

# **FINISHING OUR CHRISTIAN WALK WELL**

**Towards the end of his time here on earth the Apostle Paul wrote,**

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”  
**(2 Timothy 4:7-8)**

**The Apostle Paul knew the importance of finishing what God had called him to do in life and to remaining strong in his faith until the end**

**He also made this very clear when he wrote,**

“But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.”  
**(1 Corinthians 9:27)**

**We are now living in the perilous times that the Apostle Paul wrote about in his letter to the young pastor Timothy**

“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” **(2 Timothy 3:1-5)**

**Today I want to emphasise the importance of finishing our Christian walk well**

**It does not matter how well we started in our walk with the Lord, what really matters is how we finish our Christian walk**

**It is crucial that we finish our Christian walk well for a number of important reasons:**

- i) Because we are now living in the lawless times that Jesus spoke about where He said the love of many would grow cold. We must not allow our love for Christ to grow cold and to become indifferent to the needs of others**

**Jesus Himself said,** “And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold, But he who endures to the end shall be saved.” (Matthew 24:12-13)

- ii) So that we continue to shine brightly in our world so that we can help to lead others to Christ (The eternal destinies of others is connected to us faithfully living for the Lord)**

**Jesus Himself said,**

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)

- iii) That we are good role models and examples for our children and friends so that they are encouraged to also live wholeheartedly for the LORD**

**The way that we live our life will particularly have the greatest influence on the lives of our children**

**The Apostle Paul wrote to the young pastor Timothy,**

“Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” (1 Timothy 4:12)

- iv) Because we have a very real adversary, the devil, who is out to destroy our lives and faith**

**The Apostle Peter wrote,**

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” (1 Peter 5:8)

**AND**

- v) So that we continue to store up treasures in heaven. One day Jesus will reward us for what we did for Him during our time here on earth**

**Jesus Himself said,** “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:19-21)

“For the Son of Man will come in the glory of his Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.” (Matthew 16:27)

**We have one gift of life to make an eternal difference in the lives of others; one life to store up treasures in heaven**

**Over the last few years I have seen many Christians drifting out of fellowship and losing their fire and passion for the things of God.**

**It is so important that we keep our heart with all diligence, especially given the lawless days that we are now living in.**

**We must also be careful in this blessed country of Australia that we do not allow the material things and comforts of life to steal our passion for the things of God**

**In the book of Proverbs we read, “Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.” (Proverbs 4:23)**

**The way that we live our life and what we talk about is a reflection of the condition of our heart spiritually**

**It is so important that we do not allow the things of this world to cause our faith to become just ritualistic and routine where we have no real fervour or passion for the things of God**

**Jesus Himself said to the religious Scribes and Pharisees,**  
**‘These people <sup>[a]</sup>draw near to Me with their mouth,**  
**And honour Me with *their* lips,**  
**But their heart is far from Me.**  
**And in vain they worship Me,**  
**Teaching *as* doctrines the commandments of men.’ ”**  
**(Matthew 15:8-9)**

**God is only concerned about our worship being genuine and heart felt**

**Jesus Himself made this clear when He said,**

“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”  
**(John 4:23-24)**

**With the imminent return of the Lord more than ever before it is crucial that we finish our walk with the Lord well**

**God has so much in store for every believer's life**

**The Apostle Paul wrote,** “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,” **(Ephesians 3:20)**

**However to appropriate all that God has planned for our life we will need to remain strong in our faith as we are in a constant spiritual war in which the enemy would try and minimise what we do for God**

**In many ways the Christian walk is one of continually having to row upstream against the tide of the spirit of this world, that would try and drag us away from the things of God**

**Today I want to share 8 keys that can help us to finish our walk with the Lord well and to realise our full potential in Christ**

## **I will now quickly look at these 8 keys**

### **1) We must stay connected in fellowship with other believers**

**In the book of Hebrews we read,** “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.” **(Hebrews 10:23-25)**

**Our God given destiny will always be outworked in connection with other believers that God connects us with**

**More than ever before we need the encouragement of other believers if we are to remain strong in our faith and realise our full potential in Christ. We all need one another**

