

Speed Trap

Justin Worden – February 27, 2008
Tupos SM - Wednesday Night Live

Hebrews 12:1-2 = “Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (NASB)

I. Are You Caught In the Trap?

a. Running Our Own Race

- i. Ever feel like you are non stop?
- ii. Just going all the time... get up, get dressed, eat, go to school, eat, go home, go to work, homework, practice, eat, homework, bed... (start over)
- iii. So much to distract us
 1. school, job, friends, cell phones, texting, MySpace, Facebook, AIM, Xbox360, computer, surfing the web, etc...
 2. Where’s the time for God?
 - a. These things are okay... if you have time for God and don’t make them “gods”
 - b. “You shall have no other gods before me” (Ex. 20:3)

b. Running His Race

- i. Speeding through life, Missing opportunities
- ii. Who’s race are you running?
- iii. Who are you living for?
 1. “To live is Christ, to die is gain” (Phil 1:21)
 2. Life = for God, Death = to self/no more me

c. “Missed Me, missed Me”

- i. Playing games with God?
- ii. Living your own life (“missed me, missed me”)

II. Preparing for the Race (v.1)

a. You Are Not Alone

- i. “all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on?” (v.1, Message)
- ii. “Cloud of witnesses” – “refers to the people of faith mentioned in ch. 11. They are not actually spectators watching us; they are witnesses testifying to the truth of the faith (11:2, 4-6)” (Compact Bible Comm, pg. 902).

b. You Must Let Go

- i. What’s holding you back? What are you holding on to that’s slowing you down?

National Geographic aired a television special about how eagles catch fish in lakes. They fly high above the water but their eyesight is so good they can spot fish in the water below. When they see one they fold back their wings and aim directly for the water, going as fast as 130 mph. When they reach the water they spread their wings, reach out their talons, grab the fish, and begin flying back to the shore. On this show they ran film of a very unusual occurrence. An eagle made a dive for a fish and grabbed it in its talons. But the fish was much larger than the eagle realized. As it began to fly to the shore you could see the strain on the eagle’s face. It was not going to make it to the shore with this huge fish. It then tried to drop the fish, to let go of it. But the talons of the eagle had dug into the flesh of the fish so deeply that it could not pull them out. It struggled but to no avail.

Slowly the eagle descended into the lake and drowned, unable to let loose of its catch.

Many times in life we grab on to something that can be dangerous. We feel we have control and can stop holding on any time we like. It becomes a habit and one day we try to get out and discover that we no longer have a hold of it but it has a hold of us. “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us” (Hebrews 12:1).

- ii. “Throw off everything that hinders”

1. “Hinders” is a noun that means any kind of weight” (Zondervan NIV Comm, pg. 1002)
2. What’s weighing your living for God down?

c. Way Too Easy

- i. Sin “easily entangles us” = easily!?
- ii. Why are we easy prey for Satan?
- iii. Do we have our roadblocks up? (Feb 13th)

III. Running the Race (vv.1-2)

a. It’s Game Time

- i. You in? Totally committed? (dedicated, devoted, loyal)
- ii. “Looking here means ‘fixing one’s eyes trustingly’. We need to consistently focus on Christ instead of our own circumstances” (Compact Bible Comm, pg. 902).

Bud Wilkinson’s football teams at the University of Oklahoma were undoubtedly the strongest in the nation in the late 50s and early 60s. Consistently his undefeated teams steam-rolled the opposition. After his retirement to the broadcast booth, Coach Wilkinson was asked the secret of his success. How could he consistently mold young athletes into powerful teams, year after year? This was Bud’s answer—

"When a football player goes into a game, he can play to a variety of audiences. He may play for the crowd in the stands, for example, working hard for their cheers and avoiding their boos. Or he might play for a special person in the stands—a girlfriend, maybe.

"A player may allow the other team to dictate his play. In other words, if the man across the line isn't very good, then he doesn't play well either. If the opponent cheats and plays dirty, so does he.

"Some football players allow their teammates to determine the quality of their play. Some focus on the game officials, the referees. And of course, some play merely for themselves—they work hard to be the stars.

"Many audiences vie for the attention of the players. My men know, however, that there's only one person watching the game that matters—only one person whom they have to please...me. Regardless of the cheers or boos, the strength of the opposition, the fairness of the officials, or the play of their teammates, I am the only audience that counts. When everyone knows that and plays that way, they pull together, do their best, give it their all, and win."

Christians sometimes play to the crowd, to our peers, or to any of a number of audiences. But only one person in the stands really counts—God. We need to play our lives for him and him alone. (Philippians 3:13-14; Hebrews 12:2)

iii. He's our "Audience of One" (Big Daddy Weave)

IV. **Winning the Race (v.2)**

a. **The Author & Finisher**

- i. Author... designed the course, knows the race
- ii. Finisher = "Christ has done everything necessary for us to endure in our faith" (Compact Bible Comm, pg. 902).

b. **The Outcome: We Win!** (check out the end of the book!)

- i. Have you claimed the victory? (**Cross-eyed?**)
- ii. "Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he's there, in the place of honor, right alongside God." (vv.2-3, Message)

Closing Video = Run the Race (1:26) – Flashlight Films

"Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! 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." (1 Cor 9:24-25, NLT)

Related music = "Underdog" (Underdog by Audio Adrenaline, 1999)

Color code = blue (commentary/video), red (copyrighted quotes/story)
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Tupos Student Ministries Small Group Life Application Sheet

Wednesday, February 27, 2008



Lesson Objective: Student should understand the difference between living for oneself and living for God in this "race" of life. He/she should find encouragement & benefit in living for God!

Tonight's Text: **Hebrews 12:1-2** = "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (NASB)

Personal Insights: Give students time to reflect on the business of their lives and attempt to compare that will time they should be spending with God on a daily basis.

Discussion Questions:

1. How much priority to you honestly give God each day?
2. How can you personally run the race God has called us to better? Name practical ways to improve.
3. Do you truly believe God is the "finisher" of your faith? Do your actions as a Christian show that belief?

Prayer Time: Pray for the forgiveness of sins and encourage the students to ask God personally to forgive them of their sins.