

24th Sunday after Pentecost - Commitment Sunday

Sunday, October 30, 2016

“Running the Marathon of Maturity: 8 Principles of Commitment”

Hebrews 12:1-13

Nothing of importance happens without _____. Our commitments _____ our lives because of the amount of _____ and energy we put into them

“I appeal to you brothers and sisters by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (Romans 8:29)

Of all the commitments that we will make in our life, our primary and most important commitment is to _____.

True Commitment isn't always easy and involves a certain level of _____, confidence, and _____.

WHY IS COMMITMENT IMPORTANT?

- It is the only right _____ to God's grace towards us. “...give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God.” (Romans 6:13)

- God is _____ for people He can use; people who will make a _____ in the world through His Spirit. “The eyes of the Lord search the whole earth in order to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.” (2 Chronicles 16:9)

8 PRINCIPLES OF COMMITMENT

#1. _____ your life.

“Let us strip off anything that slows us down or holds us back, and especially those sins that wrap themselves so tightly around our feet and trip us up; and let us run with patience the particular race that God has set before us.” (Hebrews 12:1)

anything = *oikos* =

We need to cut off, clean out, and _____ all the those things that hold us back from making the kind of commitment God would have us make.

God has a _____ race for your life. The problem is, everybody wants us to run _____ race—everybody has a plan for our life—no matter how young or old we are.

Whose race are you running? Are you running light or heavy?

#2. **Don't be** _____.

“Let us run with patience the particular race that God set out before us.” (Hebrews 12:1)

patience = *hypomone* =

God's plan to make you the person He wants you to be is a _____ plan—it's not a 50 yard dash or a sprint to the finish—it's a marathon.

So often in life, we want the _____—something that will heal, help, or change us instantly, without all the work or waiting.

“...are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another...” (2 Corinthians 12:18)

As you run, are you in a rush to the finish line or are you pacing yourself?

#3. _____ on Jesus.

“We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish.” (Hebrews 12:2)

fixing our eyes = *aphorao* =

Christian commitment always begins with and ends with _____.

“Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives to pray.” (Luke 22:39)

“All of us have had that veil removed so that we can be mirrors that brightly reflect the glory of the Lord. And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him and reflect his glory even more.” (2 Corinthians 3:18)

Where are your eyes focused as you run the race set before you?

#4. **Remember the** _____.

“Jesus did not give up when he was running his race because of the cross! On the contrary, because of the joy that was waiting for him, he thought nothing of the disgrace of dying on the cross, and he is now seated at the right side of God's throne. So think of what he went through; how he put up with so much—so much hatred from sinners. So don't let yourselves become discouraged and give up.” (Hebrews 12:2-3)

As we run the race of life, we're going to encounter a lot of _____ and pressures; trials and _____ along the way.

discouraged = *kamno* =

We need to remember that Jesus can _____.

“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses...” (Hebrews 4:15)

“After you suffer for a short time, God, who gives all grace, will make everything right. He will make you strong. He will support you. He will keep you from falling. He called you to share in his glory in Christ, a glory that will continue forever.” (1 Peter 5:10)

“In this world you will have troubles. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

**Have there been times in the race when you've wanted to give up?
Are you focused on the prize?**

#5. Gather a _____ around you.

“Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another.” (Hebrews 10:24)

If we don't have anybody running with us we're not going to make it to the finish line—we're going to get tired, _____, and give up.

“Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.” (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

**Where do you find support and encouragement?
Who is cheering you on from the sidelines?**

#6. Remember God is _____ you on.

Some people think that God only smiles on them when they _____. However, God smiles at us at every _____ of our spiritual _____.

He's not waiting for us to get to a certain level of _____, but stands on the sidelines as we run—offering encouragement and _____, every step of the way.

“This I know: that God is on my side.” (Psalm 56:9)

People struggle to commit themselves to God is they're _____ of who

they are and spend all their time and energy trying to hide the fact that they don't have it all together.

“I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or I've already reached perfection. But I keep working toward that day when I will finally be all that Christ saved me for and wants me to be. I'm still not all I should be, but I am focusing all my energies on this one thing: Forgetting the past, looking forward to what lies ahead, I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven.” (Phil 3:12)

“If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31)

Do you know God's great love for you?

#7. Take every step with _____.

“Lift up your tired hands then, and strengthen your trembling knees. Keep walking on straight paths, so that your lame foot may not be disabled, but instead be healed.” (Hebrews 12:12-13)

lame foot = something that _____ us down =

If we're going to become the person God created us to be, we need to be _____. We need to be _____ committed. We need to _____.

“All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should.” (1 Corinthians 9:25)

How disciplined is your run?

#8. Realize that if we don't _____, God will.

“I am sure that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on that day when Christ Jesus comes back again.” (Philippians 1:6)

“Dear friends, we are already God's children and we can't even imagine what we will be like when Christ returns. But we do know that when he comes we will be like him, for we shall see him as he really is!” (1 John 3:2)

The race that we run is ultimately in _____ hands!

Given these 8 principles, how would you describe your commitment to God?

How well are you running the race that God has set before you?

How committed are you to Him?