

ASSURANCE COMES WHEN WE RUN WITH ENDURANCE

1. Run this race with personal self-control and personal preparation.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Winning a race requires purpose and discipline. Paul uses this illustration to explain that the Christian life takes hard work, self denial, and grueling preparation. As Christians, we are running toward our heavenly reward. The essential disciplines of prayer, bible study, and worship equip us to run with vigor and stamina. Don't merely observe from the grandstand; don't just turn out to jog a couple of laps each morning. Train diligently, your spiritual progress depends on it. (Life Application Bible Commentary)

2. Run this race without fault, without complaining, and without disputing so you may shine as lights in a dark world.

Philippians 2:12-18

Why are complaining and arguing ("murmurings and disputings") so harmful? If all that people know about a church is that its members constantly argue, complain, and gossip, they get a false impression of Christ's Gospel. Belief in Christ should unite those who trust Him. If your church is always complaining and arguing, it lacks the unifying power of Jesus Christ. Stop arguing with other Christians or complaining about people and conditions within the church and let the world see Christ.

Our lives should be characterized by moral purity, patience, and peacefulness, so that we will "shine as lights" in a crooked and perverse world. A transformed life is an effective witness to the power of God's Word. Is your life shining brightly, or is it clouded by complaints and arguing? Be a clean, radiant light shining out for God. (Life Application Bible Commentary)

3. Run with patience, run with endurance the race of faith.

Hebrews 12:1-2

4. A race ran well has many rewards.

2 Timothy 4:6-8

As Paul neared the end of his life, he was able to look back without regret or remorse. In these verses, he examines his life from 3 perspectives; the present reality of the end of his life, for which he was ready (v. 6); the past, when he had been faithful (v. 7); and the future, as he anticipated his heavenly reward (v. 8). (John McArthur Commentary)

5. This race will give you the opportunity to wear many hats.

a. Paul was compared to a soldier. 2 Timothy 2:3 & 4 2 Corinthians 10:3
1 Timothy 6:12 Philemon 2

b. Paul was compared to an athlete. 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 Ephesians 6:12

c. Paul was compared to a guardian. 2 Timothy 1:13 & 14 1 Timothy 6:20 & 21

2 Timothy 4:8

8 Henceforth (**FINALLY**) 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.