**The Psalmist wrote,** “Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing. To declare that the LORD is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.” **(Psalm 92:13-15)**

**Being accountable to other mature believers is a great safeguard to help prevent us from making wrong choices in life. There is wisdom in a multitude of counsellors**

## **2) We need to maintain a repentant heart and keep short accounts with God**

**Continually *persisting* in known sin will harden our heart and adversely affect our walk with the Lord**

**In the book of Hebrews we read,**

“Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,” **(Hebrews 3:12-14)**

**Having short accounts with God helps us to maintain a soft heart and conscience so that we can be continually sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit**

**The Apostle John wrote,**

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

**(1 John 1:9)**

**Maintaining a soft conscience helps us to hear clearly from God so that we can consistently make right choices in life that are in line with His unfolding plan for our life**

**3) We need to be continually intimate in our walk with the Lord. We need to spend quality time in God's presence on a regular (daily) basis**

**We need to make our love for Jesus our greatest priority in life. He will never leave nor forsake us**

**King David had a great love for God. He was the only one referred to in the bible as being a man after God's own heart**

**King David wrote,**

“O GOD, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for you; My flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water. So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory. Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips shall praise You.” **(Psalm 63:1-3)**

“Thus I will bless You while I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth shall praise You with joyful lips. When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches. Because You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice.” **(Psalm 63:4-7)**

**Jesus emphasised the importance of maintaining our love for God when He said,**

““And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment.” **(Mark 12:30)**



**It is our love for God that enables us to love others in a right way and EVEN our enemies and to fulfil the second great commandment**

**Jesus Himself said,** “And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” **(Mark 12:31)**

**Being intimate in our walk with the Lord helps us to maintain a right heart.**

**We must refuse to get too busy so that we do not spend quality time with the Lord (Luke 10:38-42)**

**Jesus Himself during His time here on earth consistently drew aside to spend time in prayer with His Father in Heaven so that He could be refreshed and know the will of His Father**

**In the gospel of Luke we read,** “So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.” **(Luke 5:16)**

**King David wrote,** “Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.” **(Psalm 37:4)**

**The more intimate we are in our walk with the LORD the more instinctively we will know and follow the will of God for our life**

**As the words of the song go,** “As we turn our eyes upon Jesus the things of this world will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace”

#### **4) We need to CONTINUALLY choose our friends wisely**

**The Apostle Paul wrote, “Do not be deceived: Evil company corrupts good habits.” (1 Corinthians 15:33)**

**In the book of Proverbs we read,**

**“The righteous should choose his friends carefully, For the way of the wicked leads them astray.” (Proverbs 12:26)**

**“He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed.” (Proverbs 13:20)**

**Although we need to be actively evangelising the lost, it is so important that we CONTINUALLY have the right people in our inner circle of friends**

**Allowing wrong friends into our life and connecting with wrong people will greatly impact our lives. We only have to look at the life of Whitney Houston and her tragic premature death**

**Wrong friends will undermine our character and invariably cause us to compromise in our walk with the LORD. THERE IS A BIG DIFFERENCE NOW BETWEEN THE WAYS OF THE WORLD AND THE WAYS OF GOD. How important it is therefore that we have godly friends in our life**

**We must always be quick to heed the cautioning of the Holy Spirit when warned of entering in significant relationships with certain people. GOD ALWAYS HAS OUR BEST INTERESTS AT HEART**

**5) We need to be quick to forgive those who hurt us or spitefully use us. We must simply refuse to take on offenses**

**Jesus made it clear that in this life we will have many opportunities to be offended**

**Jesus Himself said to His disciples, “It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come!” (Luke 17:1)**

**The simple fact is that none of us are perfect. We are all flawed and works in progress as Christians**

**As God has forgiven us as believers of all of our past mistakes, we need to simply CHOOSE to forgive others when they hurt us**

**Allowing offenses to enter into our heart will adversely affect our relationships both with God and with others**

**We cannot shut our heart towards others and also have our heart open to God at the same time**

**Jesus Himself said in relation to the times that we are now living in, “And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. (Matthew 24:10-11)**

