

The Need for Endurance

Intro

1. Cal Ripken - Broke Lou Gehrig's record with 2,131 straight games.
 - a. 29 different double-play partners.
 - b. Played 99.2% of every Oriole game in past 13+ years.
 - c. 3,695 players have been on disabled list since Ripken's streak.
2. He has played through grueling travel schedules, double headers, injuries, sickness, distractions such as media interviews, sponsor appearances. He has never been **late** for a game, for the streak involves starting the game.
3. Ripken has retained his zeal for the game, courteousness to the fans, and has had the same wife since the streak began.

1. The Christian's Need for Endurance

A. Our commitment to Jesus must be maintained all the days of our life:

1. Heb 3:6 - *"if we hold fast the confidence ... firm to the end."*
2. Col 1:23 - *"if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast ..."*
3. Eternal life is not an honor gained by a limited portion of life given to God.

B. Lack of endurance is sign of **immaturity**:

1. Mark's defection from the first preaching tour was evidence of his immaturity.
2. Children often don't understand the rigors of commitment and the value of enduring hardship.
3. The Hebrew brethren were criticized for immaturity - Heb 5:12-14 - 6:1-3.

C. Lack of endurance is really lack of **interest**.

1. I endure *anything* for that which I enjoy: golf - Port St. Lucie, storms.
2. For things I merely feel *obligated* to, I easily find excuses to avoid.

3. We must **enjoy** being a Christian and serving God in various ways. If not, Satan will give us plenty of excuses to avoid doing what is expected of us.

2. The Exhortation in Heb 6:11-12

- A. We must show the same diligence as from the start - 6:11.
 1. The diligence of Hebrews earlier service - 6:10.
 2. The joyful acceptance of persecution - 10:32-34.
 3. Every ball player goes through periodic slumps, and this may happen to us. We must "*recall the former days*" and recover our enthusiasm.
- B. We must not become sluggish - 6:12a.
 1. We may not quit, but we might lose our incentive to try hard.
 2. "*Lay aside every weight*" or hindrance - 12:1.
 - a. Others who have disappointed us.
 - b. The lost who are not interested.
 - c. Overcommitment to the things of the world, no energy left for God.
 3. "*and the sin which so easily ensnares us*" - 12:1.
- C. We must "*imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises*" - 6:12b.
 1. Abraham - 6:13-15. Only saw beginning in Isaac; saw Jesus by faith, Jn 8:56.
 2. "*We are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses*" - 12:1. Looks back at ch 11. Consider what the apostles accomplished in spreading the kingdom.
 3. Above all, "*looking to Jesus*" - Heb 12:2-3.

3. Endurance and Commitment

- A. We are not committed to a sport, a building, a heritage or tradition but a **Person**, the One who loved us and gave Himself for us - Gal 2:20.
- B. What can be accomplished by people with singular commitment and endurance?
Space program - To the moon in less than a decade.
- C. There is no reward in quitting - Heb 10:36-39.