

CCC FINISHING WHAT YOU START Part 2

Review Part 1

3. FOCUS ON THE GAIN NOT THE PAIN

The worthwhile things in life are rarely easy. We have to choose to look past the pain. We have chose to concentrate on how good you're going to feel after you finish. This is a Biblical principle, Moses used it, Jesus used it and others in the bible. Moses, the Bible tells us was Moses able to turn his back on all the wealth and power of Egypt. He was in line to become Pharaoh and he would have all the wealth and power of the world. But Moses choose to turned his back on all of that in order to lead one million slaves out in the desert for 40 years. Why would anybody do that? Because in Hebrews 11 it says, "*Moses was looking forward to the reward and he considered the cause of Christ greater than the riches of Egypt.*" Moses was

saying and thinking, I could be the most powerful man on earth for what maybe the next 30, 40, 50 years or I could choose to fulfill my purpose in life and enjoy an eternal reward in heaven for millions and millions of years. Moses had that choice.

The Bible says that Jesus was able to endure the cross. He was able to endure the cross because it says, "*He was looking forward to the joy that was set before Him.*" Jesus chose to live for the results that would bring millions, billions of people back into a right relationship with God.

One of the weaknesses of our culture is we are consumed with short-term thinking; we are consumed with the here and now. We don't know the meaning of delayed gratification, we want to enjoy today and forget tomorrow. We want to enjoy the fun and forget the problems, forget

the pain. But God's word, the bible says, That doesn't work because what we will become is procrastinators... We will live hoping the pains and problems will go away. We will even live ignoring the problems and pretend they don't exist; we will attempt to get out of things rather than suffer through them. We will begin thinking and living, as long as it's painful I don't care if it's good for me or not, I don't want it. Why, because I want just pleasure... I want; I desire, I deserve the good life, the fun life.

God's word, the bible says that type of a person is a fool. I live that foolish life for years, Ecclesiastes 7:4 "*A fool only thinks of having a good time now.*" So let me ask, What are you focusing on? Are you focusing on the now, today or the later, the eternal? Are you think short term or long term? The Bible says, "Don't get tired of doing what's good. Don't get discouraged and give up. You will reap a

harvest of blessing at the appropriate time." God's word is saying to us don't lose your focus. **You've got to stay focused.** Many times we fail to finish what we start because we lose our focus. We get distracted by other things in life and we lose our focus. We can't see what God has in store for us in heaven. We forget that life here on earth is not all that there is.... There is another life waiting for those who have put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and we need to stay focused on that life. The right question when you're starting to be discouraged in life is not, "What will make me feel good?" but "What does God want me to do?"

God's word says, "*God is watching you and He will know. He will reward each person for what he has done.*" Jesus said even a cup of cold water you give to a little child in His name will be noticed. Nothing is unnoticed by God.

Other people may not notice your ministry, your sacrifice, your giving, your serving, your sharing, your praying, whatever. But God does. God is noticing it. He's keeping account and you're going to be rewarded in heaven for those times that nobody else even knew about. Focus on the gain not the pain. How do you get back on track? How do you finish what you started?

4. DEPEND ON GOD TO HELP

When you're trying to finish something that you started, depend on God to help you finish it. Remember something here: God won't ask you to do what He won't give you the power to do. 1 Peter 4:11 *"Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then God will be glorified."*

God says I'll give you the power to do it.

Some of you here this morning are Seekers. That means you haven't stepped across the line yet. You've been

considering the claims of Christ. Some of you honestly have this fear and it's not a legitimate fear. You're saying, "I don't want to commit myself to Christ until I know that I can keep that commitment. Once I know that I can keep that commitment, then maybe I'll do it." I want to tell you something, You've got it all wrong. You don't have to do the keeping. It's God's job to do the keeping once you've made the initial commitment. Paul said it like this, *"I know who I have believed in and I'm persuaded that He is able to keep that which I've committed to Him against that day."* When I come to Christ and say, "Jesus Christ, I'm putting my hand in Your hand." Yes, there are times when I don't want to hold on, there are times when I say, 'God, I don't want to be a Christian anymore,' I want to take the easy way out. I want to do it my way. There are times when I want to let go. But God is never going to let go of

me. Isn't that good news? Jesus said you're in His hand and "no man can plunk them out." That is security.

It says "*Do it in the strength that God supplies and God will be given glory.*" Circle "glory".

