

“Preparing for the Journey”

“Be Determined to Stick to the Course”

Core 51

“Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:1-2

A. Keep your eyes on the prize...

“Do you see what this means—all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It means we’d better get on with it. Strip down, start running—and never quit! No extra spiritual fat, no parasitic sins. Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we’re in. Study how He did it. Because He never lost sight of where He was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—He could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now He’s there, in the place of honor, right alongside God. When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility He plowed through. That will shoot adrenaline into your souls!” Hebrews 12:1-3 The Message

1. Therefore...be determined to let go of anything that holds you back.

“Hold firmly to the word of life; then, on the day of Christ’s return, I will be proud that I did not run the race in vain and that my work was not useless.” Philippians 2:16

2. Be determined to run...not walk as you move forward.

“Don’t you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.” 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 NLT
“You’ve all been to the stadium and seen the athletes’ race. Everyone runs; one wins. Run to win. All good athletes train hard. They do it for a gold medal that tarnishes and fades. You’re after one that’s gold eternally. I don’t know about you, but I’m running hard for the finish line. I’m giving it everything I’ve got. No sloppy living for me! I’m staying alert and in top condition. I’m not going to get

caught napping, telling everyone else all about it and then missing out myself.” 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 The Message

3. Be determined to keep your eyes on Jesus.

“I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.” Philippians 3:14

B. It just takes grit...

“After much research, it turns out that across all ethnic, socio-economic, educational, and psychological demographics ‘one characteristic emerge[s] as a significant predictor of success... grit’ (Duckworth). Psychologist Angela Lee Duckworth has made grit the focus of years of study. She defines grit as ‘the ability to persevere in pursuing a future goal over a long period of time and not giving up... It is having stamina. It’s sticking with your future, day-in, day-out, not just for the week, not just for the month, but for years and working really hard to make that future a reality. Grit is living life like it’s a marathon, not a sprint.’”

1. Grit is endurance or steadfastness. Grit is the ability to stick to the course, despite obstacles.

“We give great honor to those who endure under suffering. For instance, you know about Job, a man of great endurance. You can see how the Lord was kind to him at the end, for the Lord is full of tenderness and mercy.” James 5:11

2. Grit builds as you mature spiritually.

“So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.” James 1:4

3. Grit grows through testing, trials, and difficulties.

“For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.” James 1:3

C. Building grit in your life...

“We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation.” Romans 5:3-4

1. Grit is built when we learn to delay gratification.

“Forgoing present pleasure for long-term gain.” -Mark Moore
It simply means that a Christian is willing to give up something now to obtain a better reward in the future.

“All these people earned a good reputation because of their faith, yet none of them received all that God had promised.” Hebrews 11:39

“Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘Whoever wants to be My disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Me.’” Matthew 16:24

2. Grit is built when you “get over yourself.” Do something for another who cannot pay you back. Listen to others!

“Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don’t think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us.” Romans 12:3

3. Learn to be optimistic.

“We also pray that you will be strengthened with all His glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. May you be filled with joy,” Colossians 1:11

D. So...be determined...stick to the course...and get gritty...

“Stand firm, and you will win life.” Luke 21:19 NIV

1. Look for examples who model endurance.

“Then you will not become spiritually dull and indifferent. Instead, you will follow the example of those who are going to inherit God’s promises because of their faith and endurance.” Hebrews 6:12

2. Learn to patiently wait on God.

“Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God’s will. Then you will receive all that He has promised.” Hebrews 10:36

3. Train yourself to look at trials from a different perspective.

“Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy.” James 1:2

4. Make every effort to strengthen your spiritual life by adding to your faith.

“In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God’s promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness,” 2 Peter 1:5-6

5. Don’t get lost in your present struggle...it is minimal compared to all that awaits you!!

“Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory He will reveal to us later.” Romans 8:18

6. Keep your eyes on the prize...it’s worth it!

“I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.” Philippians 3:14

To begin a relationship with Jesus...

Text: I Choose Jesus to 88202

Next Week: Mark Moore “Heaven” Core 52