**1 Thessalonians 4:1-2 Lesson 8**

**Excel Still More-You Can Do Better!**

**1 Thessalonians 4:1-2**

“Shall I not run with all my might now that I see the end in view?” **Charles Simeon**

“Those that far out distance others, are still far from the goal” **John Calvin**

**Hebrews 12:1-2**

1. **The Inspiration to Win, the Cloud of Witnesses**
2. **The Preparation Necessary to Win- Lay Aside every Encumbrance and Sin**
3. **The Determination Necessary to Win- Run your Race with Endurance**
4. **The Motivation to Win- Fix your Eyes on Jesus**

The only way to run a straight race is by committing yourself to the love of Christ. Where does the power come from to see the race to the end? I have no formula for winning other than committing yourself to the love of Christ, that’s how it’s done. **Eric Liddell**

**Application**: Pick a time in the very near future, a half or full day and get away by yourself. That amount of time may be impossible for some of us but a couple hours you could do.

Get away with no phone, no computer, no people. Take a bible and notebook and plan your run with Jesus. On that paper note the entangling sins. Note the seemingly innocent weights and encumbrances that are not condemned explicitly in the bible, but which you know are holding you back in the race for faith and love and strength and holiness and courage and freedom. Note the subtle ways you make for these provisions (Romans 13:14) the computer, the hidden alcohol or food, the television, movies, books, magazines etc. In addition, note the people that weaken you. Next, note the times that are wasted, thrown away.

When you have made all these notations, pray your way through **to resolve** and make a plan of action to dismantle these encumbrances and resist these sins, and breaking of old, old habits. We must not say, “I can’t change”. It is an assault on God if you read Hebrews 12:1-2 and go away saying it can’t happen, these hindrances can’t be removed, and theses sins can’t be laid aside. God has not spoken this command for nothing. The entire book of Hebrews is written to undergird these practical commands. So go back and read the book and ask God to take all the glorious truth that is in it (about the superiority of Christ and the power of His death and resurrection, and the effectiveness of His intercession for you) and make this truth explosive with life-changing power.

Ask someone, perhaps in your small group, someone you trust and ask them to check in with you and support you. That is what Hebrews 3:12-14 says we should do, and I might add Hebrews 10:24-25. You and I need the CHURCH.

Now that you finished reading this don’t drift away from this moment. Before this day is over choose a time that you will get away to plan your spring run with Jesus. Convictions not acted on FADE!

## Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

O soul are you weary and troubled?
No light in the darkness you see?
There's light for a look at the Savior,
And life more abundant and free!

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.

Through death into life everlasting
He passed, and we follow Him there;
O'er us sin no more hath dominion—
For more than conqu'rors we are!

His Word shall not fail you—He promised;
Believe Him, and all will be well:
Then go to a world that is dying,
His perfect salvation to tell!

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.