

The Super Bowl of Life

Hebrews 12:1-3 (NIV)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.² Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

1. SUPER BOWL PLAYERS RECOGNIZE THAT THERE ARE FANS IN THE STANDS.

v. 1a "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses..."

1 Corinthians 10:13 (Msg)

No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he'll never let you be pushed past your limit; he'll always be there to help you come through it.

1 Corinthians 15:58 (NIV)

Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

- There are faithful men and women who have gone before us.
- Others have faced what we are facing and have won their game.

2. SUPER BOWL PLAYERS REALIZE THAT PRACTICE PRECEEDS THE GAME.

v. 1b "...let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."

- We have to make sure that nothing hinders us from finishing the game.
- Sin weights us down and sometimes causes us to give up.

3. SUPER BOWL PLAYERS UNDERSTAND THE NEED FOR FOCUS.

v. 2a "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus..."

2 Corinthians 11:3 (NIV)

But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

- Every person on the team must focus on his/her assignment.
- Our opponent will do everything possible to distract us.

We Lose Focus When We Look At:

- Ourselves
- Our circumstances
- Our obstacles

4. SUPER BOWL PLAYERS KNOW THAT THERE IS A PRICE TO PAY TO GET TO THE GAME.

v. 2b "...who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame..."

- Christ endured suffering for us so that we could endure it as well.
- Anything that is worthwhile will have a price.

5. SUPER BOWL PLAYERS TRAIN FOR ALL FOUR QUARTERS.

v. 3b "...so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."

Galatians 6:9 (NASB-U)

Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.

Hebrews 3:14 - *If we can only keep our grip on the sure thing we started out with, we're in this with Christ for the long haul.*

- In the midst of hardship it is tempting to give up.
- The Opponent's Strategy for Winning the Fourth Quarter:
 1. To wear us down before we finish the game.
 2. Use trick plays to catch us off-guard.
 3. Will commit fouls if necessary to stop us.
 - Holding
 - Clipping or Illegal block to the back
 - Roughing the Passer
 - Encroachment or Off-sides
 - Pass Interference