

Unpacking the Preach

Date: 28th November 2021
Sermon Title: Discipleship & finishing the race
Bible Passage: Hebrews 12: 1 - 3

Introduction

Take time to read the passage from a few different translations.

- What do you think is the main point of the passage?
- What is the longest race you have ever taken part in? How did you train? How did you do in the race?
- What motivates you when you are training for a race?

Recapping the Preach

Stu began by describing that we live in a culture that has a passion for 'the immediate and the casual'. He went on to say that the race of discipleship takes a life-time and the process of being transformed into the likeness of Jesus takes a lifetime.

- Why do you think our culture has a 'passion for the immediate and casual'?
- Stu quoted Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard who likened us to, *'flat stones that we sometimes skim across a lake, The stone skips lightly for a time along the surface, but as soon as it stops skipping it instantly sinks down into the depths. We skip from one thing to the next, wanting maximum results for minimum effort, too afraid to stop unless we sink unnoticed into the depth'*. Do you agree with this?

Stu then went on to mention 5 bits of advice for running well that the writer mentions. Note that the writer is also a fellow disciple, he is also running the race and so is speaking from his own experience. The five bits of advice are tried and tested and work, and if we put them into practice we will run the race of discipleship well. 1) Throw off sin that so easily entangles 2) Get rid of everything that hinders the race 3) Listen to the crowd around you 4) Fix your eyes on Jesus and 5) Keep the goal in mind.

- What would happen to a runner that got entangled? What do you think the writer means when he says that sin entangles us?
- If we get entangled in sin and fall, how do you think we get back in the race (see 1 John 1:9, John 13:10)?
- What are the things in culture that can hinder a person from running the race of a disciple well? Why do these things hinder us?
- What is meant by 'the great cloud of witnesses'? Check out some of the characters in Hebrews 11 - how does their life encourage us in our race?
- What are some of the practical things we can do to fix our eyes on Jesus? What are some of the things that hinder us from doing this?
- What is the prize that awaits the disciple of Jesus who finishes the race?
- On a scale of 1 - 10, how well would you say you are running at the moment? Is there one small change you can make to help you run with perseverance?

Response

- Is there anything from the preach and passage that you will be taking away to reflect on or work on?
- Who can you encourage this week in the race?

Prayer pointers

- Pray for the grace to persevere in the race marked out for us.
- Take time to share prayer requests and pray for one another.
- Pray for friends and family who you know need encouragement today.

Additional resources:

If you need some additional resources the below websites are useful:

- <https://www.gotquestions.org>
- <https://enduringword.com>
- <https://www.biblica.com>
- <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/>