

Face the Issue:

This week, we wrapped up our 3 week look at what lies within. Jeremy asked us to what or whom are we truly committed.

He asked us this on the same day that there will be two important football games to decide who is going to the Super Bowl. Many of us are infatuated with sports. In fact, you could say that many of us are committed to a sport or a particular team or person that plays a sport. We show our commitment by wearing the team colors, decorating our cars, or even painting our faces. How does this compare to our commitment to following Christ and being His disciple?

How important are sports in your life, judging by the time you spend attending, talking about, and spending money on them? Do you think this is healthy? Why or why not?

We seem to idolize our athletic heroes more than ever. Why might this be?

How have college and professional sports changed both for the better and the worse since you've been watching them?

What positive messages do we get from sports?

What negative messages do we get?

Into the Word:**Read Hebrews 12:1–2.**

In Hebrews 11, there was a description of a sort of “faith hall of fame”. The writer then paints a picture of the Christian life as a race in a stadium packed with cheering fans—those committed hall of famers who have run before us.

How might your spiritual journey be different if you knew that other saints of the past were cheering you on?

The writer encourages us to strip away all that “hinders” and “entangles” us. What slows down your “race” and keep you from being committed to finishing?

Then we are told to “run with perseverance” and that we each have a particular “race marked out for us.” What other analogies from the world of sport can help us here to understand?

We are to “fix our eyes on Jesus”. What kind of race did He run? How did He show His commitment? In what ways does His victory differ from conventional notions of winning and losing?

Apply The Word

Read Isaiah 40:26–31

When we feel small and forgotten and our commitment waivers, we should remember God's great strength and wisdom. How does that perspective help with what may be testing your committment?

As you watch the coming athletic events, let them remind you of the committed Christian life. Run the race God has for you in a way as committed as the athletes that we are cheering for. Remember God's promises when you grow weary.