



# → DETOURS

OVERCOMING SPIRITUAL  
ROADBLOCKS IN  
MINISTRY

## Devotion #11 - Eyes on Jesus

Read: Hebrews 12:1-3

December 2021

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I remember as a child the year that Manchester United won the FA Cup and how the following week we lined the street for the welcome home parade. The team came through on an open-topped double-decker bus with a trophy lifted high at the front. The soccer team waved as the fans who lined the route cheered.

In Hebrews 11, we see a similar type of parade; not with sportsmen and women, but a parade of the heroes of faith whose stories of their faith and trust in Adonai their God fill the pages of the Old Testament. Heroes like Abraham and Sarah, Jacob and Joseph, Moses and Joshua are reminders of God's faithfulness throughout history.

But then, as we turn to chapter 12, we see the scene changes, and now instead of us being the spectators cheering on the spiritual heroes of faith, those heroes step into the role of supporters, and the focus of their attention is upon us! They are the cloud of witnesses watching, cheering and encouraging each one of us as we face the challenges of life.

The writer of this letter to the Hebrews urges his readers to run the race ahead of them because they have the support from this vast host of those who've already completed their race. With their help, the writer instructs us to keep our eyes fixed upon Jesus and run! 🌲🌲🌲

We fix our eyes upon Jesus because he is the author and the finisher of our faith. Jesus is our Redeemer, Saviour and Lord. As our attention is focused upon him, he will give us the guidance and direction we need to run the race well, and he sends the Holy Spirit to empower us to do what he calls us to do.



### Rest Stop

Who are the heroes  
of faith in your life?  
How have they  
helped to shape  
and prepare you?

Jesus endured the pain and agony of the cross, taking upon himself our sin and brokenness and receiving the just punishment for our sin. Yet, the writer reminds us that the reason he

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went through the agony of separation from the Father and death by crucifixion was so that we might be welcomed into God's family as God's sons and daughters. With this in mind, the writer encourages each of us to get rid of whatever it may be that holds us back – the sin and brokenness in our lives. Instead, with eyes fixed on Jesus, press ahead even with joy amid the challenges we face.

The challenges that are faced by deacons can be tiring and draining, both emotionally and spiritually. When faced with difficulties that seem to be getting in the way of God's Kingdom-reality being manifested, it can be easy to become discouraged. When individuals choose to remain within the prisons of their own brokenness instead of embracing the freedom and healing of the gospel, we can become despondent. When the blockages and

challenges of establishing a new ministry or supporting existing ministry efforts become insurmountable, we are tempted to give up. 🌲🌲🌲



### Rest Stop

What are the things that can distract you and prevent you from doing the work of building God's Kingdom?

It is at these times that the words from Hebrews 12 can be a lifeline and our strength. As we fix our eyes upon Jesus and upon the central truths of the gospel, we find the truth and the courage not to grow weary or lose faith but instead to pursue the work God has called us to do.

Prayer and intercession make the connection between our faith and reality. It is through times of prayer that our eyes can become fixed and focused on Jesus. In prayer, he will speak to us about our specific situations. He gives guidance and wisdom for how to deal with the blockages to his Kingdom expansion. 🌲🌲🌲

As we come to the end of this series of devotionals, it's important to remember that Jesus will be our guide. Through the Holy Spirit, he can and will direct us to be able to do everything he wants us to do. All we need to do is fix our eyes upon him.



### Rest Stop

What are the challenging situations that you are experiencing personally and as a diaconate? (Optional: Write them down and pray about them.)

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### The Scenic Route

(Done as a group)

Take some time to think about some of the **positive outcomes** of your ministry as deacons.

- Share how the Lord has helped you to make a difference in your church and community.
- Consider writing these stories down as an encouragement for challenging seasons.

Spend some time fixing your eyes on Jesus as you pray into some of the **current challenges** you face.

- Give time to listen to the direction and guidance that the Holy Spirit may give you for the specific challenges that you may face.

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