

Add Perseverance

Marathon runners “hit the wall” when they run out of energy and fail to make it to the finish line. This can also happen to Christians as we run the spiritual race. We can collapse and fall short of accomplishing the goal.

We need endurance if we are going to run effectively and finish the journey. Peter uses the word “perseverance” (2 Peter 1:6). Disciples who possess perseverance will never quit and drop out of the race. They will be patient and steadfast. No matter what obstacles that come their way, they will keep going.

Why do we need perseverance?

- Being a Christian isn't always easy.
 - We face persecution from the world. The world mocks and ridicules us for our faith in Christ.
 - We experience pain. We experience pain in our bodies and pain from other people.
 - We face temptations.
 - We must continually battle our fierce spiritual enemy (1 Peter 5:8).
 - Paul faced many difficulties in his spiritual journey (2 Corinthians 11:23-29).
- We will get discouraged. Many things can discourage us.
 - Seeing Christians leave Jesus.
 - Falling back into some sin.
 - Seeing our society widely accept sinful practices.
 - Struggling to reach the people we love with the gospel.
- The journey is long.
 - Some people run with Christ for decades. Along the way, they experience both high and low moments.
 - These saints can also “hit the wall” and fail to make it to the finish line.

How do we develop perseverance?

- Suffering – the process can refine and spiritually stretch us (James 1:1-4). Suffering allows us to turn to God and push ourselves to continue trusting Him.
- Being inspired by those who have finished – the list provided in Hebrews 11 encourages us to run with endurance. If they could finish the race, we can as well (Hebrews 12:1).
- Leaving behind what weighs us down – we can't continue in sin (Hebrews 12:1). Sin will tangle and trip us up!
- Focusing on Jesus – Jesus endured the trials before Him (Hebrews 12:2). He promises never to forsake or abandon us (Hebrews 13:5). He will help us accomplish our goal.
- Focusing on the prize – heaven is waiting at the finish line! This reward helped Paul stay focused and determined to finish strong (Philippians 3:12-14; 2 Corinthians 4:17-18; 2 Timothy 4:6-8).

Conclusion:

Do you need to begin running toward the prize?

- Shawn Jeffries