

## **Stay the Course**

### **Ready:**

"The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away."

-Matthew 13:20-21 (NIV)

### **Set**

After inheriting a team that had won only four games the previous two years, Ron Zook set out on a course to turn the University of Illinois football program around. While the record didn't change as quickly as Coach Zook would have liked, winning just two games in each of his first two years, the 2007 Illini have won eight games including wins against No. 5 ranked Wisconsin and No. 1 Ohio State. "If you believe in something, and you know you're doing the right thing, you've just got to stay the course," Zook said.

The principle of staying the course has application both in sports and in our spiritual lives. I love how Coach Zook says, "If you believe. . .you've just got to stay the course." If you truly believe in what you are doing, then staying the course is the only option.

Jesus tells a story of a farmer who goes out to plant some seed and parallels seed that falls on rocky soil to people who profess to have faith, but their faith proves to be superficial and artificial when trials come. In contrast, the seed that falls on good soil is like those "who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop" (Luke 8:15).

One abandons the course, the other stays the course: which will you be? It all depends on whether or not you truly believe what you say you believe.

### **Go**

1. How hard is it for you to stay the course when things don't go well in competition? Why?
2. When is it most difficult for you to stay the course in your faith in Christ?
3. What do you think is the key to staying the course with Jesus? What are the benefits?

### **Workout**

1 Corinthians 15:58  
2 Corinthians 4:16-18  
Galatians 6:9  
Hebrews 12:1-3

### **Bible Reference:**



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