



CHAPTER FIVE

OVERCOMING OBSTACLE

In the race of life, we are called to run with endurance the race that is set before us. Just as a runner must train and push through obstacles to reach the finish line, so too must we persevere through the challenges and trials that come our way. The book of *Hebrews* offers valuable insight into how we can overcome obstacles and become victorious in our journey.

Hebrews 12:1-2 Says:

“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”.

This passage reminds us that we are not alone in our struggles. We have a great cloud of witnesses—both those who have gone before us and the

presence of God himself - cheering us on as we press forward. To run with endurance means to keep moving forward in the face of adversity to not give up even when the path seems difficult. Just as a runner sheds excess weight to run faster and more efficiently, we are called to lay aside anything that hinders us from reaching our full potential - whether it be sin, doubt, fear, or any other obstacle that holds us back.

Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, we find the ultimate example of perseverance. Jesus endured the cross, the ultimate obstacle, with joy because he knew the victory that lay ahead. He despised the shame and kept his eyes fixed on the prize- the glory of being seated at the right hand of God. Just as Jesus overcame the greatest obstacles of all, so too can we overcome the challenges that come our way, knowing that our reward is eternal.

My dear Brothers and Sisters, as we face obstacles in our journey, we must keep our focus on Jesus, who is the source of our strength and the one who enables us to overcome.

Hebrews 12:3-4 encourages us:

“Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or faint hearted. In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood”.

When we feel overwhelmed by the obstacles before us, we can look to Jesus and draw strength from his example. He endured hostility and persecution, yet he did not grow weary or faint-hearted. He faced the ultimate struggle against sin and death, shedding his blood on the cross for our redemption. In comparison, our own struggle may seem small, but they are still significant in God's eyes. We are called to persevere and keep fighting the good fight, knowing that God is with us every step of the way.

Hebrews 12:5-6 reminds us,

“And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? My Son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives”.

Sometimes the obstacles we face are a form of discipline from the Lord. Just as runners train under the watchful eye of a coach. So too are we disciplined by God in order to become stronger and more resilient. When we face trials and hardships, we can take comfort in knowing that God disciplines us because he loves us. His corrections are for our benefit, to help us grow and mature in our faith.

Hebrews 12:11-13 encourages us,

“For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Therefore, lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed”.

Just as a runner experiences pain and discomfort in training, so too do we experience challenges and struggles in our spiritual journey.

While discipline may be difficult to endure in the moment, it produces lasting benefits in our lives. We are strengthened and made more righteous

through our trials, as God uses them to mold us into the image of Christ. When we feel weak, we can lift up our hands and strengthen our knees, knowing that God is working in us to bring about healing and restoration.

Hebrews 12:14-15 exhorts us,

“Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no root of bitterness’ springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled”.

In our race towards the finish line, we are called to pursue peace and holiness. We must make every effort to live in harmony with others and to strive for righteousness, knowing that without holiness, we will not see the Lord. We are also reminded to guard against bitterness and resentment, which can cause trouble and defile many. Instead, we are called to extend grace to others, just as God has extended grace to us.

Good friends, as we strive to overcome obstacles in our journey, we can find encouragement and strength in the words of *Hebrews*. We are

reminded to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who is the ultimate example of perseverance of faith.

We are encouraged to endure discipline from the Lord, knowing that it is for our good. We are also exhorted to strive for peace, holiness, and grace in all that we do.

By following these principles, we can run the race set before us with endurance and overcome any obstacle that comes our way.