

Destined to Finish

Last week we began what I hope is a new series. Destined

Many times when I teach on the position God granted to man both in creation and redemption I am often confronted within someone who will quote a portion of a verse."A man ought not to think more highly of himself than he ought".

Romans 12:3 (TPT) God has given me grace to speak a warning about pride. I would ask each of you to be emptied of self-promotion and not create a false image of your importance. Instead, honestly assess your worth by using your God-given faith as the standard of measurement, and then you will see your true value with an appropriate self-esteem.

No self esteem is not the same as an appropriate [connected to scripture] self esteem

You will never conquer with a grass hopper mentality you just won't.

So learn to see yourself through the filter of faith.

So today I begin our series by drawing attention to 3 words that changed each of our lives, infusing us with hope, joy & life.

John 19:30 (NASB) ... He said, "**IT IS FINISHED!**" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

These three words are perhaps the most important 3 words in scripture.

To finish is to bring to completion, or to come to the end of a course, task, or undertaking. To finish can also be something that completes or perfects. I like this definition, **to finish is to have the quality of being perfected.**

The Apostle Paul often likened life to a race.

1 Corinthians 9:24 (NASB) Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.

2 Timothy 4:7 (NASB) I have fought the good fight, **I have finished** the course, I have kept the faith;

Then he says there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness.

Every race, no matter its length has 2 lines.

- Starting line
 - Finish line

The trophy's are never given out at the starting line - they are waiting for you at the finish line.

People often think that they should get credit for starting a project never realizing that perfection comes only upon the completion of the thing started.

Starting is not most people's problem, staying, continuing and finishing is.

Finish, is a very important word, vital to our success

- Have you ever known a job hopper, the person who seems to quit their job about every other month, to have success?

Many years ago a Spiritual Father told me, "Stay in one place long enough and success will find you."

Too many people are easily distracted. They begin a project full of hope and great expectations but fail to complete what they started.

When the newness wears off they go onto something else.

Think about it.

- How many diets are begun and then forgotten before the benefits are enjoyed, before the desire is fulfilled?
- How many half read books do you currently have on your bookshelf?
- How many letters have you begun to write but never signed and mailed?
- How many projects await completion?

For a couple seasons I was crowned the king of unfinished projects.

My property was filled with unfinished projects.

I always blamed my half done jobs on my busy pastor schedule, but my excuses did not help my situation.

It was not good for my esteem or my faith to be the king of unfinished projects.

Then one day I made a decision to abdicate the throne as the king of unfinished projects

And I began to feel better about myself.

There is a magic to finishing a thing, anything, its good for you to finish.

Be like your Father

Matthew 5:48 (TPT) Since you are children of a perfect Father in heaven, you are to be perfect like him.”

God finishes - everything / always.

Genesis 2:2 (NLT) On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested from all his work.

Are you ready to give up? Give up on the faith message because it doesn't seem to be working for you? Give up on your family, or your marriage? Are you ready to give into that temptation that always seems to get the best of you? I want to encourage you not to quit. Don't give in to the feelings of discouragement. You can and will find success if you just hang in there

I once read the story of a sculpture. Self-taught.

He learned to carve curios out of stone, wood and ivory.

People traveled from across the country to his shop to browse and buy.

When asked how he'd developed such talent. He replied, I picked up a knife and I kept at it

Work your craft; until it becomes an art form

Keep at it.

There are two fatal errors that keep great success from manifesting in life:

- 1) Not starting
- 2) Not finishing.

Everyone writer knows what it is to hit a wall

Every worker knows what it is to be fatigued

And all of us know what it is to be frustrated, impatient - to feel that it ain't never gonna work.

The Bible address this

Hebrews 10:36 (NASB) For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God [started], you may receive what was promised [finish].

You, me, we all have need of endurance.

James 1:2-4 (NASB) Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, [3] knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. [4] And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

James 1:2-4 (TPT) My fellow believers, when it seems as though you are facing nothing but difficulties see it as an invaluable opportunity to experience the greatest joy that you can! [3] For you know that when your faith is tested it stirs up power within you to endure all things. [4] And then as your endurance grows even stronger it will release perfection into every part of your being until there is nothing missing and nothing lacking.

When we allow that Godly endurance to work in our lives, move us past the pain point where we wanna quit it will release perfection into every part of our being.

