

Date: March 17, 2013

Subject: Run with Patience - Heb. 12:1

"... and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Hebrews 12:1

As we should run a race with patience physically, so should we run the race with patience spiritually. Nobody can sprint a marathon; and should anyone try, they are sure to not finish at all. This same fundamental truth applies ~~to~~ spiritually as well. Jesus said,

"They on the rock are they, who, when they hear, receive the Word with joy; and these have no root, who for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away."  
Luke 8:13

Our Christian life isn't measured by how well we start, but how well we run each day - every day - and finally, how well we finish. The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy,

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge,

"shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." 2 Timothy 4:7-8

Paul - like any good runner will tell you - kept his eyes upon the goal. Over in Philippians 3:14 he wrote, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

In 1 Corinthians 15:10 Paul wrote, "... but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Of all the other Apostles, Paul says that he laboured more than any of them, what was the secret to his success? First, it was the grace of God; and second, it's because he stayed focused on Jesus, while he ran with patience, "let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

The Greek word here for "patience" is "hypomonē" and is used to describe someone who is unwavering from a deliberate purpose in faith and godliness even under the greatest trials and sufferings. The opposite of "hypomonē" is cowardice or despondency. When soldiers would return home

after war, they had a higher level of "hypomōnē" than when they first left. The more intense the war, the stronger the "hypomōnē". Romans 5:3 "Knowing that tribulation works patience [hypomōnē]." James 1:3 "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith works patience [hypomōnē]." }

Therefore the greater our trials in life, the greater will our patience - or endurance - grow. You see beloved, though the race is the same, yet are <sup>the</sup> obstacles different for each one of us. For some, sickness or disease, for others poverty, others imprisonment, mockings, even tortuous death. No matter where you are in this race; whether you are just beginning, or have been running for awhile, the trials you are facing are ~~tailored~~ made just for you. Not to tempt you, not to destroy you; but are all designed by your heavenly Father, Who loves you and Who is training you, by building you up to be the Christian He desires you to be. }

"For whom the Lord loves He chastens,  
and scourges every son whom He receives."

Hebrews 12:6

The message I hope you receive from this letter is, don't get discouraged, "Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;" (Heb. 12:12); rather, be encouraged in God's love for you. Trust in His care and goodness for you, you may be going through a very difficult situation right now, and maybe you're beginning to doubt God's love for you, "IF He loves me, why isn't He helping? Why doesn't He answer my prayers? Why does He leave me to suffer through all of this alone?"

He hasn't left you, He does love you; you just have to trust Him. Remember the old Footprints story? At the end of a man's life, he looked back on his whole life and two sets of footprints <sup>were</sup> in the sand, showing that Jesus walked all the way with him. But he noticed that during the hardest times of his life, he saw only one set of footprints in the sand. He turned to Jesus and said how could you leave me all alone at the worst times of my life! Jesus calmly answered, I never left ~~you~~ you, I never forsook you; those difficult times in your life where you only saw one set of footprint in the sand, it was then that I carried you.

We read in Psalm 77:19 "Thy way is in the sea, and Thy path is the great waters, and Thy footsteps are not known."

God's footsteps are all around you my dear friend, but you can't see them with your eyes, but only by faith. So be encouraged and, "run with patience."

Your servant for Jesus' sake,

Herb A. Wheeler