

RUN WITH ENDURANCE

(No. 1209 – 9/27/21 – Sermon Online Zoom Meeting)

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. We are living in the last days—days Paul said would be terrible, dark, difficult, and dangerous! [see 2 Tim. 3:1-5]
- B. Jesus promised that in the world we would have tribulation, but to take courage because He has overcome the world! (John 16:33)

- C. Many of the believers addressed in the book of Hebrews were going through very tough times—the apostle’s advice to them: persevere, endure to the end, don’t shrink back (**Heb. 10:32-39**):

*³²Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when **you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering**. ³³Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. ³⁴You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. ³⁵So **do not throw away your confidence**; it will be richly rewarded. ³⁶**You need to persevere** [“patient endurance is what you need now” NLT] so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised. ³⁷For in just a very little while, “He who is coming will come and will not delay. ³⁸But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.” ³⁹But **we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed**, but of those who believe and are saved.*

- D. He later reminded them that they were in a race—not a 100-meter sprint but a marathon—a long distance endurance race—and exhorted them not to grow weary, give up, or quit the race (**Heb. 12:1-4**):

*¹Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us **run with perseverance** the race marked out for us. ²Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him **endured the cross**, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³**Consider Him who endured***

such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. ⁴In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

1. From October 12-15, 2005, ultramarathon runner Karnazes ran 350 miles across Northern California without stopping. He didn't stop to sleep or to eat—he ran for 80 hours, 44 minutes without a break!
2. There is only one way we can endure hardships—fix our eyes on Jesus and *consider* [Gk. *analogizomai* = “consider it all in comparison with your trials” AMP] what He endured.

II. THREE REASONS WHY WE NEED ENDURANCE

A. To finish the race

1. Jesus said those who endure to the end will be saved:
 - a) **Mat. 10:21-22** (NKJV): ²¹*Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be **put to death**.* ²²*And you will be **hated by all** for My name's sake. But **he who endures to the end will be saved**.*
 - b) **Mat. 24:9-13** (NKJV): ⁹*Then they will deliver you up to **tribulation** and **kill you**, and you will be **hated by all nations** for My name's sake.* ¹⁰*And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.* ¹¹*Then **many false prophets** will rise up and deceive many.* ¹²*And because **lawlessness will abound**, the **love of many will grow cold**.* ¹³***BUT he who endures to the end shall be saved**.*
2. It's how we *finish* the race that counts:
 - a) **Acts 20:24**: *However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may **finish the race** and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.*
 - b) **2 Tim. 4:7-8**: ⁷*I have fought the good fight, I have **finished the race**, I have kept the faith.* ⁸*Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing.*

3. To receive what He has promised—to meet Him when He comes: “For in just a very little while, He who is coming will come and will not delay.”

B. To overcome

1. The word “overcome” is meaningless unless we have difficulties, challenges, enemies, problems!
2. Jesus endured and overcame—we want to be like Him!
3. He that overcomes inherits (Rev. 2 & 3, 21):
 - a) **Rev. 2:7: *To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.*** [see Rev. 2:11, 17, 26-29; 3:5, 12, 21]
 - b) **Rev. 3:21: *To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.***
 - c) **Rev. 21:7: *He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be My son.***

C. To develop character or “stress wood”

1. **Rom. 5:3-4:** ³*We rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that **suffering produces perseverance** (endurance); ⁴*perseverance (endurance), **character**; and character, hope.*
 - a) No one likes suffering, but it is the very thing that produces endurance
 - b) No one likes endurance, but it is the very thing that produces “proven character” (NAS)*
2. Biodome experiment in Arizona (1991-1993)
 - a) 8 people lived in an ideal controlled environment
 - b) The trees grew tall in this perfect world, but amazingly, all began to fall down and die
 - c) Scientists were puzzled, but discovered that trees need wind, drought, and storms—tribulation—to develop deep roots and what they call “stress wood!”
3. God in His loving Providence doesn’t place us in a perfect biodome that is free of stresses and challenges—He puts us in a broken world and knows exactly what we need to develop endurance and Christlike character.

4. We need tough times to make us tough:
 - a) Without burdens, we'll never get stronger
 - b) Without giants, we'll never become giant-killers like David!
 - c) Without mountains, we'll never learn to climb
5. *Deeper* by Meredith Andrews lyrics

*Every valley made me lift my eyes up
Every burden only made me stronger
Every sorrow only made Your joy go
Deeper and deeper, deeper, and deeper

Every mountain is making me a climber
Every giant is calling out a fighter
Every heartache only makes Your love go
Deeper and deeper, deeper, and deeper*

***Thrown down but not defeated
I'm worn out but not giving up
I've hit ground but even at rock bottom
I'm just getting started, Yea, I'm just getting started***

III. CONCLUSION – HOW TO ENDURE TO THE END

- A. Fix our eyes on Jesus—consider all that He endured and our problems will seem SMALL!
- B. We stand and live by FAITH, not by sight
- C. Stay focused on the PRIZE at the finish line!
- D. Allow the Word of God and the Holy Spirit to strengthen us in our inner man DAILY.

*For in just a very little while,
He who is coming will come and will not delay.*

– Hebrews 10:37