



Introduction

The title of my messages is, Run your race! And I want to challenge each of us to start running our race, today. Maybe you did not know you in a race, but you are and the only competitor in your race is YOU!

Please turn with me in your Bible because the Bible is and must always be the basis of everything we teach and need to know, the Bible is Key to each of our lives and please read it daily it will change your life.

Our title verse today comes from **Hebrews 12:1-2** *"¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

You are in your own race

Today I have good news for some people or maybe sad news for you, but every person in the world, those who have lived before, those who are living now, or those who will be living in the future, have, are and will be running their race.

And this included everyone in this church today, each one of you are running a race. And I want you to understand that this race is your race, it is not someone else's race.

You cannot run someone else's race; and someone else cannot run your race you can only run your race.

Our text in **Hebrews 12** says that there is a cloud of witnesses, those people who have died and gone to be with the Lord, like the disciples, like the men and woman of God who accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and made Him King of their lives, they have all run their races and are all a witness to the faithfulness of God and an inspiration to us to stay the course and run our race the best we can.

The writer of Hebrews says, let us lay aside every weight, and sin that ensnares us, the time for continually sinning is over, the time for getting angry at people is over, the time for hatred is over, the time to get even is over.

Throw these things away they will not help you win your race; they will prevent you from getting to the finish line and winning the prize.



1 Corinthians 9:24-27 ²⁴ *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.* ²⁵ *And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.* ²⁶ *Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air.* ²⁷ *But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."*

If you did not know this before, the Bible is telling you to run your race like you are going to receive a prize and that prize will never fade, you will win one of five crowns spoken of in the Bible.

The Imperishable Crown for all you not only ran their race but finished their race.

Example

Can you imagine you are at the Olympic games competing in the 100 meters final, and you have the best shoes in Edgars on your feet, you wearing your nice suit/dress money can buy, and you have a laptop bag with the latest and greatest laptop and gadgets on your back, and over the front of your chest you have a bag with a million rand in cash, you have gold chains around your neck and bangles on your wrists, your fancy watch, the latest cell phone in your hand and you pulling that nice German motor car you want everyone to see you in.

Do you think you have any chance of winning the race? No, why because of the extra weight you are carrying and the things you think are important are causing you to lose your race.

Throw those weights off today, if you need to forgive someone, forgive them not because you must but because it is a weight causing you not to win your race.

If there is sin in your life, deal with it because it will cause you to lose your race.

Is the pride, arrogance, lust, whatever, throw it off because it is causing you not to win your race.

If someone has hurt you, said bad things about you, get over it because it is causing you not to win your race.



Looking unto Jesus

Throw those weights off and turn your attention, focus onto Jesus Christ, and start to run your race with a meaning and purpose, every step is purposeful, everything you do has a purpose for the Kingdom, every place you go, every action you take is focused on God and reaching the finish line.

Stop looking around while running, stop pointing fingers at your neighbour, your spouse, or your friend, and trying to fix them. Fix yourself or you will lose your race,

Stop looking at the junk on TV and movies, focus on Jesus because Jesus was focusing on you at the Cross of Calvary because **Hebrews 12** says, the Joy of seeing you and you and me and the entire world being saved through His death on the Cross gave Him Joy. Jesus saw you and me coming to Him while going through the pain and suffering of the Cross of Calvary.

So, stop looking at what other people are doing. Stop judging others against your standards. Stop measuring yourself against people who were all already running their race. Stop chasing after things, getting the next promotion, if God want you to have these things He will supply them – **Philippians 4:19 / Psalm 37:4 / Matthew 6:33**.

I want you to realise that you are in your own race and only you can accomplish the finish line. God has giving you everything you will need to complete this plan and purpose He has for you.

God is not going to ask you what your pastor your parents' friends or anyone else did to stop you from finishing your race, He is going to ask you what you did!

This is serious, it will be you and God and the race, the plan He set before you since the foundation of time.

If you are born again this is not a judgement about Salvation, Jesus Christ has already paid the price for you to enter Heaven, this is a judgement on whether you will earn the prize and that prize everyone will see for the rest of eternity.

Run you Race

As I bring this message to a close, I want you to know that God has a plan for your life, the race He wants you to complete.

