

Winning in 2018 – Endurance

How do we win in 2018?

Hebrews 12:1-3 A huge cloud of witnesses is all around us, the pioneers of the faith, the veterans cheering us on, So let us throw off / strip off everything that stands in our way or slows us down. Let us throw off any sin that holds on to us so tightly. And let us keep on running the race marked out for us. 2 Let us keep looking to Jesus. He is the one who started this journey of faith. And he is the one who completes the journey of faith. He paid no attention to the shame of the cross. He suffered there because of the joy he was looking forward to. Then he sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won't become weary and give up. You won't get tired, you won't lose hope.

The vision of the church is to preach the gospel of Jesus and help people come to faith in Jesus; To preach the Gospel and make disciples of Jesus - by loving Jesus and having a passion for those things that Jesus is passionate about and serving our community. To be Jesus in our neighbourhood.

Firstly we got to keep looking at or unto Jesus who is the author and the finisher of our faith. Faith starts with Jesus and ends with Jesus.

John 1:3 All things were made through him. Nothing that has been made was made without him.

Col 1:15-17 We look at this Son and see the God who cannot be seen. We look at this Son and see God's original purpose in everything created. For everything, absolutely everything, above and below, visible and invisible, rank after rank after rank of angels—everything got started in him and finds its purpose in him. He was there before any of it came into existence and holds it all together right up to this moment.

Secondly by having the right mental attitude - we have to have a Winners Mindset to win. The firm attitude of a winner who trains and gets in shape to win the prize. Our minds need renewing by the word of God.

Thirdly - by having self control or Discipline : There has to be the discipline of prayer, of reading the bible, of coming together as believers to encourage one another, of putting the kingdom of God and His righteousness first. No short cuts. A true athlete trains, eats carefully, controls his thoughts, thinks positively not negatively, believes he is a winner. So must we. Today we are starting our fasting and prayer as a church.

Fourthly – By Endurance, or Longsuffering - we must cultivate endurance. There are times when things can happen suddenly but there are also times when you have to stay your game and endure the trials of the journey.

Life's journey is never a straight line. It has its ups and downs and its pressures and you cannot afford to quit. The opposite of endurance is giving up. You cannot afford to give up. Believe you me Satan will throw everything at you to make you give up.

I have been bombarded so many times with this and I know how it feels when things are not going the way you want it or like it, i know the frustration that creates in you, when you, despite all the negatives have to continue the journey and do it well.

Finish well. You require self-control to stay your course and endure to the end. Without self control we will not achieve endurance. We must master our weakness, otherwise when the tests come in this area of endurance, some weakness be it emotional, psychological or physical - will get us down and cause us to give up at the very point when we should be holding on and enduring.

On a practical note, some of us may need a mentor or a friend to steer us and keep us focussed on the prize on the goal so that when challenges come our way we do not give up on all that God has for us.

2Tim 2:3 tells us that we must endure hardship as a good soldier of Christ. We must put up with our share of hardship as a good soldier of Jesus. So hardship will come. Let's make a resolve not to question why but rather ask God, what are you teaching me and help me learn quickly. Close with *Gal 6:9 So let's not allow ourselves to get fatigued doing good. At the right time we will harvest a good crop if we don't give up, or quit. Longsuffering is a fruit of the Spirit. Let's learn to endure with thankfulness to the end.*

Summary: first we have to keep looking to Jesus. Second we must maintain a right mental attitude, a winning mind. Third we need self control or discipline and fourthly we need endurance or Longsuffering.

Jesus Loves you and desires to have a relationship with you. He desires to give you a life full of joy and purpose.

Jesus can change the past you cannot change by walking into those places of sin and failure and wipe your slate clean, your past cleaned and removed. Jesus is the same today as he was yesterday and forever His love for you will never give up or run dry or fail you. Jesus knows the worst about you and yet he believes the best.

Why? Because He sees you not as you are but as His child when he gets through with you. He is an amazing friend! Jesus has a great future for you. You can trust Him. His plans are for good and not for evil to give you a future and a hope (joyful expectation/ anticipation about the future). **Jesus listens to your every prayer.**

Do you want to know this Jesus? Are you willing to do what Jesus says just because He's said it?

Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, I am sorry for the things I have done wrong in my life. I ask Your forgiveness. Thank you for dying on the cross for me to set me free from my sins. Come into my life Jesus. I believe you are Jesus my Lord and Saviour. Lord fill me with your Holy Spirit and be with me always . Amen