

**27/28 June 2023**

In his sermon on Sunday, Jago said that the most important thing in our life as disciples of Jesus is finishing well... to be able to say vs.7 "I have fought the good fight; finished the race; kept to faith".

**Read 2 Timothy 4**

**Recap**

**Reasons for not finishing well:**

1. Demas – vs.10 – "because of his love for this world..." Loving the gifts of this world instead of loving the giver.

2. Hatred of the truth (vs.3) – a made-up gospel that satisfies their itching ears / editing Scripture to make ok what culture is telling us is ok. In our day, what are some of the things that our itching ears want to hear? (all those questions that start with "Did God really say...")

**What are some of the myths that people are turning aside to in our day?**

(Prosperity gospel; Speaking tongues means you are more spiritual; My happiness is what is most important; I deserve it; There are many ways to heaven; As long as you sincere everything will be OK etc)

**Do we recognise / agree that these are in effect "hatred of the truth"?**

**People want to be comfortable instead of wanting to hear the truth. One pastor even said his goal was to "make the people of his church feel comfortable." Was this Jesus' goal? Paul's goal? John the Baptist's goal?**

**What was their goal?** (Truth. We embrace the truth even when it hurts. We find a fellowship and a church that teach the truth no matter what. We tell others the truth even though it may make them uncomfortable. We listen to our friends and brothers and sisters in Christ when they encourage us from the Bible, even if it is not easy to hear.)

**Do you feel able / responsible/ equipped to "keep your head in all situations" (vs. 5)**

**Discuss why and how you feel that.** (this is a great opportunity to encourage one another to think about ways to equip ourselves by intentional Bible Study; gathering as a community of truth believers; time in prayer and solitude with God so we make ourselves available to hear from Him and for Him to strengthen us as He stands alongside us)

**Jago reminded us that what we believe influences how we live our life.**

There are two things we need to believe to finish well as a disciple of Jesus (Reread vs. 1):

1. God, in His Spirit, is present with me in the present. Do you and I go about life knowing that He is at our side right now? In order to give us strength so that through us the message might be fully proclaimed in our daily lives. How might this change some circumstances we are facing right now?
2. The judgement of God in the future (vs. 8) – this day is not seen as one to fear but rather an encouragement that He will be at that finish line with arms wide open.

As we think about approaching the end of our earthly lives, how do we want to cross that finish line? Do we prioritise arriving in a well-preserved body or shouting (as Hunter Thompson suggests): "wow what a ride"!! Or, do we add to this along with Paul and Wilberforce who desires: "to having lived more for the glory of God and the good of my fellow creatures"... Suggest some other ways that people might want to finish this life....

**The Challenge**

What is the greatest challenge for you and I from this passage: For some we might be struggling to either:

- Fight the good fight
- Finish the race
- Keep the faith

**Pray into anything that comes up for you as we consider these struggles. That we would know God standing by our side and giving us strength.**