How do I bring glory to God? The Bible tells us the primary goal for believers, is to bring glory to God. How do I do that? Simple. By completing the task He's given me to do. By doing what God put me on this earth to do in the first place. Jesus said, "*I have brought You glory on earth* [talking to His Father] *by completing the work You gave me to do.*" He finished what He started.

The same with Paul. "*I only want to complete my mission and finish the work that the Lord Jesus gave me to do.*"

Paul's last words on his death bed, "*I have fought the good fight and I've finished the race.*"

So let me ask you... Are you going to be able to say that when you stand before Jesus Christ one day? Will you be able to say, "I've finished the race. I did what You put me on earth to do." See I may die with unfinished financial portfolio, an unfinished symphony or an unfinished poem or an unfinished story or an unfinished building. But it doesn't compare to the tragedy of dying with unfinished business with God.

So what's unfinished in your life? Some of you have some relationships that if you died today you will die with unfinished business. You need to go make it right. You need to ask forgiveness or offer forgiveness or seek some kind of peace, some kind of closure on that issue because if you died today you'd die with unfinished business with that person. Many of you have unfinished business with God. You need to deal with that.

Let's get real personal and real practical. Here are two questions you need to ask yourself: "What do I need to finish?" And "What's my next step?" I don't know what your next step is because I don't know what you need to finish. But if you go home and pray about it and say, "God, what do I need to finish that's left unfinished." He'll show you. Just in case you forget to do that, let me suggest five things:

1. Some of you are seekers. You haven't become full believers in Christ yet. You haven't stepped across the line. You haven't said, "Yes, Jesus Christ, come into my life." If you haven't done that, let me ask you a simple question: What are you waiting on? What's got to happen first before you step across the line? God says I want to forgive all your past, I want to give you a permanent home

in heaven, I want to help you with your problems now... What are you waiting on? Don't waste another day.

2. Many of you have already done that. You've accepted Christ. But you still need to be baptized. I'm not talking about being christened as a little baby. That wasn't your decision. You didn't even know about it. I'm not talking about being confirmed as a teenager. I'm talking about an adult decision where you say, "I've accepted Christ in my life and I'm going to do what He commanded us to do, what Jesus Himself modeled when He went down to the Jordan River and was baptized by John the Baptist to symbolized I died to my old life and I'm beginning a new life.

We have baptized over 200 people here at Calvary and will be having another baptism September 13th. Each year we baptize 15 to 20 people. If you have not been baptized the

Biblical way, the way Jesus said, as an adult expression of your faith that says, “I’m a believer and I understand what I’m doing,” you need to be baptized.

3. Some of you have been thinking, “I need to get some relationships, some Christian friends in my life. I know I should be in a small group. One day I’ll get around to it.” But you’re still not in one. Some of you could host a neighborhood group in your house that would be awesome.

4. What do you need to finish that you started? A few years ago, we talked about building an “Equipping Center” and many made commitments to give towards that project... during that time. Let me share some of what we have done with your giving towards that... The trailers have been bought and paid for; we have hook-up to both Water and sewage. These are all steps needed to take as we

continue the path of building an Equipping Center. Those two projects themselves were over \$50,000 and they are paid in full and this all happened with the monies that you have given over and above your tithe and offerings. We haven’t stopped working on getting things done and we are pressing on... to the completion of God vision for this church.

Some of you maybe have forgotten or you kind of slacked off in your giving... and maybe you’re discouraged at the half way point. Don’t get discouraged. Just say, “God, I need to finish what I started in the first place.” Don’t get discouraged by that. Don’t feel bad about it.

Circumstances and situations have changed. Paul had to write a letter to some people about this very thing. In Corinth, he had made a commitment to give to the churches and Paul wrote this: *“Having started the ball*

rolling so enthusiastically, you should carry this project through to completion just as gladly, giving whatever you can out of whatever you have. It's between you and God. Nobody's going to tell you what to give. It's your commitment. "Let your enthusiasm at the start be equaled by realistic action now." God's saying to some of you about Time to build, you need to finish what you started. Any of these five commitments can be started on immediately. Maybe God's spoken to you about something else. There's not a better time than now.

Prayer:

Father, in this kind of messages You've told us what to do. The issue is whether we're going to do it or not. The issue is whether we're going to trust You more than our feelings. The issue is whether we're going to do what's right or what's convenient. Help us to not look at short-term issues but long term benefits and eternal rewards. In Jesus' name. Amen.