



FINISHING WELL

**TAKE THE HILL part 6
JULY 31, 2022**

CROSSING THE FINISH LINE

What are some of the things it takes to run an athletic race?

Is there anything that you started well doing but then you dropped out?

If yes, what was it that caused you to not finish?

The Apostle Paul often described the Christian way of life as running a race.

1 Corinthians 9:24—

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it.

“Run that you may obtain it” is a phrase of _____, meaning we must be purposeful in what we do.

Compare your Christian life to a race. What are some of the things we do intentionally to be successful runners?

What would you consider to be a successful “race?”

What does a runner not finishing well look like?

When Paul wrote to the Galatians, he told them how well they had been doing. Then he asked them a very important question...

Galatians 5:7-8—

7 You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?

8 This persuasion is not from Him who calls you.

Who is it that hinders you? What are some of the lies that keep you from from running a good Christian race?

Would you say the Christian life is more like a marathon or a 100-yard dash?

HOW PAUL SAYS TO RUN YOUR RACE:

1. UNDERSTAND YOUR _____

Acts 20:24 —

But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

According to Paul what is our life's true purpose?

MISSION  SELF

So do we neglect ourselves completely?

1 Corinthians 9:24-27—

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

According to Paul what is necessary to prepare ourself for the race?

How is caring for your family a part of accomplishing life's true mission?

2. RUN THE _____ COURSE

Hebrews 12:1—

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

How are we to run?

What does Paul say we need to do to prepare ourselves for the long run?

Ecclesiastes 7:8—

Better is the end of a thing than its beginning, and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

Why is a patient spirit better than a proud spirit when running a race?

3. KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE _____**Philippians 3:14 —**

I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:6 —

And I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

2 John 1:8 —

Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward.

Which of these three verses give you the most hope as you run your race?

How helpful is the advice given in 2 John 1:8?

Have you ever known someone who started a great Christian journey that didn't finish well? If so, what got them off track?

4. PASS YOUR _____ BEFORE YOU GO

When Paul was in prison for the last time, he wrote a letter to his protégé Timothy. Paul knew that he would not survive his current run-in with Roman law. After all of the encouragement and coaching he offered in this letter, Paul wants to leave a clear impression on his friend to continue the work they have done so far.

2 Timothy 2:2— What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Titus 2:3-5—

- 3 In the same way, older women are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not slaves to excessive drinking. They are to teach what is good,
4 so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands and to love their children,
5 to be self-controlled, pure, workers at home, kind, and in submission to their husbands, so that God's word will not be slandered.

2 Timothy 4:6-8—

- 6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time for my departure is close.
7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.
8 There is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me, but to all those who have loved his appearing.

In verse 6, Paul acknowledges his time is near—"The time for my departure is close." It is interesting that the Greek word for "departure" is "_____."

Paul used this word referring to his impending death. The word analysis (departure) was used to describe the following events. Analyze each in respect to death. What do they tell us it is like?

The unyoking of an ox to its plow.

Loosing the bonds of a prisoner.

Taking down a soldier's tent.

Loosing the mooring ropes of a ship.

Paul could finish his race well because he knew...

He focused on the true mission.

He endured to the end.

He kept his eye on the prize.

He passed the mission on to another.

And his departure would mean peace, rest, freedom, and victory for him.

PRAYER TIME

- Express gratitude to God for His faithfulness to help you in your race of faith.
- Pray for strength to complete the tasks put before you—especially strength to endure and live a disciplined life.
- Ask God to show you who you need to teach and train that they might continue spreading the message of God's love when you are gone.