God says in **Jeremiah 29:11-14** *“¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. ¹²*



Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. ¹⁴ I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back from your captivity;”

God has a plan for your life and we need to find out what that plan is and stop wasting time, His plans are not to harm you, it is not God that is punishing you for your sin, He already punished Jesus Christ at Calvary for the SIN of the entire human race, it is the consequences of your sin that was not part of His plan for you that is causing your pain – not God!

God’s plan is to give you a hope and a future with Him in heaven, and when you realise God has a plan for your life, your natural response is to CALL on Him, ask God what He wants you to do and He will listen to you and when you get serious and seek Him with all your heart you will find Him and accomplish the race, the plan he has for your life.

Just note, when you are busy with God’s plan for your life there is peace, there is contentment, there is rest, and most importantly there is provision. God will supply your needs when you are doing His plan for you, there is ALWAYS provision.

Conclusion

Let me close by saying this, when you stand before God either at the Rapture of the church or after you have died. The Bible says in many places we will stand before God to be judged, judged one what?

Judged on whether you have received God’s only Son Jesus Christ and then how you ran your race. **Hebrews 9:24** *“And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment”*

Racing against Time

For some of us today, we are not even in God’s race because our race is a race against time. You have not committed your life to God by submitting to Him and accepting Jesus Christ as your Saviour as full payment for your sin and so you are not even in the race which these scriptures talk about.

When you stand before God, a search will be made in the Lambs Book of Life and if your name is not written in this book you will be condemned to a place of eternal separation from God and His love and presence, a place we call hell and your race, and the way you lived your life will testify that you never served Him.



You see when you received Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, when you lay down your life of sin and received the forgiveness that is found in no other name but the Name of Jesus Christ. It is only Jesus Christ who died your and my sin at the Cross of Calvary. Your name is written in the Lambs Book of Life never to be erased.

As we celebrate the Crucifixion in a few days, never forget that it was there on the Cross of Calvary that God poured out His ENTIRE WRATH for SIN on Jesus Christ.

The just punishment your sin deserves was placed on Jesus Christ at the Cross and He paid the full price for every sin for all entity and He was punished by God and obtained total forgiveness of sin for all who will come through Him, Jesus Christ to God, that is why Jesus said in **John 14:6**, *“I am the WAY, the Truth and the Life and no one comes to the Father but through Me!”*

That is why the Crucifixion is such an ugly place, **Isaiah 52:14** says *“¹⁴ Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;”*

Jesus Christ was punished, beaten, whipped, smashed, destroyed, gave His life, and died for all the sin of the Entire World, from the beginning of Time to the end of Time, SIN was dealt with once and for all time, for ALL mankind.

When we speak for the Cross of Calvary it was not a pretty sight, for on that Cross hung Jesus Christ, totally smashed, crushed, destroyed because of your and my sin.

It is not the Jews or the Jewish leaders that put Jesus on the Cross of Calvary, it was you and my SIN that put Him there.

Therefore, when you do not accept Him as your Saviour, when you reject that horrible punishment that God poured on Jesus Christ for your sin, do you think you have a chance to live in heaven?

Sadly, the answer to this question is no, if you reject Jesus Christ and His death and full payment for your sin, there is no other way, and you will go to a Christless eternity in hell because your sin condemns you there.

Let's pray...

You can change that today, as we all bow our heads and close our eyes.



I have shared with you that you are in a race to win the prize God has for each and everyone of us, but you need to come through Jesus Christ to be part of that race.

You know you are not right with God; the Holy Spirit is telling you right now that you are not and if you are wondering or hoping to make heaven then you are not going to Heaven, but you can change that today.

If you want to give your life to Jesus Christ and become His child, if you want to chose Heaven instead of hell then I want you to raise your hand right now?

Remember it is not your husband, wife, friend that is going to hell it is you alone and only you can change your address in eternity, only you can choose to follow Jesus Christ and live with Him in heaven.

If that is you, I want you to raise you had right now, do not look around this is all about you, do you want to go to heaven or hell?

If you raised your hand at any time during my call, I want you to take a step of faith and stand up and let ask Jesus Christ to come and live in your heart and have your name written in the Lambs Book of Live.