

DETERMINATION AND COURAGE: STAYING THE COURSE

(JOHN 6:67-68, HEBREWS 12:1-2)

IREMIDE AKINSOLA

IREMIDEAKINSOLA@YAHOO.COM, +2348101801995

Scriptures Speak

- Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?” But Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” **John 6:67-68**
- Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which 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**

Case Study

- Jide, Chidinma and Adamu agreed to fast on Saturday. They decided to meet at the church by 3pm to pray and break the fast. At 10am, Jide perceived the aroma of freshly baked bread from the bakery opposite his house. The weather was cold, and he was craving bread and tea. After struggling with the thought for 30 minutes, he bought the bread and broke the fast.
- At 11:20am, Chidinma felt hunger pangs. It had been months since she fasted. She wondered why she agreed to fast, considering that fasting was not a prerequisite for answered prayers.

Case Study cont'd

- She opened her fridge and took a bite from the peppered chicken. There would be another day for fasting. She cannot “come and kill herself”
- What are some reasons people quit tasks before completion?

Reasons for uncompleted tasks

- **Discomfort:** Then many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, “This is a hard saying. Who can accept it? Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, “Does this offend you?” ... From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. **John 6:60-61, 66**
- **Distractions:** Others are like the seeds sown among the thorns. They hear the word, but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth, and the desire for other things come in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. **Mark 4:18-19**

Reasons for uncompleted tasks

- **Desires:** For Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world. 2 Timothy 4:10; But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. **James 1:14**
- **Disappointment:** Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!” **Job 2:9**

RUNNING THE RACE

- How can we maintain our commitment to Christ through life's journey? **F.O.C.U.S**

RUNNING THE RACE

- **F – Fixing our eyes on Christ:** Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Hebrews 12:1
- **O – Observing the lives and experiences of others:** Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 1 Corinthians 10:11

RUNNING THE RACE

- **C – Cutting off weights and sin:** Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which easily ensnares us. Hebrews 12:1
- **U – Understanding that the Christian race is a marathon:** Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. 1 Corinthians 9:24

RUNNING THE RACE

- **S – Seeking the help of the Holy Spirit:**
But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things. John 14:26

CONCLUSION

- The Christian race is a marathon requiring determination and courage.
- There will be challenges on the way in form of disappointment from unmet needs and prayers that seem to be unanswered, death of loved ones, or distractions from the enemy.

CONCLUSION

- However, as we hold on to Christ and rely on the Holy Spirit, at the end of our journey, we will be able to say, like Paul said: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 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**