Foundations and Cornerstones

Curtis Pope · 2 Peter 1:5–11 · Series: **Having A Better Relationship With God**

INTRODUCTION

- Can we hit a wall? Can we suffer fatigue and burnout? Can we fail to make it to the spiritual finish line? I submit to you that we can.
- The reason why some Christians stop running in the spiritual race to heaven is because they lack what Peter is talking about in the scripture reading we had earlier. They lack perseverance.
- That word perseverance that Peter uses there in 2 Peter 1 and verse 6 is a word that means endurance. It means that no matter what obstacles come our way, we are not going to quit.

1 Being a Christian Isn't Always Easy; We Get Discouraged

2 Corinthians 11:23–28

- It is easy being a Christian today, but you and I both know that every day is not like today.
- Being a Christian isn't easy on some days because we're being persecuted by the world, and it also isn't easy because some days we're feeling pain.
- Being a Christian wasn't always easy for the Apostle Paul. And it's not always going to be easy for us.
- One of the things that makes it difficult at times is we often get discouraged.

2 This Race Is Long: A Marathon, Not a Sprint

- We need perseverance because this journey we're on, this race we're running, it's long. It's a marathon, it's not a sprint.
- Eventually, that newness wore off. Eventually, that new car, that new spiritual car smell wore off.
- Many of you in this room, you've been through a lot as a Christian. And yet, look at where you are this morning. You're here. You're still serving Jesus.

3 We Get Perseverance by Suffering

James 1:1–4

- The first way we get perseverance as Christians is according to the Bible, we get it by suffering.
- Consider it all joy. My brethren, when you encounter various trials. Knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience, perseverance, endurance.
- The Bible says trials can also bless us. They can help us. They can grow us spiritually and help us develop perseverance or endurance or patience.
- We need to remember that those periods of suffering are opportunities.

4 Being Inspired by Those Who've Already Finished the Race

Hebrews 12:1; Hebrews 11

- Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us. And let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.
- The message of Hebrews 11 is you can be like those people. You can be like those ordinary people who, despite making a ton of mistakes in their lives, they trusted God, they had faith, they persevered.
- That list is there to inspire us. It's to let us know that we can do it.

5 Leave Behind What Weighs Us Down

Hebrews 12:1–2

- Another thing we got to do to get perseverance is we got to leave behind what weighs us down.
- The Hebrew writer says sin weighs us down. We gotta leave behind the sin. We gotta stop dabbling in sin, flirting with sin, justifying our sins.
- We got to fix our eyes on Jesus. Why do we got to fix our eyes on Jesus? Well, because Jesus had exactly what we're trying to get. Jesus had perseverance.

6 Stay Focused on the Prize

Philippians 3:12–14; 2 Timothy 4:6–8; Luke 18:1–8

- We've got to stay focused. Stay focused, not just on our Lord Jesus, but also on the prize that we're going to get the finish line.
- Forgetting what lies behind, and reaching forward to what lies ahead. I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
- The thing that helped him endure and persevere and keep going was the reward waiting for him at the finish line. It was heaven.
- We get perseverance by staying focused on the prize. And one of the things that can help us do that is prayer.
- It is about understanding that one of the keys to endurance is prayer according to Jesus.

> THE CHALLENGE
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> **Are you doing that? Are you persevering? Are you persevering in the cause of the gospel? Have you even begun that process?**

MY NOTES