

# GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XII

December 7, 2003

No. 49

## RUN CHRISTIAN

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Many do not like to run. Expending energy, resulting in sweat and possible pain are mental barriers to many a couch potato. The idea of a race conjures up competition, winning and losing. No sir, I will leave running in a race to the more adventurous and competitive in spirit. I can live my life just fine without running or racing.

While living the life of a Christian is described as a “walk” - “*We walk by faith and not by sight*” (2 Corinthians 5:7); the Christian’s life is also like running in a race. Paul writes to the same people who are walking by faith, offering this exhortation: “*Know ye not that they that run in a race run all, but one receiveth a prize? Even so run; that ye may attain*” (1 Corinthians 9:24).

Paul recognizes that a race in the Isthmian Games brought participants into the arena with expectations of one receiving the prize. But in the spiritual race, it is different. All can attain unto the prize. However, you must enter the race, and you must run before the prize can be yours. A garland of leaves might grace the head of

the winning competitor in the Games, but it cannot compare to the prize for Christians running their race. The garland of leaves, flowers or even gold is still a “*corruptible crown*”. The Christian is running for “*an incorruptible*” crown, the crown of eternal life (1 Corinthians 9:25, Revelation 2:10).

Running a race is an important concept because it necessitates discipline. We don’t think too much about discipline in preparing to walk from one room to another, but knowing we have a 26-mile run before us, thoughts will wisely turn to disciplined eating habits, and rigorous training. Knowing we must run the race demands a disciplined life.

Paul writes, “*And every man that striveth in the games exerciseth self-control in all things...I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage*” (1 Corinthians 9:25-26). We must control our thoughts, keeping them pure, and must buffet our bodies, not allowing them to be instruments of unrighteousness.

Our discipline must be regulated by the law of Christ.

“*And if also a man contend in the games, he is not crowned, except he have contended lawfully*” (2 Timothy 2:5). The crown Paul was running for was the “*crown of righteousness*” (2 Timothy 4:8). It is the prize for running the race lawfully, or living right in accordance with the gospel of Christ, which is God’s standard of righteousness (Romans 1:16-17).

Discipline is not easy. Neither is the disciplined race of the Christian easy. Pitfalls await us to derail and discourage us from completing the race and thus robbing us of the joyful crown. We must “*... run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus... who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross despising shame, and hath set down at the right hand of God*” (Hebrews 12:1-2). As Jesus went through sorrow to obtain His throne, we do not let life’s sorrows keep us from our crown. We run with patience, never giving in or giving up. Dear Christian are you running? Are you running lawfully and steadfastly? “*...Run that ye may attain.*”