

RUN...DON'T WALK!

Proverbs 18:10

10 The name of the Lord is a strong tower: The righteous RUNNETH INTO IT, and is safe.

I would like to direct your attention to the word “run.” The Bible says, “The righteous RUN to the name of the Lord and are safe.” Over and over again we’re admonished in Scripture to *run*. In fact, what we call the “Christian WALK” is really the Christian ‘RACE.’

1 Corinthians 9:24

24 Know ye not that they which RUN IN A RACE run all, but one RECEIVETH THE PRIZE? So RUN, that ye may obtain.

According to this verse, if we’re going to “receive the prize,” then we must learn to **RUN...NOT WALK!**

Hebrews 6:12

12 That ye BE NOT SLOTHFUL, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

The word “slothful” means **sluggish or slow**. The Bible warns us against being *slow*, especially when it comes to believing or obeying God’s word. And this is how we are to understand this admonition to run. When we talk about *running* we’re talking about **being quick to obey or believe; moving with a sense of urgency; giving maximum effort!**

Now, there’s a certain amount of preparation that’s required in order for us to truly run.

Song of Solomon 1:4 (KJV 1900)

4 Draw me, we will run after thee...

According to this verse the ability or motivation to run starts with God! The reason it starts with God is because it requires a certain amount of preparation.

Psalms 119:32

32 I WILL RUN the way of thy commandments, When thou shalt ENLARGE MY HEART.

Psalm 119:32 New International Version 1984

³² I RUN in the path of your commands, for you have SET MY HEART FREE.

RUNNING REQUIRES FREEDOM

This is where our preparation starts. Preparation to run (or run effectively) begins by freeing ourselves!

Hebrews 12:1

¹ Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us LAY ASIDE EVERY WEIGHT, and the SIN which doth so easily beset us, and LET US RUN with patience the race that is set before us,

Apparently, our ‘besetting sins’ and ‘weights’ are run-stoppers. What are besetting sins? A besetting sin is a sin that easily entangles us (i.e. a sin we constantly struggle with). On the other hand, a ‘weight’ is anything that slows us down or takes away our motivation to run. We must lay these things aside FIRST, if we want to run our race effectively!

RUNNING REQUIRES SPACE

The word “enlarge” in **Psalm 119:32** can also be translated *make room* or *widen*.

Psalm 119:32 Lexham Septuagint

³² I RAN the way of your commandments when you WIDENED MY HEART.

Sometimes the reason we’re unable to run is because we’re simply not allowing God enough room or space in our hearts! In other words, there are too many areas in our hearts that are closed off (or off limits) to God.

Two things can help us with this...

1. A GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Psalm 119:32 Revised Standard Version

³² I WILL RUN in the way of thy commandments when thou ENLARGEST MY UNDERSTANDING!

We can make more room in our hearts by increasing our understanding. The reason some people aren’t *running* is because they’re ignorant of what God truly wants, OR they’re ignorant of what will truly make them happy. (When people know better, they will oftentimes do better!)

2. A GREATER *FEAR OF GOD*

Isaiah 60:5

5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, And THINE HEART SHALL FEAR, AND BE ENLARGED...

Our hearts will become enlarged when we learn to fear God (take His word and His judgments seriously). In fact, the fear of the Lord can motivate us to run like nothing else can!

Hebrews 6:18

18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have FLED FOR REFUGE to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

This verse is a reminder that we ought to run with a *purpose*. Here we're told to *run for refuge*.

There were “cities of refuge” that were strategically located throughout the land of Israel to provide sanctuary (safety) for those fleeing from an *avenger*. (Under the Old Covenant, Israel lived by the concept “an eye for an eye.” Meaning, if anyone was killed, whether intentionally or accidentally, that person’s family had a right *avenge* their blood. This was considered justice in those days. However, as a way of providing an exception for those deaths that occurred *accidentally*, God had Israel to build *cities of refuge*.)

Numbers 35:11, 12

***11 Then ye shall appoint you cities to be CITIES OF REFUGE for you; that the slayer may flee thither, which KILLETH ANY PERSON at UNAWARES.
12 And they shall be unto you CITIES FOR REFUGE FROM THE AVENGER; that the manslayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment.***

Therefore, until a person could receive due process, asylum (safety) from their avenger was given to them IF they reached one of these cities. Now, not everyone took advantage of this provision. Some ignorantly (or foolishly) continued to live as though the avenger would never come. There’s a great illustration of this in **2 Samuel 3**.

2 Samuel 3:33

33 And the king lamented over Abner, and said, Died Abner AS A FOOL dieth?

Who is Abner, and why did David say that he died as a fool? Well, Abner was a commander in Saul's army. After the death of Saul, Abner assembled a faction against David (even though he knew God ordained David to be king of Israel).

Now, Abner's rebellion led to a contest between his men (soldiers) and Joab's men. (Joab was the commander of David's army.) On one occasion, Asahel (who was Joab's younger brother) pursued hard after Abner to kill him. Out of respect for Joab, Abner tried desperately to avoid confrontation with Asahel. But Asahel persisted, and Abner was forced to kill him out of self-defense. Knowing this would provoke Joab to seek revenge, Abner fled to Hebron where he quickly secured peace with David.

Fleeing to Hebron was a strategic move by Abner because Hebron was a city of refuge! Knowing he could not exact revenge while Abner was in Hebron, Joab invited Abner to the gates of the city to make peace with him. However, as soon as Abner reached the city gates, Joab slew him!

This treasonous act by Joab grieved David, BUT he accused Abner of being a fool. Why? Because Abner knew that he had safety in Hebron, yet he left the city exposing himself to judgment from his avenger! Abner assumed that he would not be harmed by his enemy because he had made peace with the king.

Hebrews 2:3

³ HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE, IF WE NEGLECT SO GREAT SALVATION; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*;

Notice, we will not escape judgment if we "neglect" (or fail to remain in) salvation! Some live like judgment will never come. But, they are *fools* and do not know that they are living on burrowed time!