**David A. Rankin “Tony”**

**Mike Vestal**

**BVBI Homiletics 4**

**19 March 2020 (13 October 2020)**

**“Always Looking to Jesus”**

**Hebrews 12:1-3**

***Jesus, the Example***

**1 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,**

**2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the aauthor 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.**

**3 For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary band lose heart.**

**NASB 1995**

**Introduction:** The writer of Hebrews gives us an example unto like we might be

familiar with if we have ever been to a track meet or other performance

event with a multitude of spectators. I can think back when I was a high

school track coach and had athletes participating in the State Track

meet. In Darrell K. Royal Memorial Stadium there would be thousands in

attendance. The athlete’s had to be disciplined and focused on the Goal

so as not to be distracted by the multitudes. We have to rid our minds of

all distractions, we have to prepare ourselves for the race ahead which is

not a sprint but a marathon, and we have to stay focused on the goal.

Most importantly we have to finish the race.

**Thesis: Always Looking to Jesus to finish the race!**

**(2 Timothy 4:7-8)**

**I. Disciplined and Focused on the goal.**

**A. In order to be disciplined and focused on the goal we have to have a**

**great plan.**

**1. This would include identifying our goal (Matthew 14:29)**

**a. Always looking to Jesus to stay in the race**

1. Reading our Bibles to understand how to keep our eyes on Jesus

2. Practical Application of our plan (loving and serving God

and our neighbor)

**Application: When we look at Christ we should see how He endured the cross, He endured the shame of the cross and received the reward of being seated at the righthand of God. This is what we are looking at when we keep our eyes on Christ.**

**b. Staying focused on our goal. (Matthew 14:30)**

1. Imitating Jesus on a daily basis (in action and attitude)

2. Avoiding Stumbling blocks (tempted by worldly lifestyle, persecution)

**Application:** **None of the people in chapter 11 received their reward in this life but by faith they endured until the end. They focused on what was promised not what they had not received in this life. They all looked for the joy to come by keeping their eyes on Jesus.**

**2. Coming up with a plan to achieve our goal**

a. By studying our Bibles and imitating Jesus we can practice what Jesus did in serving God and mankind.

1. Worshipping God (Our Daily Walk with God)

2. Praying (Our prayer Schedule)

3. Love our neighbor as ourselves (by them groceries, give them a ride somewhere, study the Bible with them)

b. Study time with my family

1. Quality time with my spouse

2. Quality time with my children

c. Social Settings (planning a Bible Study at my Home)

1. Study a particular passage or book/epistle

2. A Series on faith, love, etc…

**Application: The only way this plan works is that we keep our eyes on Jesus to give us the faith we need to run the race. If we focus on other things or other people. We will not finish the race but if we focus our eyes on Jesus then we can run freely to Him**

3. Sticking to our plan and making adjustments when necessary

a. If what I am doing is not working I need to re-evaluate

1. If I’m not reading and studying daily, I need to start

2. If I’m not Praying daily, I need to start

b. If I’m not spending enough time with my family, I need to start

1. Spouse

2. Children

**Application: We need to cast away all burdens and baggage we are carrying when we are running the race with Jesus. Give all our burdens to God in prayer and break those bindings so we can run free with Jesus.**

**(The Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13:22).**

**As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.**

**Let us lay aside every encumbrance ( encumbrance = a burden or impediment)!**

**We have to let go of the guilt of the sins we have asked for forgiveness for and let them go. If we don’t they will weigh us down.**

**Guilt of our conscience is good if we haven’t asked for forgiveness yet but we need to go ahead and ask for forgiveness so it doesn’t slow us down in the race. Most importantly, we need to believe we are forgiven or this will continue to slow us down.**

**Conclusion:**

**Jesus gave us the example of how to endure till the end (John 19:30). If we keep our eyes on Him, we will make it!**

**If you are here this morning and you want to learn more about Jesus and obeying His Gospel we love to study with you.**

**You have to: 1. Hear**

**2. Believe**

**3. Repent**

**4. Confess**

**5. Baptized for the remission of sins**

**Continue to live the Christian Life.**

**If you are already in the body of Christ:**

**1. Let us pray for you. Don’t carry all your burdens around, hand**

**them over to Jesus.**