

Determine to Finish
STRONGLY

1 Corinthians 15:51-52

- 51.** Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,
- 52.** in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

1 Corinthians 9:24-25

- 24.** Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it.
- 25.** Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.

Hebrews 12:1-2

1. 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,
2. 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.

Psalm 37:23-25

- 23.** The steps of a man are established by the LORD, when He delights in his way;
- 24.** though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong, for the LORD upholds his hand.
- 25.** I have been young, and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or His children begging for bread.

Finishing Strongly Regardless of our Failings!

- Abraham, Joshua, Daniel, Paul and Peter all enjoyed a deepening intimacy and growing relationship with God throughout life
- the key was they never stopped learning and growing, but pressed into the LORD for everything
- they did not allow their 'set-backs' to cause them to give up
- fully submitted to the Lord, they joined Him in His work and completed what God gave them to do

It is Possible to Finish Poorly

King Rehoboam in 1 Kings 12

1 Corinthians 3:12-15

12. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw
13. each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.
14. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward.
15. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

Our Incentive is to Finish Well

2 Corinthians 5:9-10

9. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please Him.
10. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

Can We Say with Paul:

2 Timothy 4:7-8

7. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.
8. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing.

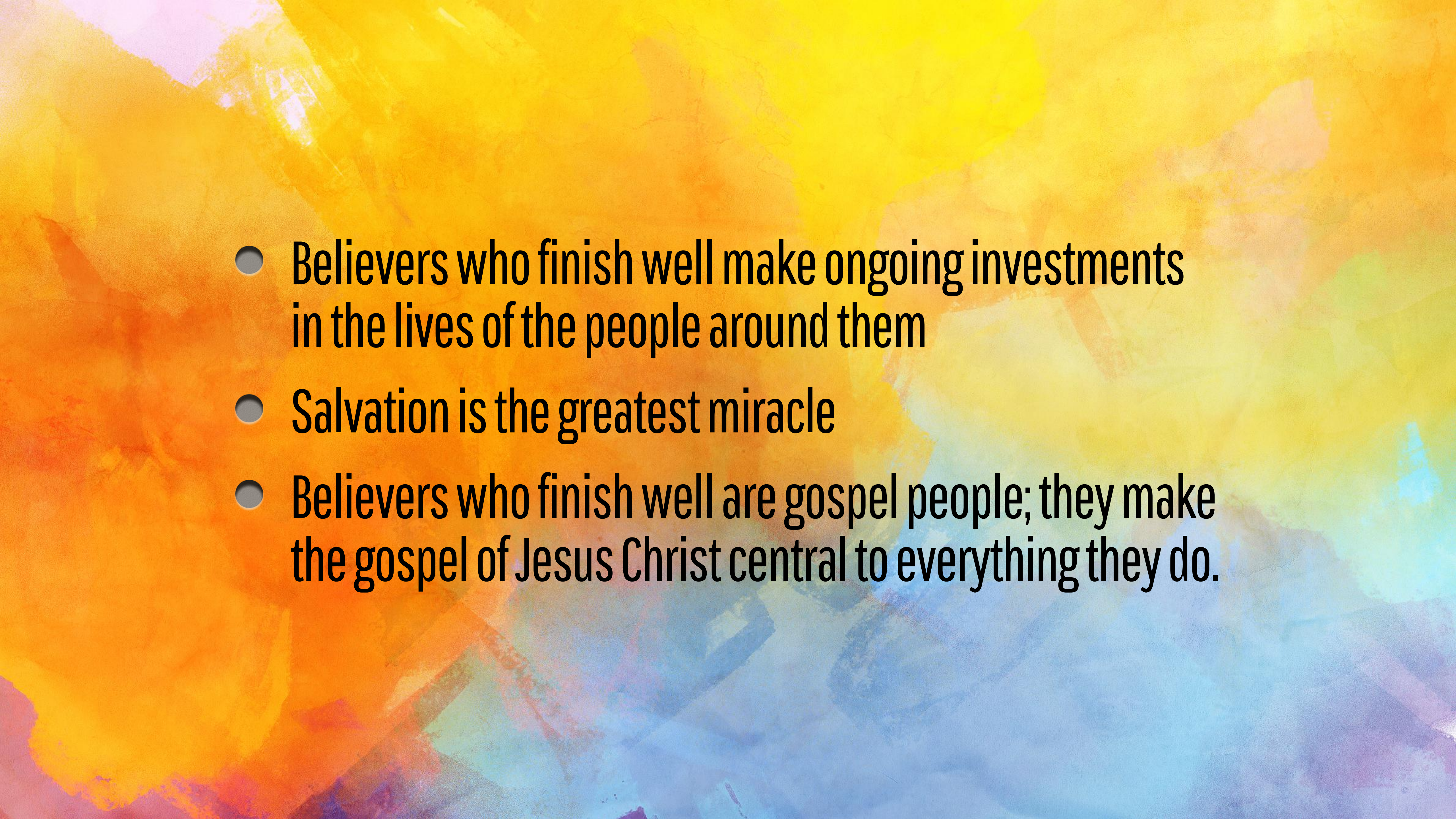
Essential Elements for Finishing Well

- daily time of focused personal communion with God
- daily commitment to God as a living sacrifice
- firm belief in the sovereignty and love of God
- genuine desire to fulfil His plans and purposes

All People Matter to God

Matthew 9:36-38

- 36.** When He saw the crowds, He had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.
- 37.** Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few;
- 38.** therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest.”

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- **Believers who finish well make ongoing investments in the lives of the people around them**
 - **Salvation is the greatest miracle**
 - **Believers who finish well are gospel people; they make the gospel of Jesus Christ central to everything they do.**

- Those who finish strongly remain eternity focussed!
- The knowledge that we will stand before God and that He will recognise and reward faithful service is an incentive to finish well.

2 Timothy 2:10

Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

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1 Thessalonians 5:1-6

1. Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you.
2. For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.
3. While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labour pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.
4. But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief.
5. For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness.
6. So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober.