**SERMON OUTLINE**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SERMON TITLE:** | How to Run Like a Champion |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | Hebrews 12:1-2 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2413 |
|  |  |
| We are grateful for the opportunity to provide this outline produced from a sermon preached by Adrian Rogers while serving as pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. This outline is intended for your personal, non-commercial use.  In order to ensure our ability to be good stewards of Adrian Rogers’ messages, Love Worth Finding has reserved all rights to this content.  Except for your personal, non-commercial use and except for brief quotations in printed reviews, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means —electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other— without the prior permission of the publisher.  Copyright ©2022 Love Worth Finding Ministries, Inc. | |

1. INTRODUCTION
   1. When you think of a runner, what do you think about?
      1. A person who is looking straight ahead in complete, total concentration.
      2. A person whose every inch, every ounce, every nerve, every fiber is pressing toward the goal.
      3. A runner who is staying in the lane.
         1. He is not moving to the right.
         2. He is not moving to the left.
      4. A runner who is not running against anyone else.
         1. He is running against himself.
         2. He is running against the clock, headed toward the finish line.
   2. Hebrews 12:1-2
      1. According to this Scripture, you are a runner if you are saved.
         1. You may not be able to run athletically, but you can run spiritually.
   3. If you are a child of God, you are in the race.
      1. It matters not how old you are.
      2. It matters not how feeble you may be.
      3. It matters not how rich or poor you may be.
   4. There is a race for you to run, and God wants you to run like a champion.
   5. Today’s message will teach you how to run like a champion.
2. there is a purpose to pursue (hebrews 12:1)
   1. The purpose is for us to run.
   2. Hebrews 12:1
      1. There is a race that is set before us.
         1. This is our purpose in life.
      2. What does the word “wherefore” represent in this passage?
         1. Hebrews 11 tells us about champions who ran the race of faith.
            1. These champions succeeded, and their names were included in God’s Hall of Champions in this chapter.
         2. This is to challenge us to run as they ran.
      3. There is a purpose to pursue.
         1. The heroes of the past are now in the Glory.
            1. They are watching us.

They are not criticizing us but cheering us on.

In the Apostle Paul’s day, there were great stadiums where the people would go to watch different kinds of athletic events and exhibitions.

The author of Hebrews said that we are now on the playing field, and the heroes of the past are in the stands.

* + - 1. We are to run the race that is set before us.
  1. We are not running in order to get to Heaven.
     1. Do not think that if you win the race that you are going to Heaven.
     2. Heaven is not the goal at the end of the race.
     3. Salvation is not the goal at the end of the race.
        1. It is the gift that puts you in the race.
  2. There is a course that is set for each of us.
     1. Hebrews 12:1
     2. We all have our own particular race.
        1. The Apostle Paul came to the end of his own race.
           1. Acts 20:24
        2. Everyone has their own race.
           1. Everyone’s race is different.
           2. We should not compare ourselves with one another.
  3. We are not running against one another.
     1. We are running against sin.
     2. We are running against Satan.
     3. We are running against self.
  4. We need to get our eyes off of how others are running their race and concentrate on our own race.
     1. We do not need to try to run somebody else’s race.
     2. God has a different kind of a race for each of us to run.
  5. If you are not in the race:
     1. Then you are sinning against yourself.
     2. You are sinning against your church.
     3. You are a disappointment to angels.
     4. You are rebellious against God.
  6. Each of us have a race, and we are not exempt.

