

**“...began to
build and
was not able
to finish”?**

Luke 14:30



Highlights

- Finishing the “races”
- Started and did not finish
- The fuel of the beginnings
- Stumbling on the road
- Enduring to the end



Finishing the “races” ⁽¹⁾

- “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” **2 Tim 4:7-8**



Finishing the “races” (2)

- “Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it” *Hebrews 4:1*



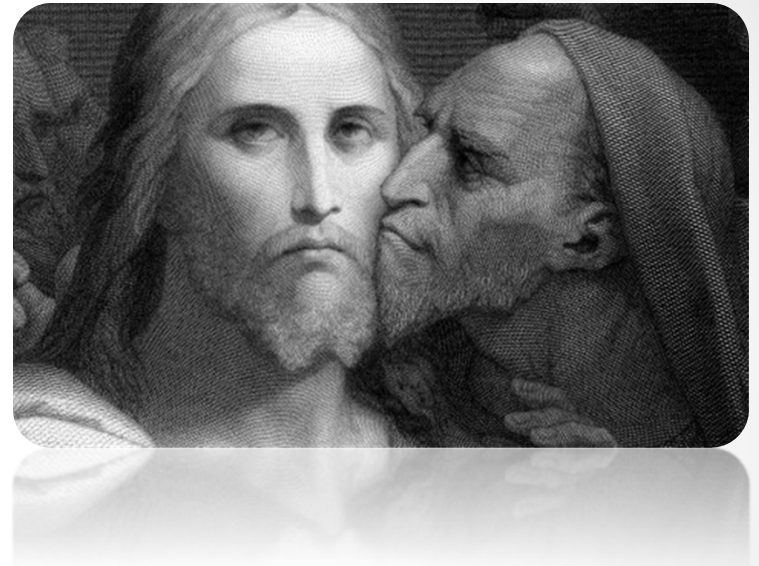
Finishing the “races” ⁽³⁾

- The race of the eternal life
- Marriage
- Service
- Work
- Relationships
- Vows
-



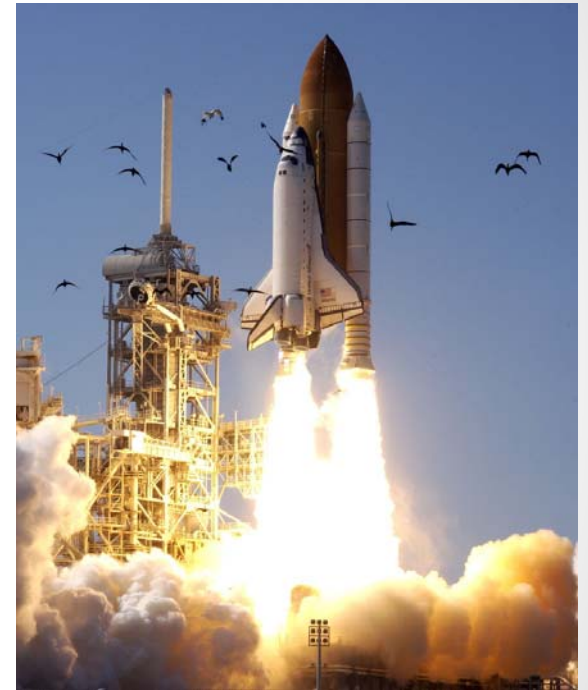
Started and did not finish

- The people of Israel
- Saul the king
- King Uzziah
- Demas, the disciple of
St. Paul
- Judas Iscariot



The Fuel of the Beginnings

- The first love and the passion associated
- Enthusiasm of a strong conviction
- Excitement of the new experience
- The consolations of the beginnings
-



Stumbling on the road ⁽¹⁾

1. Running out of fuel:

- The nature of the emotions and their short lives
- Absence of the consolation with the long way



Stumbling on the road ⁽²⁾

2. Forgetting the promises

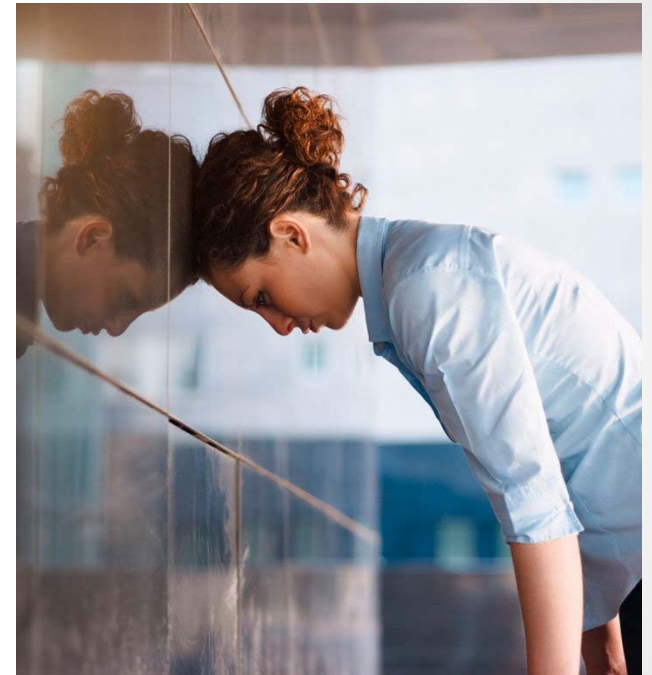
- The Israelites and their turning away from their promises
- Promises are made for actions not for feelings
- Promises are not conditioned



