

You Are Called to Become

Sermon by Todd Lester

May 24, 2015

Romans 8:28-29 And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose for them. For God knew His people in advance, and He chose them to become like His Son, so that His Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

HOW DO I BECOME WHAT GOD CALLS ME TO BE?

Running Your Marathon to Maturity: Hebrews 12

1. _____ My Life

Hebrews 12:1a

2. Don't Get _____

Hebrews 12:1b

3. Spend Time _____ Every Day

Hebrews 12:2a Also 2 Corinthians 3:18

4. When It Gets _____, Remember The _____

Hebrews 12:2-3 Also 1 Peter 5:10

5. Gather A _____ To Run With Me

Hebrews 10:24-25

6. Remember That God Is _____ At Every Stage

Philippians 3:12-14

7. Take Every Step With _____

1 Corinthians 9:25-26 Also Hebrews 12:12-13

8. Realize That What I Don't Finish, _____!

Philippians 1:6 Also 1 John 3:2

You Remind Me of Jesus

Every Christian reflects the character of Jesus in some way. As your group has gotten to know each other, you can begin to see how each person demonstrates Christ in their very own personality.

Go around the circle and have one person at a time listen while others tell that person how they remind them of Jesus. You may also want to tell them why you selected what you did.

YOU REMIND ME OF ...

JESUS THE HEALER

You seem to be able to touch someone's life with your compassion and help make them whole.

JESUS THE TEACHER

You have a gift for bringing the Scripture to life in a way that offers hope and truth.

JESUS THE SERVANT

There seems to be nothing that you wouldn't do for someone.

JESUS THE CRITIC

You have the courage to say what needs to be said, even if it isn't always popular.

JESUS THE PREACHER

You share your faith in a way that challenges and inspires people.

JESUS THE LEADER

Because you are a visionary, people are willing to follow you.

JESUS THE ADMINISTRATOR

As Jesus had a plan for the disciples, you are able to organize and accomplish great things for God.

JESUS THE MIRACLE WORKER

You seem to defy the laws of nature in your efforts to make God's kingdom come alive.

JESUS THE REBEL

By doing the unexpected, you remind me of Jesus' way of revealing God in unique, surprising ways.

JESUS THE SACRIFICE

Like Jesus, you seem to be willing to sacrifice anything to glorify God.

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Icebreaker/Introduction

'You Remind Me of Jesus' is an activity that ties in well with Todd's opening remarks about how we are called to become like Jesus. He reminded us that we don't become God but do become godly. This page asks each participant to think about the ways that they see Jesus reflected in the other people in their group.

Read Romans 8:28-29

Ask if there was anything from this week's message that stood out – either a point that was made that really resonated with them, or perhaps a question or difficulty that came up for them.

HOW DO I BECOME WHAT GOD CALLS ME TO BE?

Running Your Marathon to Maturity: Hebrews 12

1. Simplify My Life

Focuses on Hebrews 12:1

Todd encouraged us that we need to eliminate the diversions, distractions, detours, and dead ends from our lives. What would be some examples of these?

Todd also pointed out that we often live our lives under the influence of other's expectations of us. What are examples of this (peers, parents, partner, teacher)?

What is one thing you could do to simplify your life?

2. Don't Get Impatient

Focuses on Hebrews 12:1b

Is maturity simply a function of time or are there things we can do to develop that strong, stable, secure life that Todd talked about when comparing the growth of a mushroom (6 hours) to an oak tree (60 years)?

3. Spend Time Focusing On Jesus Every Day

Focuses on Hebrews 12:2a, 2 Corinthians 3:18

Consider some practical aspects of focusing on Jesus daily: Period (length of time, when), Place (where), Practice (what – reading Bible, prayer, listening, meditation). What areas do you need to focus on?

4. When It Gets Hard, Remember The Reward

Focuses on Hebrews 12:2-3, 1 Peter 5:10

Todd reminded us that God uses hard times to help us grow (God's Curriculum for Character Development). What have you learned, or how have you changed, as a result of going through some specific (ie. name them) difficulties?

In what ways do you find it helpful to consider that Jesus too was lonely, criticized, tired, misunderstood, and betrayed?

5. Gather A Team To Run With Me

Focuses on Hebrews 10:24-25

What kind of encouragement could you use at this time in your life/journey?

Who is someone that your could encourage (and how could you do it)?

6. Remember That God Is Cheering Me At Every Stage

Focuses on Philippians 3:12-14

How revolutionary is it for you to realize that God cheers for you at every stage of your life in Him, and even when you fall? [so even when you stumble/sin God is on your side!]

7. Take Every Step With Purpose

Focuses on 1 Corinthians 9:25-26, Hebrews 12:12-13

How successful do you tend to be with self-discipline (at work, in family life, chores, organization, task-oriented)? Is it easier in some areas than others?

How about with following Jesus – is it a disciplined walk or more of an adventure? Do you think there should be a balance of these or would you weight one more than the other?

8. Realize That What I Don't Finish, God Will!

Focuses on Philippians 1:6, 1 John 3:2

How do we achieve a proper balanced perspective on 'becoming like Jesus' – ie. our part and God's part?

The verse in 1 John 3 tells us that ultimately we will take on the complete character of Christ when He returns. What would you say to someone who used that verse to justify not working on growing because in the end God will cause us to be "changed instantly into His likeness" (Todd's words)?

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Running Your Marathon to Maturity: Hebrews 12

1. Simplify My Life

Hebrews 12:1a Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up.

2. Don't Get Impatient

Hebrews 12:1b And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us.

3. Spend Time Focusing On Jesus Every Day

Hebrews 12:2a We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith.

2 Corinthians 3:18 So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like Him as we are changed into His glorious image.

4. When It Gets Hard, Remember The Reward

Hebrews 12:2-3 We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting Him, He endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now He is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne. Think of all the hostility He endured from sinful people; then you won't become weary and give up.

1 Peter 5:10 In His kindness God called you to share in His eternal glory by means of Christ Jesus. So after you have suffered a little while, He will restore, support, and strengthen you, and He will place you on a firm foundation.

5. Gather A Team To Run With Me

Hebrews 10:24-25 Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of His return is drawing near.

6. Remember That God Is Cheering Me At Every Stage

Philippians 3:12-14 I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.

7. Take Every Step With Purpose

1 Corinthians 9:25-26 All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing.

Hebrews 12:12-13 So take a new grip with your tired hands and strengthen your weak knees. Mark out a straight path for your feet so that those who are weak and lame will not fall but become strong.

8. Realize That What I Don't Finish, God Will!

Philippians 1:6 And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue His work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

1 John 3:2 Dear friends, we are already God's children, but He has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like Him, for we will see Him as He really is.