1. THERE IS A PERSON TO PREPARE (HEBREWS 12:1)
   1. If you are going to run the race, then you have to prepare to run the race.
   2. Hebrews 12:1
   3. Lay the weights aside.
      1. The least weight the better.
         1. You will never see someone in the Olympics running a race while wearing an overcoat.
      2. The Greek word for “weight” does not mean something that is sinful.
         1. It means something that burdens you; something that holds you down.
      3. There are some things that are not bad in themselves.
         1. For example, there is nothing wrong with an overcoat.
            1. You just don’t wear an overcoat when you are running a race.
   4. 1 Corinthians 6:12
      1. When you think of the word “expedience,” another word that comes to mind is “expedition”.
         1. An expedition is when you are going somewhere.
      2. Paul said, “Something may be lawful for me, but if it’s not expedient, if it doesn’t speed me on my course, then I need to leave it alone.”
         1. It may be some recreational habit, an acquaintance, a hobby, too much television, or too much sleep; but if it keeps you from winning the race, then lay it aside.
         2. Good things become bad things when they keep us from the best things.
   5. We need to ask ourselves these questions:
      1. Is there something in my life that is hindering my walk with Christ?
      2. Is there something that is holding me back?
      3. Is there something that is excess baggage?
      4. Is there something that is keeping me from being all that I ought to be for the Lord Jesus Christ?
         1. If you want to win the race, then lay it aside.
   6. Hebrews 12:1
      1. This passage is not talking about good things that may become bad things; it is simply talking about bad things.
      2. The word “beset” means “to tangle you up.”
         1. A person cannot run a race with a long, flowing robe that is tangling him up or with a rope around his feet.
         2. A person needs to be free so that he can run.
      3. What is the sin that so easily trips you up?
         1. Weights load us down; sin trips us up.
            1. Either one can make you a poor runner and keep you from running the race.
   7. The Apostle Paul is talking about faith in Hebrews 11 and 12.
      1. The race that we are running is the race of faith.
      2. The book of Hebrews says that we live by faith; therefore, we run by faith.
         1. Hebrews 10:38
      3. The reason that we do not have any more faith than we do have is because of sin.
         1. Hebrews 3:12
            1. Unbelief is not a mental sin; it is a moral sin.
            2. It does not come out of the head; it comes out of the heart.
   8. God puts things in a particular sequence in the Bible.
      1. For example, in 2 Peter 1:2, grace comes before peace.
         1. It never says “peace and grace;” it is always “grace and peace.”
            1. We will not know peace until we know grace.
      2. The Bible also says to believe and be baptized.
         1. Mark 16:16
         2. It doesn’t say “Be baptized and believe.”
            1. To be immersed before giving your heart to Jesus and truly believing is not baptism at all.
            2. True baptism follows true belief.
      3. Another order that God has put in the Bible is repentance and faith.
         1. If you’re having difficulty with faith, then try repentance.
         2. There is nothing so condemning and so debilitating to faith as sin in the heart.
            1. Hebrews 3:12
   9. The writer of Hebrews is telling us to get rid of the excess weight as we run the race.
2. there is a price to pay (hebrews 12:1)
   1. Hebrews 12:1
      1. The word “patience” in this passage literally means “endurance.”
         1. It means bearing up under some load or challenge.
   2. Are you looking for an easy way, a cheap way, or a lazy way to serve God?
      1. The business of running this race means that you are going to do it with all of your heart.
         1. No one is excluded.
         2. We all are to run with endurance.
      2. If you are in this race, then you need to pray over it, weep over it, study over it, and work over it.
         1. If we possess the race, the race will possess others.
      3. This matter of being saved and running the race is a full-time occupation.
         1. God does business with those who mean business.
   3. Do you pay a price?
      1. Do you give up some extra time in the morning to get into the Word of God?
      2. Do you pay the price of being ridiculed because you keep your Bible on your desk in the office or bow your head and thank God for His goodness before your meal?
      3. Are you willing to be different from the crowd?
   4. When we run this race, we are running against the grain.
      1. What we believe starts at a different source, it follows a different course, and it will end at a different conclusion.
      2. There is a price to pay.
   5. Most people don’t like the idea of a price to pay.
      1. But a disciple is one who follows his Master and obeys his Master.
   6. Many people run and then quit running.
      1. We are to finish our course.
      2. No matter how far ahead you are in any race, you are going to lose if you stop running.
      3. Jesus bowed His head on the cross and said, “It is finished.”
         1. John 19:30
      4. The Apostle Paul finished his course.
         1. 2 Timothy 4:7
      5. Don’t quit.
3. there is a promise to plead (hebrews 12:2)
   1. Hebrews 12:2
      1. The promise in this passage is that if we look to Jesus, then Jesus will be the author and finisher of our faith.
      2. “Author” here literally means “example,” “leader” or “the originator.”
         * 1. Jesus is the example of faith and the originator of our faith.
      3. Faith comes from beholding the Lord Jesus Christ.
   2. All of the heroes of the faith in Hebrews 11 can cheer us on, but they are not our chief example.
      1. Our chief example is the One who never sinned and never failed.
         1. His name is Jesus.
   3. If you want faith, then not only get the sin out of your heart and life, lay aside the weights, but also fix your eyes upon Jesus Christ.
      1. Take your eyes off the faults of those for whom Jesus died and put your eyes upon Jesus Christ, and then your faith will grow.
      2. He is the goal toward which we run.
      3. He is the coach who runs alongside us and gives us courage and strength to run the race.
   4. We ought to be great in our faith, but we should never boast about our great faith.
      1. It is not so much great faith in God that we need as it is faith in a great God.
   5. “Looking unto Jesus” in Hebrews 12:2 literally means looking away from everything else and looking at Jesus.
      1. Keep your eyes upon Jesus.
      2. Don’t look at your look; don’t put faith in your faith.
         1. Put your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. there is a prize to possess (hebrews 12:2)
   1. When you run, you do so to win a trophy or a prize.
   2. Hebrews 12:2
      1. The joy that is set before Him is winning the race.
      2. Jesus is our example.
         1. He is a champion who, when He ran His race, received a crown of joy.
         2. This crown, according to this Scripture, gave Him the ability to endure.
            1. We will pay the price if we keep the crown in mind.
            2. If we keep the crown in mind, then we can bear the cross.
            3. But we cannot have the crown if we despise the cross.
         3. We are crucified with the Lord Jesus Christ.
   3. 1 Corinthians 9:25
   4. 1 Thessalonians 2:19
      1. In this Scripture, the Apostle Paul was saying that his crown was going to be those whom he had led to Jesus.
         1. This is a crown that doesn’t corrupt.
         2. When you die and go to Heaven, are you going to take someone with you or are you going to Heaven alone?
            1. It matters not how eloquently we may teach, how faithfully we attend church, or how circumspectly we walk.

