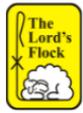


MOVING WHEN GOD MOVES

(Moving Forward Series, Part 3)

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THE LORD'S FLOCK GROW DIGEST

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When God stirs us to pursue our journey with Him, moving forward is the direction we should all be heading. This spiritual movement is likened to a RACE, which, doubtlessly is a challenging course. In 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, St. Paul speaks of running the race and he uses the metaphor of an athletic competition to illustrate the Christian life and the pursuit of spiritual maturity.

1. What Does It Take to Run a Race?

- 1.1 **Focus.** Our eyes have to remain fixed on our Coach who is Christ Jesus; concentrate on attaining the goal.
- 1.2 **Training.** Prepare for an intense and strict spiritual workout (study of the word, prayer, service, putting faith into practice) which require sustained and intentional discipline.
- 1.3 **Passion.** Have a strong determination and boundless enthusiasm to pursue this life-long Christian marathon.
- 1.4 **Purpose.** Run with certainty towards the goal or the finish line to finally get the prize.
- 1.5 **Ability to master our flesh.** Let us not give in to the desires of the flesh and we must live according to the Spirit; we should keep God's word in our minds, hearts and spirits to avoid falling into Satan's traps.

2. Similarities Between an Earthly Race and the Christian Race

- 2.1 Both have a Finish Line Judge who decides on our placement in the race when we reach the finish line
- 2.2 Both have a Finish Line which is the final point of the race (refers to our physical death or the rapture, also known as the Second Coming of Christ).
- 2.3 Both have Winners who are awarded the corresponding prizes. *God offers us not only earthly rewards but more importantly eternal heavenly rewards and the imperishable crown which never fades.*

3. How do we Move Forward When God Moves? As we set out to move forward, we are required to:

- 3.1 Stay focused on God alone who assures us that He will instruct and teach us in the way we should go (Ps. 32:8);

- 3.2 Cling to God's promise of hope which serves as the anchor of our soul when we experience difficulties in our journey. When we put our hope in God, we will receive His great promise of renewed strength (Isaiah 40:31);
- 3.3 Get rid of things that are holding us back. Sins weigh us down while running or moving forward (Hebrews 12:1).

4. Wrong Ways to Run

- 4.1 Running religiously without power. Apart from God, we can do nothing and without His power, we should not dare to run. The power of the Holy Spirit allows us to accomplish the things of God (Acts 1:8)
- 4.2 Running with your enemies. "Avoid the company of fools because it will lead to harm" (Prov. 13:20). "Choose friends wisely for the way of the wicked leads them astray" (Prov. 12:26)
- 4.3 Running away from God. When we run from God, we are headed for danger and bound to meet various difficulties and threats (Jonah running from God).
- 4.4 Running ahead of God. For Abraham and Sarah, time was running out to bear a child; thus, Sarah suggested to Abraham that he take Hagar and let her bear his child. Our God not only has a divine will but He also has an eternal timetable; thus, let us not run ahead of God.

Conclusion: We are commanded by Jesus to follow Him; but we cannot do so if we will stay stationary or remain inactive. We should keep running in the right direction – with His word as lamp to our feet and light to our path. As God moves, we also must move and actively live according to our Christian faith. Let us run the race with a hope, a resolve to win and to finish well.

Reflection:

1. How do you condition your spiritual muscles for God's race?
2. What prevents you from running to win the prize?

Prayer: *Lord, grant me the strength and determination to run my race with passion and purpose. Fill me with your Holy Spirit so I may have the endurance to overcome the hurdles and cultivate discipline in my spiritual race. In Jesus' Name. AMEN!*

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