When you become impatient you quit before you have finished.

God gave you patience so that you could finish what you started.

Create a legacy of Accomplishment

Acts 20:24 (TPT) "But whether I live or die is not important, for I don't esteem my life as indispensable. It's more important for me to fulfill my destiny and to finish the ministry my Lord Jesus has assigned to me, which is to faithfully preach the wonderful news of God's grace.

What you finish might not even be about you.

It could be about your children, your church or your generation.

The book you start writing but never leaves your iCloud account will bless no one

But the book you finish may bless a stranger 100 years from now.

2 Corinthians 8:10-11 (TPT) So here are my thoughts concerning this matter, and it's in your best interests. Since you made such a good start last year, both in the grace of giving and in your longing to give, [11] you should finish what you started. You were so eager in your intentions to give, so go do it. Finish this act of worship according to your ability to give.

Nothing meaningful can be achieved if we do not finish what we started.

I began to think about how many good things I had begun and then aborted in pursuit of something new and exciting. Only to repeat the cycle again with yet another project.

1. How many half-written books are in my computer?
2. How many half completed teaching series.?

What if Jesus gave up? What if He had never cried, "It is finished!" His course was not an easy one. He was a man with a mission. Don't for a moment think that it was an easy one. It was not! He was tempted to quit. He had bad days too!

- Days when it seemed like He was not achieving a thing.
- His disciples never did seem to grasp His teaching.

- He poured His heart into them only to watch them quarrel among themselves and then to run at the first sign of trouble.
- He taught them faith only to hear them cry, “Lord, don’t you care if we die?”
- When He began to talk about the price of discipleship so many of His followers left Him that He turned to Peter and asked, “Will you go too?”
- He endured untold hardships and trials.
- He felt betrayed when His own family turned against Him.
- He knows what it is to suffer.

Take a moment and think Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane? He told His disciples, “Stay here while I go over there and pray.” ...“And taking with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, He began to show grief and distress of mind and was deeply depressed.” This was our Savior. He knows what it is to hurt. To want to give up, to throw in the towel.

“Then He said to them, My soul is very sad and deeply grieved, so that I am almost dying of sorrow. Stay here and keep awake and keep watch with Me.”

His heart was so discouraged that he did not want to continue. He wanted to quit, right there, right then. What would have happened if He had?

It is too horrible to think about. God’s plan of salvation would have been aborted. Yet it was not an easy decision. In fact the gospel of Luke tells His struggle was so desperate that blood vessels in Head began to rupture, the agony of mind was intense and real. Blood began to flow from the pores of His forehead. Doctors tell us that this only happens in the most extreme cases when the mental pressure is so great that the body violently reacts to the struggle within.

He asked God for permission to quit. Hear His words. “My Father, if it is possible let this cup pass from me-yet it must not be what I want, but what you want.”

Did you notice what Jesus said? What did Jesus want? He wanted the pain to end; He did not think that He could see it through to the end. It was a tough decision. He could quit; He had that right. But He also knew that if He did not see it through all was lost. Jesus had character; He was determined. Thank God Jesus was no quitter.

Jesus made a decision. That decision brought Him to a cross. Upon the cross He was tortured. Verbally assaulted. His disciples were scattered. His enemies were laughing and jeering. It appeared to be the worst of defeats. Yet in the midst of this pain and ridicule, Jesus took a deep, agonizing breath. Stood up on feet that were pierced with an iron nail and cried, "IT IS FINISHED." It was brought to completion, to perfection, to the end.

What was finished? A project that had been started hundreds of years before, the redemption of man. It was a long road, filled with many hardships and heartaches. But Jesus did not quit. He never gave up. He hung there and shouted in relief; "IT IS FINISHED."

Do you feel like giving up?

Are you discouraged, weary, and tired?

Look to Jesus

Hebrews 12:2 (MKJV) looking to Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right of the throne of God.

Give it another try. Go back to work with the determination that you will not be defeated. Face that temptation knowing that you cannot lose.

You cannot be defeated, and you won't quit.

Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him."

You are destined to finish so don't give up

James 1:12 (CEV) God will bless you, if you don't give up when your faith is being tested. He will reward you with a glorious life, just as he rewards everyone who loves him.