

Finish Strong Pt. 5
Discussion Notes- November 23, 2025

1. If you had to choose one word for the season you're in right now — "starting," "running," or "finishing" — which would you choose and why?

This past weekend, the service wove together worship, baptisms, testimonies, and three mini-messages that showed what perseverance and legacy look like in Scripture and in our church today. Solomon completing the temple reminded us that when God's people sacrifice and build together, generations experience joy and blessing. Joshua's declaration, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord", challenged us to intentionally choose the spiritual legacy we're leaving. And Jesus' words on the cross, "It is finished," revealed the ultimate example of faithful obedience, completing the mission the Father gave Him. Through the stories shared and the commitments revealed, we were reminded that finishing strong means choosing purpose, walking in faith, and building something that will outlast us.

Read John 19:28-30

"After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), 'I thirst.' A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, 'It is finished,' and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."

When Jesus declared, "It is finished," He wasn't saying His life was ending (although His time on earth was). He was announcing that His mission was fully accomplished. The Greek word *tetelestai* means completely fulfilled, paid in full, totally completed. Every prophecy, every act of obedience, every step toward the cross had been faithfully carried out. Jesus didn't quit when it became painful, costly, or lonely. He pressed on until the work the Father gave Him was entirely done. His declaration is the ultimate picture of finishing strong: a life poured out in obedience, perseverance, and purpose so that others could live in freedom. His example reminds us that our own race is worth running with that same resolve; not perfectly, but faithfully.

2. How does Jesus' example help you think differently about finishing strong in your own life?

Read Hebrews 12:1-2

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."

Hebrews 12:1–2 comes right after the “Hall of Faith” in Hebrews 11, where the writer lists men and women who persevered through trials, uncertainty, and hardship because they trusted God. With that cloud of witnesses surrounding us, Hebrews calls us to run our own race with the same endurance; laying aside anything that slows us down and fixing our focus on Jesus. He is the ultimate example of perseverance, the One who endured the cross and finished His mission. This passage reminds us that we don’t run alone, we don’t run aimlessly, and we don’t run on our own strength. We run to finish strong because Christ has already gone before us.

3. What “race” or season do you feel God has set before you right now, and what helps you stay committed to it?

Read Joshua 24:14-18

“Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods, for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight and preserved us in all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed. And the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.”

Joshua calls the people to fear the Lord and serve Him wholeheartedly, reminding them of everything God had done- from delivering them out of Egypt to giving them victory in the Promised Land. As Joshua recounts God’s faithfulness, the people respond by declaring that they will serve the Lord because they have seen His power, protection, and provision firsthand. They recognize that no other god has ever rescued them or walked with them like Yahweh has. Their commitment flows out of remembrance: because they know who God is and what He has done, they choose to serve Him with loyalty and devotion.

4. How has God’s faithfulness in your past helped strengthen your perseverance in the present?

Read Galatians 6:9

“And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.”

5. What “harvest” are you praying and believing for as you continue doing good and staying faithful?

Prayer Points:

- Pray for endurance and faithfulness to finish the race God has set before us.

- Pray for clarity and courage to choose daily to serve the Lord in our homes and lives.
- Pray for strength to persevere in doing good, trusting God's timing for the harvest.

Deeper Dive: Solomon – From David's Son to Temple Builder

Solomon's Early Life and God's Promise

Read 1 Chronicles 22:6–13

"Then he called for Solomon his son and charged him to build a house for the Lord, the God of Israel. David said to Solomon, 'My son, I had it in my heart to build a house to the name of the Lord my God. But the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 'You have shed much blood and have waged great wars. You shall not build a house to my name, because you have shed so much blood before me on the earth. Behold, a son shall be born to you who shall be a man of rest. I will give him rest from all his surrounding enemies. For his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quiet to Israel in his days. He shall build a house for my name. He shall be my son, and I will be his father, and I will establish his royal throne in Israel forever.' " Now, my son, the Lord be with you, so that you may succeed in building the house of the Lord your God, as he has spoken concerning you. Only, may the Lord grant you discretion and understanding, that when he gives you charge over Israel you may keep the law of the Lord your God. Then you will prosper if you are careful to observe the statutes and the rules that the Lord commanded Moses for Israel. Be strong and courageous. Fear not; do not be dismayed."

Solomon was the son of David and Bathsheba, growing up in the royal palace with the weight of expectation and a complex family dynamic. David prepared Solomon to succeed him as king, and God spoke directly to Solomon, promising wisdom, wealth, and a long reign if he would follow God's ways. This promise set the foundation for Solomon's life and mission: to lead Israel faithfully and build the temple for God's glory.

Solomon Plans and Begins the Temple

Read 1 Kings 5:1–12

"Now Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon when he heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father, for Hiram always loved David. And Solomon sent word to Hiram, 'You know that David my father could not build a house for the name of the LORD his God because of the warfare with which his enemies surrounded him, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet. But now the LORD my God has given me rest on every side. There is neither adversary nor misfortune. And so I intend to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD said to David my father, 'Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, shall build the house for my name. Now therefore command that cedars of Lebanon be cut for me. And my servants will join your servants, and I will pay you for your servants such wages as you set, for you know that there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians.'"

As soon as Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly and said, "Blessed be the LORD this day, who has given to David a wise son to be over this great people." And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, "I have heard the message that you have sent to me. I am ready to do all you desire in the matter of cedar and cypress timber. My servants shall bring it down to the sea from Lebanon, and I will make it into rafts to go by sea to the place you direct. And I will have them broken up there, and you shall receive it. And you shall meet my wishes by providing food for my household." So Hiram supplied Solomon with all the timber of cedar and cypress that he desired, while Solomon gave Hiram 20,000 cors of wheat as food for his household, and 20,000 cors of beaten oil. Solomon gave this to Hiram year by year. And the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him. And there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a treaty."

When Solomon became king, he began preparing for the temple. He negotiated alliances, gathered materials, and organized labor. This phase shows Solomon's diligence and vision: he didn't rush or act impulsively but carefully laid the groundwork for what would be a monumental task. His perseverance in planning demonstrates that finishing strong often begins with faithful preparation.

Solomon Completes and Dedicates the Temple

Read 1 Kings 8:10-13

"And when the priests came out of the Holy Place, a cloud filled the house of the LORD, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD. Then Solomon said, "The LORD has said that he would dwell in thick darkness. I have indeed built you an exalted house, a place for you to dwell in forever."

After years of construction, Solomon completed the temple, and during the dedication, the glory of the Lord filled the building, signaling God's presence among His people. The people rejoiced because Solomon's faithful leadership and perseverance had brought God's promise to fruition. This moment shows that finishing strong requires sustained commitment, patience, and obedience over time, resulting in a legacy that impacts generations.

Discussion Questions:

1. Solomon had years of preparation before the temple was built. How does planning and patience play a role in finishing strong in our own lives?
2. What challenges or distractions might have tempted Solomon to give up, and how can we learn from his perseverance?
3. How does Solomon's focus on God's promise and purpose inspire you to remain faithful in your "race," even when the work is long or difficult?