

Challenges to Finishing

Starting well doesn't guarantee that we will finish well.

- Israelites left Egypt but died in the wilderness (1 Corinthians 10:1-5).
- Solomon when he was older, turned away from God (1 Kings 11:4).
- King Asa (1 Kings 15:23; 2 Chronicles 16:7,12). In his old age he sought help from anywhere but God.
- King Jehoshaphat got new counselors as he got older and turned from God (2 Chronicles 24:17-22).
- Demas fell in love with this present world and left Paul (2 Timothy 4:10).
- The Galatian Christians started running well but quickly turned to a different gospel (Galatians 1:6-9).

Not everyone "kept the faith."

- 1 Timothy 1:19 – Some have made **shipwreck** of their faith.
- 1 Timothy 4:1 – Some will **depart** from the faith...following teachings of demons.
- 1 Timothy 5:8 – **Denied** the faith (those who do not take care of their family).
- 1 Timothy 5:12 – **Abandoned** their former faith.
- 1 Timothy 6:10 – Some have **wandered** away from the faith.
- 2 Timothy 3:8 – **Disqualified** regarding the faith.

3 Specific Challenges to Finishing:

- **The Challenge of the Moment**
 - 2 Timothy 2:1-7 – Paul uses three examples to talk about living past the moment.
 - The Soldier who isn't distracted by civilian pursuits. He aims to please his superior officers.
 - 1 Timothy 1:18 – Wage the good warfare...
 - 1 Timothy 6:12 – Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of eternal life.
 - The Athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. He didn't take shortcuts.
 - The Hard-Working Farmer is the one to have the first share of his crops. He was patient.
 - 2 Timothy 2:19-22 – Live as a vessel for honor. Be pure. Flee the temporary passions of the flesh.
- **The Challenge of Weariness**
 - We can get beat down, weak, tired and at times just want to throw up our hands and quit.
 - "Is this all really worth it?"
 - 2 Timothy 2:8-13 – Timothy was told to remember Jesus risen from the dead. He was called to be faithful and endure because Jesus is faithful.
 - 1 Corinthians 15:58 – Our labor is not in vain. Because of the resurrection of Jesus, we can be steadfast, immovable, and always abounding in God's work. We know our labor is not in vain.
 - Galatians 6:9 – Do not grow weary in well doing. In due season we will reap if we don't lose heart.
- **The Challenge of People**
 - Galatians 2:11-14 – "Even Barnabas" was carried away by Peter's hypocrisy.
 - Galatians 5:7-9 – You ran well, "who" hindered you?
 - 2 Timothy 2:14 – Quarreling about words only ruins the hearers.
 - 2 Timothy 2:16 – Irreverent babble will only "lead" people into more and more ungodliness.
 - 2 Timothy 2:18 – False doctrines were "upsetting the faith of some."
 - 2 Timothy 2:23 – Ignorant controversies, you know that they breed quarrels.
 - 1 Corinthians 15:33 – Evil companions...this was in the context of bad teaching about the resurrection.
 - Who is in your inner circle? He who walks with wise men will be wise!