



THE SCROLLS

Helping one another mature so we can impact our world for Christ

Senior Sunday

For the week of May 30th, 2005

Beliefs

- T rinity
- S alvation by Grace
- A uthority of Bible
- P ersonal God
- I dentity in Christ
- C hurch
- H umanity
- C ompassion
- E ternity
- S tewardship

Practices

- W orship
- P rayer
- B ible S tudy
- S ingle-mindedness
- B iblical Community
- S piritual Gifts
- G iving My T ime
- G iving My Money
- G iving My Faith
- G iving My Life

Virtues

- L ove
- J oy
- P eace
- P atience
- K indness/Goodness
- F aithfulness
- G entleness
- S elf-Control
- H ope
- H umility
- F orgiveness

The Journey You are On: Running the Race

In the fictional work, *The Lord of the Rings* by JRR Tolkien, Frodo Baggins sets out on a journey of heroic proportions. No one can predict where that journey will take him or the difficulties he will encounter along the way. What begins as a group effort with a fellowship of nine, splinters until only Frodo and his companion, Samwise Gangee, remain. Constantly dogged by evil creatures and self-doubts, Frodo repeatedly questions whether he can finish what he began. Yet he continues, one step at a time, one day at a time. In the end, after marching into the domain of evil itself, Mordor, Frodo finishes his task by casting the Ring into the fires of Mt. Doom.

This fictional work, now popularized by the recent films, is an allegory of what it means to follow Christ. Christ calls us to see the journey through to the end. There will be difficult at times, we will each encounter our own evils, and will wrestle with our own self doubts. Thankfully, the New Testament is a chorus of encouragement, cheering us on to finish the course, to see it through to the end. This coming Sunday we will honor our high school and college graduates who have completed one part of the larger journey (of following after our Savior). This edition of the Scrolls, though written for all of us, is intended especially for our graduating Seniors. May we learn about the journey, or what the apostle Paul called “the race” together.

Monday – The Race We Run

Please read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, Hebrews 12:1-4 and 2 Timothy 4:6-8

1. What does Paul compare the Christian life to in each of these passages? What do you think of when you think of running an important race or completing an important task?
2. Why do you think Paul compares the Christian life to a race? Is this race more like a sprint or a marathon?
3. What is the finish line in this “race” that Paul is describing?
4. What point are you at in this race? Are you at the beginning? The end? Are you running well or are you winded and in need of help?

Tuesday – Training

“There is an immense difference between training to do something and trying to do something... For much of my life, when I heard messages about following Jesus, I thought in terms of trying hard to be like him.... Spiritual transformation is not a matter of trying harder, but of training wisely.” John Ortberg – *The Life You’ve Always Wanted*

Please read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, Romans 12:1-2

1. In 1 Corinthians 9, Paul speaks about going into strict training to run the race. What does he mean by “strict training”?
2. In what ways is training for an athletic event similar to spiritual training?
3. In what ways have you entered into spiritual training? Are there spiritual practices you are engaging in or would like to engage in (e.g. prayer, reflecting on Scripture, solitude)?
4. What insights does Paul give us in Romans 12 about spiritual training?

Digging Deeper - What are some things we can do this week to engage ourselves into spiritual training (set aside a day or morning for a spiritual retreat, say no to certain activities in your life, begin each day with time alone with God and his Word, etc)?

Wednesday – Jesus, Our Forerunner

“...we can become like Christ by doing one thing – by following him in the overall style of life he chose for himself. If we have faith in Christ, we must believe that he knew how to live. We can, through faith and grace, become like Christ by practicing the types of activities he engaged in, by arranging our whole lives around the activities he himself practiced....” Dallas Willard – *The Spirit of the Disciplines*

Please read Hebrews 12:1-4

1. How does Hebrews 12 describe Jesus?
2. What does it mean that he is the author and perfecter of our faith?
3. What kinds of activities did Jesus engage in that he calls us to imitate?
4. How does his life and death help us to understand what our lives should look like?

Digging Deeper - We often think that a life like Christ’s would be joyless and unfulfilling. But Jesus himself was the most joy-filled person who ever lived. Why did his style of life lead to joy?