Stumbling on the road ⁽³⁾

3. Frustration:

- The long way
- Tiredness: "And let us not grow weary while doing good" *Galatians 6:9*
- Daily responsibilities and life demands
- Unmet expectations



Stumbling on the road ⁽⁴⁾

3. Frustration: (Cont.)

- Absence of fruits or return on the investment
- Doubts



Stumbling on the road ⁽⁵⁾

4. Strange love

- Love of the world (Demas)
- Money, pleasures
- The idol of the ego (Saul, King Uzziah)



Stumbling on the road ⁽⁶⁾

5. Boredom

- "...and our soul loathes this worthless bread"

Numbers 21:5

- Traveling in the wilderness
- The liturgy, the Agpeya, the church, etc.



Stumbling on the road ⁽⁷⁾

6. Relying on uncertain sources of fuel

- Appreciation, rewards, promotion
- Individuals (Moses and his absence)
- New tastes and experience



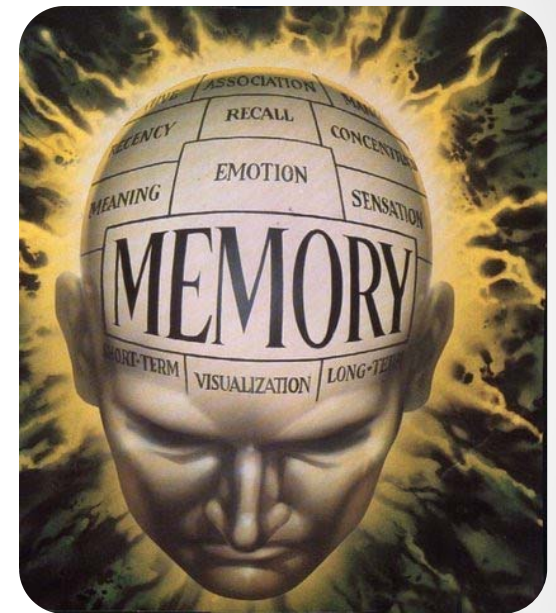
Stumbling on the road ⁽⁸⁾

7. The selective memory

- Remembering only the negatives, setbacks and hurts
- Lacking the ability to forgive

8. Looking for early comforts:

- The nature of the way does not permit vacations or retirement



Stumbling on the road ⁽⁹⁾

9. Emotional withdrawal

- Remembering Egypt and seeking to return back
- Seeking comforts through what is seen and felt
- Spending time in social activities to avoid confronting
- the real problem



Enduring to the end ⁽¹⁾

1. Understanding the nature of the race

- Setting the right expectations and how to deal with them
- Understanding God's will, myself, others, the course, the common stumbles, etc.



Enduring to the end ⁽²⁾

2. Faith vs. comforts

- The wars of boredom and distractions are confronted with a strong faith in God's acceptance
- Storing the experiences in the days of comfort to use them in
 - the days of aridity
 -



Enduring to the end ⁽³⁾

3. The new forms of love

- Success is not measured by how we feel
- Endurance, respect, commitment are all forms of love that fit the nature of a long path



Enduring to the end ⁽⁴⁾

4. Living with the mind of a servant

- *The burden of the stewardship:*

“ For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship” *1 Cor. 9:17*



Enduring to the end ⁽⁵⁾

4. Living with the mind of a servant (cont.)

- *It is more blessed to give:*

“And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved” ***2 Cor 12:15***



Enduring to the end ⁽⁶⁾

4. Living with the mind of a servant

(cont.)

- *Accepting the loss:*

"...for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain

Christ" *Philippians 3:8*



Enduring to the end ⁽⁷⁾

5. Looking at the Author of our faith

- "For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls"

Hebrews 12:3

- Looking at the example for
- comfort and for guidance



Enduring to the end ⁽⁸⁾

6. The fuel of the journey

- Prayers
- Fasting
- Readings
- Spiritual retreats



Enduring to the end ⁽⁹⁾

7. Acquiring a positive attitude

- The Past: lesson to learn from
- The Present: opportunity to do better
- The Future: plan and hope



Enduring to the end ⁽¹⁰⁾

8. The companionship

- Those who encourage and motivate us
- The example to imitate



Enduring to the end ⁽¹¹⁾

9. Watch for yourself

- The strange love
- The boundaries of my responsibilities
- Confronting not withdrawing
- Priorities and adjusting the goal
- Remember the beginning



Glory be to God
Forever