



Run the Life of Faith
1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Philipians 3:12-14

September 3, 2023

DAILY DEVOTION

Find a rhythm in God's word this week! Follow this 5 day plan on your own or with your group!

<https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/14382-running-the-race-to-win>

INSPIRATION

I have climbed highest mountain
I have run through the fields
Only to be with you, only to be with you
I have run
I have crawled
I have scaled these city walls, these city walls
Only to be with you
But I still haven't found what I'm looking for

...
I believe in the kingdom come
Then all the colors will bleed into one, bleed into one
Well yes I'm still running
You broke the bonds and you loosed the chains
Carried the cross of my shame, of my shame

The song *I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For* by the band U2, quoted above, has won Grammy awards and is listed in music magazines as one of the greatest rock songs of all time. The song conveys the critical teaching that true meaning, and eternal life, is not found by chasing things of this world. Instead of aimlessly searching for meaning, we can run a life of faith by trusting in the one who broke the bonds, loosed the chains and carried the cross of our shame.

ICE BREAKER

1. Have you ever competed in a race or another sport? What was the prize or goal of the competition?
 2. Explain the training that was required to compete for the prize.
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DEEP DIVE

Read this out loud

A point concerning the message this week:



“As followers of Jesus, we run the life of faith for an eternal prize. Heaven, life with God as He intended it, forever. At the same time, we know that what lasts forever begins today. We were created to abide with Jesus now. To bear the life of the kingdom now. To delight in his presence in this moment and the next.”

Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-25 and Philippians 3:12-14 and then answer the following questions:

3. Paul uses a heated foot race in 1 Corinthians 9:24-25 to describe how Christ followers should live. Based on this passage, what is the “prize”?
4. The passage in 1 Corinthians 9:24-25 focuses on both the finish line and on how we run the race. Explain what Paul means by the phrase, “Run in such a way as to get the prize.”
5. How does the manner in which we choose to live not only fulfill us today, but also keep us directed toward heaven? Explain how Christ followers, as described in the message excerpt above, abide with Jesus now.
6. As reflected in 1 Corinthians 9:24 and Philippians 3:12-14, the race requires strict training as we press on toward the goal. List some “Christian disciplines” (i.e., Bible study, prayer, attending a small group, etc.) that you engage in to strengthen your faith. Why is forgetting what is behind so important to focusing on the future prize?

Read this out loud

A point concerning the message this week:

“In a world that runs at a break-neck speed of pace, if we want to experience the heavenly prize Paul speaks of, we must run at a different pace. The speed of the Spirit is one of slowing, abiding, resting, and knowing that He is God. Then, and only then, will our whole lives be an outflow of our relationship with the Father. Jesus called this the kingdom life. Right here. Now.”

Read 1 Corinthians 9:26-27 and then answer the following questions:

7. Compare and contrast the “prizes” or priorities of selfishness, on the one hand, with Christ followers, on the other hand. How is chasing selfishness or instant gratification like “running aimlessly” (1 Corinthians 9:26)?
8. Explain how slowing the pace of life, and eliminating distractions that interfere with your relationship with God, can build your faith and help you win the race Paul is talking about.

Additional Study

If you have time during your Small Group or you want to study more about the message topic, read and consider the following passages:

- 1 Peter 5:4
- Ecclesiastes 2:11
- James 1:12
- Psalm 149:4
- Galatians 6:9-10



NEXT STEPS

9. Bono, the lead singer of U2, described the song quoted above as "a kind of gospel song with a restless spirit." Are you running aimlessly, or do you have a restless spirit that is sprinting toward God?
10. If you are not in the race and pressing on to win the valuable and lasting crown, what is keeping you on the sidelines? Are you ready to run?

PRAYER

1. God, help me run the marathon and not become weary, help me to maintain my focus on your prize.
2. Lord, help me share the good news of your everlasting prize with others. Please motivate those who need you and help them choose to run the good race. Help me to run with and encourage them.

SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY

Establish a regular rhythm of serving together! Below are some service opportunities.

- BENSON – Local Mission Partner is ABIDE. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
- MILLARD - Local Mission Partner is Heartland Hope. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
- FREMONT - Local Mission Partner is LifeHouse. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
- OMAHA - Local Mission Partner is Open Door Mission. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
- Or get to know your community! Seek out service opportunities in your area.