jesus, He is the author and the finisher of our faith. When you keep your eyes on Jesus, you can keep on running, and you can endure hardships. You can make it through the storms and the rains. Keep your eyes on the prize.

The writer of Hebrews says, there is a great cloud of witnesses cheering us on. Can you hear them saying, "Run on, do not give up!" Run on, and see what the end will be. Run on, through streams of doubt. Run on, through valleys of despair. Run on, over the mountains of fear. Run until peace flows like a river. Run until Jesus greets you with your prize. You are a winner!

Listen to the cheers; listen to the call. You can make it! Your mother is cheering you on; your father is cheering you on; your husband is cheering you on; your wife is cheering you on; your friends are cheering you on; your daughter or son is cheering you on. So don't quit! You can make it if you keep trying. Stay the course! Jesus is waiting for you at the finishing line.