Thursday – Finishing the Race

“Our imagination so powerfully magnifies time, by continual reflections upon it, and so diminishes eternity... for want of reflection, that we make nothing of eternity and an eternity of nothing.” Pascal

Please read 2 Timothy 4:6-8, Matthew 25:19-21 and 2 Corinthians 4:17

1. When we as believers in Christ “finish the race,” what will be our eternal reward?
2. How do you think Paul felt when he wrote 2 Tim. 4:6-8? If your life ended right now, would you be able to say what Paul said?
3. How can a healthy view of heaven change the way you live today? How can this help you as you encounter struggles and trials?
4. Any believer in Christ longs to hear Jesus say the words, “Well done my good and faithful servant...Come and share your master’s happiness!” What do those words mean to you?

Friday – Keeping the End in Mind

“If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.” C.S. Lewis

Please read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 and 2 Corinthians 4:18

1. What happens when you’re competing in a race or game, and no longer remember or care about the prize?
2. Why does Paul think it is important for the Corinthians and Timothy to keep eternity in mind in the here and now of today?
3. It is a dangerous thing for us as Christians to lose sight of our ultimate destination and the joys we will experience there. In what ways is it dangerous? How healthy is your view of your ultimate destination with Christ?
4. What is some way you can remind yourself of your eternal prize and keep focused on Christ throughout the day and coming week? Consider asking Christ to deepen your awareness and appreciation of heaven.

Saturday – As We Look Back

Please read 2 Timothy 4:6-8

1. What do Paul’s words in 2 Timothy evoke in you as you read them? Do they inspire you or make you feel guilty?
2. As we look at Paul’s life, how did he assess his life? Did he have any regrets about what he did or how much he accomplished?
3. 2 Timothy is one of the last letters Paul wrote before he was executed in Rome. How does this make his last words to Timothy all the more important?
4. Whether or not you have been faithful to God, he is faithful to you. As you look back on the last few years of your life, how has God done a work in you to transform you into the image of Christ?

Recommendation: *he Life You’ve Always Wanted* by John Ortberg



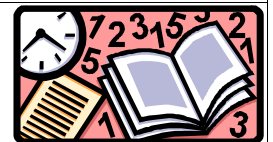
Homegroup Discussion

This section is designed for Home Groups and Small Groups who would like to discuss the Scrolls together. Begin by reading the opening introduction and the quote by John Ortberg (see Tuesday).

1. Have you ever trained for an athletic event? What did you train for and what was the training like?
2. In 1 Corinthians 9, Paul speaks about going into strict training to run the race. What does he mean by “strict training”?
3. In what ways is training for an athletic event similar to spiritual training?
4. In what ways have you entered into spiritual training? Are there spiritual practices you are engaging in or would like to engage in (e.g. prayer, reflecting on Scripture, solitude)?
5. What insights does Paul give us in Romans 12 about spiritual training?
6. Digging Deeper - What are some things we can do this week to engage ourselves into spiritual training (set aside a day or morning for a spiritual retreat, say no to certain activities in your life, begin each day with time alone with God and his Word, etc)?

Family Time with Kids

Families can use these kid-friendly questions to help your children learn what you studied this week. Begin by reading. 1 Corinthians 9:24-27



1. In 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 Paul writes about athletes who train hard. The athletes don’t just want to be fit. They want to win! Write a list of activities athletes do when they train to win. If you play a sport how your practices or training similar?
2. How does Paul compare an athlete training to compete with how you should live your Christian life?
3. Just as an athlete has a physical fitness plan to compete, you may create a spiritual fitness plan to be spiritually fit.
4. What activities would you put on your spiritual fitness plan? How can these activities help you be prepared to be spiritually fit, ready to serve God and others in a pleasing way “to win”?

Application- *Make a spiritual fitness plan, post it where the list will help you remember your plan. Do the activities you’ve put on your list to keep you spiritually fit. (Some suggestions: Read your Bible and think about what God says. Spend time in prayer every day. Pray for others who need special help. Do at least one loving thing for someone each day. Try to please God in everything you do.)*

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