If we are not trying to bring souls to Jesus, then we are not right with God.

* 1. We need to have a passion to see people come to the Lord Jesus Christ.
  2. The crown is the soul winner’s crown.
  3. Philippians 3:13-14
     1. The Apostle Paul wrote this passage late in his ministry, after he had been beaten with rods and stones, survived a shipwreck, and been imprisoned.
  4. All the soul winning we will ever do will be done in this world and in this life.
  5. All the sacrifices we will ever make for Jesus, we are going to make now.
     1. We must finish our course.
  6. 1 Corinthians 9:24
     1. Do you want the prize?
     2. You can be an athlete.
        1. Even if you are on a sick bed.
        2. Even if you are poor.
        3. Even if you have a debilitating disease.
        4. No matter who you are, where you are, what age you are, or whatever you may have, you can be like the Apostle Paul and say, “I have finished my course.”
           1. 2 Timothy 4:7
  7. Philippians 1:21
  8. Matthew 25:21

1. CONCLUSION
   1. Salvation is not a gift or a prize at the end of the race.
      1. It is the gift that puts us in the race.
   2. No matter how young, how old, how rich, or how poor you may be, God has a race for you to run.
      1. If you run it, then you will say, “It will be worth it all when we see Jesus.”
   3. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
   4. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
      1. Romans 3:23
      2. Romans 10:9-10
      3. Romans 10:13
      4. Acts 16:31
      5. John 3:16