

1/2

What we're seeing here is the running of a race used as a metaphor for the Xian life.

- This is not the first time we find this in the N.T. (Paul?)
  - Acts 20:17-24, 2 Timothy 4:7, 1 Corinthians 9:24-25
- Every runner enters the race with one goal in mind: to win it.
- Using that metaphor, the writer here, acting as our coach, gives us some advice as to how to win.

When you're in it to win it you're gonna get free from anything that slows you down. (:1a-b)

- Lay aside, strip off, throw off
- Every weight (NIV = everything that hinders, NASB = encumbrance) = burden
  - No runner goes into the race carrying an unnecessary burden.
    - Shorts, shirt & shoes - that's it.
  - What burdens are you carrying with you, that are gonna hold you back?
    - Fear: of unknown / failure / embarrassment / (vs. faith) - no one trembles in trust!
    - Guilt: your past may = Quentin Tarrantino B-movie of bad decisions & misbehavior
    - Shame: ≠ what you've done, but what's been done to you : victims feel shame, dark secret, rage
  - Jesus has done all that needs to be done (can be done) for you to throw off those burdens.
    - re. appropriate: take for your own use (re. committee)
    - He calms fear (e.g. storm), forgives guilt (e.g. @ Peter's) , bears your shame (e.g. cross)
- The sin that so easily ensnares (NASB & NIV = entangles / hinders our progress.
  - Entangles = surrounds (wraps us up so we can't move freely)
    - Have you ever see a runner come out of the blocks w/something wrapped around their legs?
    - Sin will wrap itself around you like a vine; Hobble (horse-dangerous) / Shackle (prisoner).
  - What sin is wrapping you up so you can't move freely into a Jesus-centered life?
    - A habit? = the way you feel about it. (Rahjneesh - become one with the smoking)
    - The enemy will wrap you up in your own sense of failure. (re. do / don't do)
    - But God sees beyond your habits right through to your heart.
    - He sees the born-again-by-faith you that's gonna spend eternity w/Him.
    - He sets you free from the do/don't do cycle of performance based relationship.
    - And that's how you throw off the sin that's got itself wrapped around you.
    - You're free, so be free!

(All of above = getting ready to run. Now...)

When you're in it to win it you're gonna run with endurance. (:1c)

- Run with endurance (NIV = perseverance)
  - Another way of saying "don't give up"
- The race marked out for you = your race (not anyone else's)

There's the what & why. Now we see the how. (:2-3)

- By fixing your eyes on Jesus (:2)
  - Runners will often fix their minds on something - other than their gasping lungs and aching legs...
  - Author & finisher = pioneer (trailblazer) & perfecter
    - He's run this race. Knows every hill & valley / obstacle.
    - He knows how hard it is to run. And what it's like to win.
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- Keep your mind on Jesus (:3)
  - remember / ponder / rehearse all that He went through
  - It's so easy to get tired / give up & go back

2/2

- If He can do it, you can do it - 'cuz He gives you His strength.
- Consider = imperative: command/ instruction.
  - If you're in it to win it, do this