

Reading: I Corinthians 9:24

Topic: From Start To Finish

INTRODUCTION: Many people have the tendency to _____ a project with enthusiasm and excitement but then as time passes they begin to lose the vision and the project does not get _____.

I. UNFINISHED PROJECTS:

A. Natural Things:

1. One can name any number of things in life that were _____ with the intention to get it completed shortly, only to have it still not _____ days, weeks, months or even years later. _____
2. Jesus spoke of an _____ project that was started with plans and a vision, but was never completed, and in that case it was a lack of funds that deterred the individual from _____. Lk. 14:28-30
3. In Topeka, Kansas, USA, there was an elaborate _____ under construction by a man named Erastus Stone but financial troubles forced him to abandon the project before it was _____ and it was left vacant and said to have been haunted until several years later when it became a Bible School.

B. Spiritual things:

1. What a joy it is to be born again and _____ a new spiritual life after hearing the Gospel, believing it and obeying it and beginning a daily walk with Jesus with the intention of _____ to Heaven.
2. The spiritual journey _____ with anticipation and enthusiasm, but the day comes when opposition arises, trials come and things get tough, and then some quit and never _____. Mt. 13:20,21
3. Almost everyone who is serving God today knows someone who has started out to _____ with the Lord, only to one day see them give up and not _____ their journey to Heaven. 2 Tim. 4:10

II. BIBLICAL EXAMPLES:

A. The Children of Israel:

1. There is no more evident example of the great _____ and then a sad and terrible _____ than the story of the Children of Israel and their journey to the Promised Land. I Cor. 10:11
2. The deliverance from Egypt was a great miracle and they _____ for the Promised Land, witnessing the destruction of their enemies at the Red Sea but many of them never _____ the journey. I Cor. 10:1-5

B. Joash, The King of Israel:

1. Joash the King of Israel had been given the potential by God to defeat the _____ that had been oppressing them for several years, and Elisha the prophet gave him the _____ to prove it. 2 Ki. 13:14-17
2. When Elisha instructed King Joash to smite the _____ into the ground as a demonstration of what he would do to the enemy, he _____ well but did not _____ well. 2 Ki. 13:18,19
3. What could have been an story of victory for the king and his people turned into eventual _____ because the man did not have the sense to _____ the job he was given to do.

C. Saul:

1. Another example of someone who _____ very well but did not _____ well is found in the story of King Saul who tragically died by suicide on the battlefield. I Sam. 15:17,23,24

III. START TO FINISH:

A. Not Start To Quit:

1. Jesus made it clear in His teaching that anyone who would _____ to follow Him would need to develop the determination to continue unto the _____ if they wanted to be saved. Mk. 10:22
2. Jesus had many, many followers in the beginning of His ministry – many who _____ to follow Him but many of them did not _____ their journey with Him. Jn. 6:66

B. Exhortations To Finish:

1. The Apostle Paul questioned the people of the church in Galatia of why they had _____ the race and ran well, but no longer were doing so and were in danger of not going on to _____. Gal. 5:7
2. Paul exhorted the believers to understand that in order to obtain the _____, one has to not just start, but run until the _____ line. I Cor. 9:24
3. When the Apostle had come to the end of his life, he was able to testify that not only did he _____ well but he had continued until he _____ the course. 2 Tim. 4:7

C. Mind Made Up:

1. The key to going all the way to the _____ line is to have a made-up mind and the determination that no matter what opposition comes, you have decided to give it your all! Ecc. 9:10
2. When the adversary puts obstacles in your way and causes you to stumble and _____, just get back up and keep going on until you reach the _____ line. Micah 7:8, Prov. 24:16

CONCLUSION: God has planned for His people to be overcomers and victorious, not to be _____ and not _____, but to be in this race from _____ to _____.