

Finishing Well

Towards the end of the Apostle Paul's life he was able to say, "I've fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith." He had a sense of satisfaction about the way he'd lived and served God. Most of us read these words and a "me too" rises up within us. What might it mean for us to finish well? And what kind of habits do we need to pursue now that would promote finishing well? That's what we are considering today.

Opening Question: Do you have any examples of people in your life who have finished well? Explain.

Read 2 Timothy 4:5-8

1. What are Paul's reflections about his life (v. 6-7)?
2. What kinds of things do you think were part of Paul's fighting the good fight, finishing the race and keeping the faith?
3. What does Paul anticipate for his future (v. 8)?

Read 1 Tim. 4:6-16

4. What types of things does Paul communicate to Timothy that would help him (and us) run the race well?

Steve said:

There was a tremendous amount at stake in whether or not Timothy “persevered” by paying close attention to himself and to his teaching. These two areas represent two broad categories to which all of us need to pay attention: yourself (your spiritual maturity and walk with God) and your ministry (which is normally aligned with your spiritual gifting). The Scriptures teach that every believer is responsible to pursue maturity and to pursue ministry/service. If you want to persevere through this life and finish well, you have to pay attention to yourself and to your ministry.

5. What do you think it means to “pay close attention” to yourself and to your ministry (v. 16)?

6. Paul tells Timothy to “discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness” (4:7). What might that mean in your life to do this? What kinds of things help you pursue godliness?

Steve said:

Today I’m primarily inviting you - whatever your stage of life - to enter into this topic of finishing well. I’d invite you to make finishing well your personal aspiration. And I’d invite you to discern the habits of life you need to practice that will promote finishing well.

7. How much does the idea of finishing well and a future heavenly reward motivate you now?

8. What kinds of things come to your mind when you think about finishing well?

9. What “habits of life” have you found to be the most critical in you being able to finish well?