



## FIGHTING THE NINJAS

**KEY SCRIPTURES:** 1 Peter 5:8, 1 John 4:4, 1 Corinthians 15:58, Psalm 119:105, Acts 2:42

Have you ever watched a movie in which the good guy is about to enter the “save the day” location, but he finds it to be heavily guarded? One after another, like ninjas from nowhere, the guards come after the hero to keep him from finishing the story with the happily-ever-after he’s fought so hard for.

Of course, our hero has been trained to fight, and he’s come too far to stop now, so he flips one ninja and punches the next until the 3 to 7 guards—there are always between three and seven—have met their doom and are left writhing in pain on the floor. Then, carefully stepping over the unsuccessful ninjas, the hero finally makes it into the “save the day” location. He rescues the girl or finds the treasure, and quickly exits in case one last ninja is lurking in the dark to stop him.

Well, there is always one last ninja, but the hero handily deals with him, too.

Do you ever feel like you are fighting ninjas? You have journeyed along the path that God has you on, and you can just feel that you are “this” close to your own “save the day” place, the results and rewards of all your efforts waiting just on the other side of the proverbial door. But then, here come the ninjas. You are just steps away from finishing well, but they are doing everything they can to keep you from doing so.

Rest assured, you are not imagining things, because they are there. And they take many forms.

Maybe one is the ninja of distraction. You have started well, but now there are shiny things in front of you, and you find yourself losing your focus. What you once saw clearly seems blurry now, and you are not real sure anymore what it was you were looking for.

Maybe another is the ninja of doubt. Your journey has been a long one, and you thought for sure you would have finished by now. So, you start believing that you have been believing wrong, that maybe this wasn’t even the journey you were supposed to be on after all.

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"...so we can know our value, live with purpose, and make a difference...**In that order.**"



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Maybe still another is the ninja of dread. What if there are more ninjas, you suppose to yourself. What if my battle isn't really almost over? What if I have more fights to fight before I reach my goals? Thoughts like that can creep in. After all, you are tired, and you don't know how much fight you have left.

And you really, really hate ninjas.

Have you ever noticed that if the hero arrives at an unguarded door, a really important, unguarded door, he knows something is amiss? He stops in his tracks, because he has come to understand that there are no free passes if he is going to save the day. So, he steadies himself for the fight he knows is coming.

The same can be said of our journeys as we walk in God's will.

*"Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8).*

There will be times when we have journeyed and are nearing the destination. Though it can be said that heaven is our final destination, and it oh-so-gloriously is, we are still blessed with journeys to complete while we are here. And, our completed journeys save the day and threaten the darkness, so our enemy is determined to stop that from happening.

Whether it is a journey to better our health or our education, to finish the painting or the writing project, to support the cause or the cure, we all have journeys of hope and help that we are called to walk. Meant to bring God glory and to show His love to others, our completed journeys give reason to believe.

That is why there will always be ninjas to fight, because ninjas fight for darkness and destruction.

So, we must fight. If we are going to finish well, we must fight the ninjas.

And how do we fight? We fight with devotion.

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We must fight the ninja of distraction with devotion to God's Word. If we remain in its pages, we won't lose our focus. God's Word has a way of steadying us, keeping us from chasing after other things.

We must fight the ninja of doubt with devotion to prayer. If we keep the lines of communication open, we will receive ongoing messages of encouragement and direction straight from home base. We won't be going it alone and begin to lose our assurance that this fight will end in victory.

We must fight the ninja of dread with devotion to "them." Who is "them"? They are the ones waiting for us on the other side of the guarded door. They are the ones depending on us to fight the ninjas, to finish well, and to rescue them from the darkness that has them trapped. Keeping "them" in mind helps us dread quitting more than we dread fighting. Keeping them in mind keeps us from giving up.

Sometimes we don't see the bad guy in the movie that was in charge of sending the ninjas, but most of the time we do. One thing is for sure, if there are ninjas, we know there is a bad guy calling the shots from the darkness. But, we also know that our hero is stronger, and he will finish well. He might be bruised, but he will be victorious.

He has gotten his orders with this admonition: *"You are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world"* (1 John 4:4). And, we have received the same orders with the same truth.

There will be ninjas, but we can finish well by expecting them, continually preparing to fight them, and refusing to let them win.

*"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"* (1 Corinthians 15:58).

And we will be victorious.

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