

Quitting Wrinkles the Soul

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In days gone by, the culture was to keep fixing things that were broken until they eventually needed to be replaced. Today, the culture is to simply replace broken things, which has had a major effect on our psyche. We do not hold fast to relationships with others, including our relationship with God and our service to Him.

‘Quitting’ should never be in a Christian’s vocabulary.

We are constantly being bombarded with new and updated versions of everything so that we can be part of the ‘in crowd’. But we need to understand that materialism is totally contrary to perseverance and stickability. God tells us to run our race to the end, because this is what is most important for the Kingdom and what we are tasked to do for the Lord in our lifetime. General McArthur said, ‘Age wrinkles the body but quitting wrinkles the soul’. ‘Quitting’ should never be in a Christian’s vocabulary.

Perseverance Rewarded

This is evident in the testimony of a lady who prayed for her husband’s salvation. He was unfaithful over and over again, but through her hurt she kept forgiving him and prayed constantly that God would turn his life around. Her trust and perseverance was rewarded when, twenty years later, her husband got radically saved and went from being a divorce lawyer to a marriage counselor.

Satan will do all in his power to rob you of your faith and take away your trust in the Lord your Saviour. Don’t allow that to happen, child of God. Remember that the devil is our adversary, seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8), but if you keep your shield of faith high, he will never devour you. Keep a clear mind in every situation, preach the good news of the Gospel to all you come across and fully serve the Lord with all your heart.

‘And now the prize awaits me — the crown of righteousness..’

Timothy spoke about fighting the good fight of faith in 2 Timothy 4 and then adds:

'As for me, my life has already been out poured out as an offering to God. The time of my death is near. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. And now the prize awaits me — the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his appearing.' (2 Timothy 4:6-8)

False teachings are out there in abundance, sent by Satan to try and weaken our faith. Lifestyles of secularism, modernism, materialism and suchlike are pushed at us from all angles — in the movies, magazines, TV programs and many other forms of public media.

How To Finish Strong

You may ask, 'How do we stand in this culture that we find ourselves in? How do we finish the marathon and keep on keeping on?'

Choose to Listen

The answer is that we have a choice. We can either allow ourselves to be weighed down, distracted and taken off course by the influence of this world **OR** we can choose to listen to the Holy Spirit's voice of warning and caution in our hearts, and listen to the wise counsel of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

John says, 'I am writing these things to warn you about those who want to lead you astray. But you have received the Holy Spirit, and he lives within you, so you don't need anyone to teach you what is true. For the Spirit teaches you everything you need to know, and what he teaches is true—it is not a lie. So just as he has taught you, remain in fellowship with Christ.' (1 John 2:26-27 NLT)

Abide in His Love

We have no need to fear because '*perfect love casts away all fear*' (1 John 4:18). Pressing into, tasting and seeing how much He loves you will gradually immunise you against the fear of suffering and even reveal its value in the greater scheme of His Kingdom.

The measure to which His love for us has become our all-pervading reality is the measure to which we are insulated and strengthened against the fear of any unforeseeable suffering in the future.

Pour Yourself Out

Obedience to God's call is paramount in making one vigorous against the attempts of the enemy to trip us up. If we link the parables of the 10 virgins with the servants receiving talents/gifts, we see that the servant with one talent and the 5 virgins whose oil ran out had an important thing in common: They were not about their father's business. They were not listening to God by spreading the gospel and doing the work of the ministry which the Lord had given them to do.

Giving out of your emptiness invites God to fill your cup.

There is something about sharing the love of Christ, calling people back to Christ and introducing others to Christ for the first time that gives you a perspective on life that is "superior" to all other perspectives. It's as if things fall into place and you suddenly have patience for the irritable, nonsensical things around you. Giving out of your emptiness invites God to fill your cup. If you continue in this, it gives you sufficient fuel to finish the race. (2 Timothy 4:7)

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God's Endurance

We must always be thankful and know that God's power gives us all the endurance and patience we need. If you have ever doubted that this were true, consider this story of a young lady who was the daughter of a satanic priest. She was repeatedly impregnated when she came of age to conceive and was given over to many men. She gave birth to several babies who were never registered, but were used as sacrifices by her father for various demonic reasons and rituals. She naturally had split personality disorders and was totally desperate, as nobody knew what she was going through. Her father was a very high profile, well-known person, so he was obviously very careful to keep his actions secret.

Eventually the daughter managed to run away and seek sanctuary at a church, where she clearly heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Take my body, which was broken for you, and my blood, which was shed for you. If you take communion in this service, I will completely set you free.'

After all the abuse, anger, hatred and cruelty done to her, she still kept on pursuing and loving him to salvation.

Not only did she get completely and radically saved and set free, but later, when she learned that her father was on his deathbed, the first thing that came into her mind was, 'Lord, please save my father's soul!' She rushed to the hospital and stood at his bedside, and there and then led him to Christ. After all the abuse, anger, hatred and cruelty done to her, she still kept on pursuing and loving him to salvation.

'And remember, our Lord's patience gives people time to be saved. This is what our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you with the wisdom God gave him.' (2 Peter 3:15)

With this exhortation, let us be encouraged that we too need to remain faithful and keep on keeping on.