**We must simply continue to forgive all people at all times so that we can maintain a soft heart towards God and others**

**Jesus Himself said,**

“And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.” **(Mark 11:25-26)**

**6) We need to be careful about what we focus on. We must be careful about what we allow into our ear and eye gates**

**Focusing on wrong things can weaken our character and cause us to stumble in our walk with the Lord**

**The internet is full of things that have the potential to cause people to stumble in their walk with the Lord**

**We must be continually disciplined and careful about what we look at and listen to so that we do not allow wrong desires to develop in our heart**

**We must simply give no place to the enemy who is continually looking for an opportunity to draw us into sin and to thwart God's plan for our life**

**In the book of James we read, "Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full grown, brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren."  
**(James 1:12-16)****

**The Apostle Paul made it clear what we should meditate on when he wrote,**

“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy-meditate on these things.” **(Philippians 4:8)**

**We must never get complacent in our walk with the Lord. It is so important that we are always disciplined in what we listen to and look at**

Even King David, a man after God’s own heart, stumbled into sin when he looked upon Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah in a wrong way. After committing adultery with her and then having her husband murdered, he repented of his sins but from that time on the sword never left his house

**There are always consequences for sin because we never sin in a vacuum**

**7) We need to build our life on the Word of God. That we are both HEARERS and DOERS of God's word**

**It is so important that we do not allow the ways of the world to negatively affect the way that we live our lives as Christians.**

**With the world becoming increasingly more ungodly and even hostile towards Christian values, we must be careful that we do not allow the ways of the world to shape the way that we live our life**

**The bible gives us much wisdom for how to do life well**

**It is so important that we continually CHOOSE to build our lives based on the wisdom and promises contained in the word of God**

**This is a great key to not allowing the ways of the world to influence the way that we live our life**

**As believers we can position ourselves to appropriate all of God's wonderful promises in His word**

**The Apostle Paul wrote,**

**“For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.” (2 Corinthians 1:20)**

**As believers it is so important that we continually build our lives based on what God says about our lives and future and what the word of God says in relation to how we should live our lives**

**It is so important that we continually replace all wrong mindsets with Kingdom thinking**

**This is why the Apostle Paul wrote, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” (Romans 12:2)**

**God’s will for our life is the best. True fulfilment and purpose in life only comes from loving God with all of our heart and from flowing in His will and plan for our life**

**We must simply refuse to compromise in our walk with the Lord, especially when under pressure and go against the wisdom expressed in God’s word**

**Going against God’s wisdom in His word opens us up to the possibility of deception entering into our lives**

**In the book of James we read,**

**“Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” (James 1:21-22)**

**As Christians we are in a marathon.**

**If we are simply committed to being both hearers and doers of God’s word we will see God’s blessing and favour upon our lives in the LONG RUN and will continually remain strong in our faith during the trials of life**



**Jesus Himself emphasised the importance of being continually BOTH hearers and doers of God's word when He said,**

“Therefore, whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the **rock**; and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

“But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand; and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” (Matthew 7:24-27)

**The LORD said the Joshua when he was about to lead the Children of Israel into the Promised Land,**

“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” (Joshua 1:8)

**Being continually both hearers and doers of God's word is therefore a key to being prosperous and to having good success in life and is crucial to seeing us finish our Christian walk well**

**AND**

**8) We need to keep our focus on the eternal things. God has so much in store for every believer's life**

**As Christians we are to be in this world but not of it. As Christians we have been called to be Christ's ambassadors here on earth**

**The Apostle Paul wrote, "Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, ... Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God." (2 Corinthians 5:18 & 20)**

**For this reason we need to always live our life with eternity in mind and for the Kingdom Cause**

**In living our life this way it will affect our choices here on earth. How we use our time, talents and resources and the people that we connect with**

**William Carey, who achieved so much for God during his missions work in India had the motto; EXPECT GREAT THINGS FROM GOD, ATTEMPT GREAT THINGS FOR GOD**

