

FINISHING WELL

In this 2020 season we are in, our plans have been hijacked and our vision for the year has become distorted or fuzzy.

20/20 vision is a term used to express normal visual acuity (the clarity or sharpness of **vision**) measured at a distance of 20 feet.

As believers, although this pandemic has affected our life and the way we do things, our vision and our focus must remain the same.

Paul's secret to finishing well...

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. **2 Timothy 4:7-8***

A. Fight a good fight.

The Greek word **agonizomai**, translated “fight”, literally means “*to engage in conflict.*”

“I have fought the good fight” is significant reminder for all believers that we are in for a

fight, that Christian life is not a bed of roses but a constant and consistent fight/battle against the old self and the evil in the world.

Paul writes ...

*“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. **Galatians 2:20***

*For me to live is Christ and to die is gain. **Philippians 1:21***

In this day and age, as believers, what does it mean for us to **“fight a good fight”**?

Living for Jesus is a fight, it is a battle.

As believers, we need to realise to fight a good fight - **GOD must be in it.**

This fight is not physical or natural but spiritual.

*Our battle is not with flesh and blood “but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in the high places”. **Ephesians 6:12***

13 Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which, you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

*18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints. **Ephesians 6:13-18***

To stand firm, we must wear the...

Belt of Truth – *Equipped with truth for truth alone sets us free*

Breastplate of righteousness – *We protect our heart with Christ's righteousness*

Preparation of the gospel of peace – *Ready to share the good news*

Helmet of salvation – *Protecting our minds with the saving power of Jesus Christ*

Sword of the Spirit – Word of God – *Our only offensive weapon to defeat the enemy*

B. Finish the race.

In a race it is not how well you start but how well you finish that matters.

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. 1 Cor. 9:24-25

As believers, **we need to run the race** that God has placed before us, both individually and corporately as a church.

The focus here is not the prize but the way we run our race. Let's all run with purpose, not aimlessly.

What do we need to do to run our race and finish well?

“Lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith”. **Hebrews 12:1-2**

C. Keep the Faith.

What did Paul mean when he said he had kept the faith?

The Greek word for “faith” is *pistis*, which has to do with ***conviction based on hearing.***

*So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. **Romans 10:17***

What does it mean by ***keeping the faith?***

To keep the faith means to guard our heart and follow that conviction that God has placed within our hearts through his Word.

To keep the faith, we need to keep the main thing, the main thing.

The main thing is JESUS.

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Hebrews 12:2

It is not about us! It is all about him - JESUS!