

## **RUN TO WIN PART TWO: WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF THE RACE AND WHERE DO WE GET THE POWER TO RUN**

### **SERIES FOUNDATIONAL VERSES:**

*“You know that in a race all the runners run but only one wins the prize, don’t you? You must run in such a way that you may be victorious. Everyone who enters an athletic contest practices self-control in everything. They do it to win a wreath that withers away, but we run to win a prize that never fades. That is the way I run, with a clear goal in mind. That is the way I fight, not like someone shadow boxing.” (1 Corinthians 9:24-26 ISV)*

*“Therefore, having so vast a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, and throwing off everything that hinders us and especially the sin that so easily entangles us, let us keep running with endurance the race set before us, fixing our attention on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of the faith, who, in view of the joy set before him, endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Think about the one who endured such hostility from sinners, so that you may not become tired and give up.” (Hebrews 12:1-3 ISV)*

Part One of the Run To Win Bible Study To Go Series, focuses on keeping you moving forward throughout the high and low points in your life.

The focus of this four part series is to help you understand that you are in a race - a race called life. This race is run on two levels. On the first level, the race is run on a primarily natural level. This level is moved and motivated by our natural senses and experiences but also includes aspects of spiritual experiences. The second level of the race is run on a spiritual level. Running the race on this level, people are primarily moved and motivated by our reborn spiritual senses, but must still experience life within the boundaries our natural senses and experiences.

Unlike the competitive races that we may participate in or watch, our primary competitor is ourselves, not other people in the race. Even though we will have outside influences and hindrances while running our race, we are to help others to win their race, as well.

In Part Two of the series we will answer the questions:

- What's the purpose of the race?
- Where do we get the power to run?

The purpose of being in the race is summed up by Jesus Christ. The conversation is described in Matthew 22:34-40.

*“After Jesus had made the Sadducees look foolish, the Pharisees heard about it and got together. One of them was an expert in the Jewish Law. So he tried to test Jesus by asking, “Teacher, what is the most important commandment in the Law?” Jesus answered: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind. This is the first and most important commandment. The second most important commandment is like this one. And it is, “Love others as much as you love yourself.”*

*All the Law of Moses and the Books of the Prophets[a] are based on these two commandments.” (Matthew 22:34-40)*

In this race, knowing that loving God and loving others as we ourselves, means that God put us in the race to run as part of His unified body.

*“Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by[c] one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.*

*Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?*

*But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment.*

*But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it." (1 Corinthians 12: 12-27)*

There is no difference in our purpose from when we were born into the race naturally and when we were born spiritually. The only difference is our motivation and the power behind our ability to fulfill our purpose.

Before being born again, we may not have even known that our purpose was to love God and to love our neighbors in the same way that we love ourselves.

Before we were born again, we were running our race to live in the best way we could, whether good or bad. We were using whatever power, knowledge and wisdom that we had or could get naturally (or from a lesser spiritual force).

Once we are born again, by the Spirit, we now have both spiritual power, knowledge and wisdom. And, we want to show God our love by pleasing Him and helping others.

But, unlike using our power, wisdom and knowledge the way world's system tells us to, that is, using it religiously to get ahead or because we have to, we now use that power, wisdom and knowledge get ahead and help others, because we want to.

*“Be careful and watch that no one leads you away and take you captive with false, deceptive and empty and worthless teaching that is only human [according to human traditions], which comes from the ruling spirits and elemental spiritual forces or elementary teachings of this world, and not from Christ. All of God lives fully in Christ. For in him all the fullness of deity dwells in a human body and you have a full and true life in Christ being filled in him, who is ruler head over every ruler and power or authority. (Colossians 2: 8-10 EVB)*

*... If people’s thinking is controlled by or their mind is set on the sinful nature, the result is death. But if their thinking is controlled by [or their mind is set on the Spirit, the result is life and peace. When people’s thinking is controlled by or their mind is set on their sinful nature, they are hostile to God, because they refuse to submit to God’s law and really are not even able to submit to God’s law. Those people who are under the control of their sinful nature; cannot please God.*

*But you are not controlled by your sinful nature, but the Spirit, if that Spirit of God really lives in you...  
(Romans 8: 5-11 [6-9] EVB personalized)*

We come into the world with the power to run the race. Remember, this race is run on two levels - human/natural and human/spiritual. On the natural level of the race the phrase, “pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps”, still includes others who were willing to help - even if it’s just giving us the boots and/or the bootstraps.

Thinking that we’re in this race alone is not true. We will always need help. Which demonstrates that our true competition is with ourselves, not others.

Likewise, on the spiritual level of the race, we have help from the outside. In this case, the help comes from the Holy Spirit who now lives within us. The way we win the ultimate, spiritual race comes by utilizing the power that we have through the Holy Spirit which is

unlimited.

Remember, this race is run on two levels - human/natural and human/spiritual. On this new aspect of your race, being born by the Spirit gives you the power and ability run the race so that you can win.

Knowing the “why” we’re in the race is necessary in understanding the “how” we can win the race. The “why” or the “purpose” of us being in the race is to:

- Love God
- Love Ourselves
- Love Others

The “how” or the power to win the race comes from utilizing the resources that we have available, both natural and spiritual. Some of our “power” resources include:

- The help of others
- Our own physical, emotional, mental and natural spiritual strength
- The Holy Spirit (if we have been born again/reborn by the Spirit)

**Bible Study Questions:**

Do you feel/believe that you have a purpose to live your life?

1. All of the time? \_\_\_\_\_
2. A lot of the time? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Most of the time? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Some of the time? \_\_\_\_\_
5. None of the time? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you feel/believe you're empowered by the Holy Spirit to live your life to win your race?

1. All of the time? \_\_\_\_\_
2. A lot of the time? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Most of the time? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Some of the time? \_\_\_\_\_
5. None of the time? \_\_\_\_\_

Understanding the difference between being in a sprint or a marathon from Part One, why is knowing whether you're in a sprint or a marathon important to knowing your purpose?

Why is having purpose necessary to run your race?

How would you define running your race with purpose and power?

How would you currently describe your progress in running your race with purpose and power?