**I sensed the Lord put on my heart to encourage people today that by finishing well in your walk with the Lord, you can make a great difference in this world for eternity in the days to come**

**The LORD said to the prophet Jeremiah,**

“Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.”  
**(Jeremiah 33:3)**

**Your past does not define your future**

**The world is now in desperate need of hope. As believers we have the answer, Christ in us the hope of glory. All God needs is our AVAILABILITY**

**Just believe that your life can make a great difference in the lives of many for eternity in the days to come, if you wholeheartedly commit to living with eternity in mind AND FOR THE KINGDOM CAUSE**

The great evangelist Billy Graham was simply a 16 year old farm boy when He gave His life to Jesus Christ. As he grew in his Christian walk he was simply just committed to following God’s plan for his life. **The rest is now history**

Over the course of his ministry here on earth he preached the gospel to more than 215 million people in more than 185 countries and territories. He also reached hundreds of millions more on television and through videos

**Billy Graham was simply AVAILABLE to be used of the Lord**

## **WE ALL HAVE A MISSIONS FIELD**

**Every believer is uniquely gifted**

**God also has a unique plan for every believer's life.**

**The Apostle Paul wrote,** “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” **(Ephesians 2:10)**

**Jesus also made it clear that if we live for Him and the Kingdom cause, ALL that we need in life shall be added to us**

**Jesus Himself said,** “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ Or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” **(Matthew 6:31-33)**

**We will never come second putting God first in our life**

## **OUR LABOUR FOR THE LORD IS NEVER IN VAIN**

**The Apostle Paul wrote,**

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” **(1 Corinthians 15:58)**

## **SO IN CONCLUSION MAY I ENCOURAGE YOU TO,**

- 1) Continually stay connected in fellowship with other believers**
- 2) Maintain a repentant heart and to keep short accounts with God**
- 3) Spend quality time in God's presence on a regular (daily) basis**
- 4) Continually choose your friends wisely**
- 5) Be quick to forgive those who hurt you or spitefully use you and to refuse to take on offenses**
- 6) Be careful about what you focus on and let into your ear and eye gates**
- 7) Build your life on the firm foundation of the word of God by being both hearers and DOERS of the word of God, and**
- 8) Continually live your life with eternity in mind as you choose to live for the Kingdom Cause**

**In doing this you will finish your walk with the Lord strongly and one day hear from the Lord the words "Well done my good and faithful servant"**

## **I will now finish by sharing about an Indian Beggar who had an encounter with the Maharajah of India**

An Indian beggar sat beside a road, fingering the rice in his little bowl. Wearing only a loin cloth, he sat in poverty beside a road that stretched into nowhere both ways. One day he heard the thunder of a chariot in the distance. It was the grand entourage of the maharajah.

This was a moment that had never come to him before. So the Indian beggar cried out to the great one for him to stop and to give him some baskets of rice. To his amazement the golden chariot of the maharajah stopped before the poor beggar.

The great one stepped down and the beggar fell before him. Then the sky seemed to fall in when the Maharajah said to the India beggar, "Give me your rice." The Indian beggar thought to himself I have to feed my family. It had been a bad day and he only had a third of a bowl of rice. So the beggar reached into his bowl and thrust one grain of rice toward the maharajah. "Is that all?" said the great one. The beggar then threw him one more grain of rice.

The great one turned, entered his chariot, and was gone. The beggar - angry, empty, and crushed - fingered the remaining rice he had hoarded in his bowl. He felt something hard, different from the rice. He pulled it out. It was one grain of gold. He poured out his rice, caring nothing for it now. He found one other grain of gold.

They said his cries could be heard all around India - If only I have given my all

## **WE HAVE ONE LIFE TO GIVE OUR BEST FOR THE LORD**

**One life to leave an eternal legacy in our world through the way that we live our life here on earth**

**One life to store up treasures in heaven**

**So may I encourage you to FINISH WELL and to give your best for the Kingdom Cause, so that in the days to come you will help many others to come to Christ and one day hear the words from the Lord, “Well done my good and faithful servant”**