



● **WARM UP**

The Bible talks about a race that Christians are engaged in, rather than a ride. As we know, in any race there is the possibility that the runners can fail to finish or possibly even turn aside from the track.

Once we enrol and register for the Christian life, the race of life begins. There will be times when every muscle in your body is screaming at you to quit, but if you break through this pain barrier, you are a champion.

I am reminded of what the late Dr Ed Cole said, "Champions are not those who never fail, but those who never quit!" The thought that comes through the Bible is that it is not so important how we start, but how we finish the race. Those who finish well will win the crown of life.

● **READ** 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Hebrews 12:1-2

● **BACKGROUND**

With the race of life in mind, Paul writes to the Church in Corinth and emphasises at least four important words or phrases that describe competing in the Games.

The writer to the Hebrews exhorts us as believers to *"lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith..."*

In the Greek/Roman Games, blood, sweat and tears were all part of the struggle for the prize. And so it will be in our Christian lives as well. However, as long as we keep *"looking unto Jesus,"* He will not only be the author, but the finisher of our faith as well!

● **QUESTIONS**

- 1 What did Paul write to Timothy at the end of his life? (2 Timothy 4:7-8 NKJV) What three disciplines brought about his reward? Could that be said of you?

- 2 Olympic athletes are extremely disciplined with diet, exercise and rest. In 1 Corinthians 9:25 Paul makes mention of two kinds of disciplines and two kinds of crowns. Discuss and make personal application.

- 3 Offset the thoughts of an athlete's disciplined endurance with what Paul sadly writes in Galatians 5:7. What are your thoughts on "hindrances" when running the race?

● **CONSIDER THIS**

As we study the lives of some of the Bible 'Greats' and 'Not So Greats' we will discover that they fall under five different categories.

- Good Beginning: Bad End (GBBE)
- Bad Beginning: Good End (BBGE)
- Good Beginning: Good End (GBGE)
- Bad Beginning: Bad End (BBBE)
- Religious Beginning: Spiritual End! (RBSE)

As we look back in biblical history, it is interesting to see the following:

- *Saul of Tarsus (Rated RBSE)
- *David (Rated GBGE)
- *Noah (Genesis 6:8-9,18)
- *Ananias & Sapphira (Acts 5)
- *Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 4:28-37)
- *Judas Iscariot (Matthew 27:1-5)
- *King Solomon (1 Kings 3:3-4; 11:1-4)
- *King Manasseh (2 Kings 21:1-2,6; 2 Chron 33:11-16)
- *King Saul (1 Sam 10:9-11; 15:35; 1 Chron 10:13-14)

"And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart." (Galatians 6:9) Go for gold!

What is God saying to me?

● **LET'S PRAY**

REAL LIFE STORIES OF GOD'S POWER



A couple of years ago I attended a meeting and [Bill] called out for [people with] lower back pain. I came forward and he spoke over me and cast off a spirit of childhood terror. This was spot on because when I was 17 years old I had been held down by a couple of boys and punched time and time again between my legs. I was tormented and tortured and that had hung over me all these years. Since he has prayed over me my back has been really spot on. Steve

Dedicated to the memory of our friend and brother Dr Mike Gorrie who passed away on 22 March 2015. *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 2 Tim 4:7*