

Running the Right Race

by David Wilkerson

This sermon focuses on the importance of running the right race in the Christian journey, distinguishing between the spirit race that leads to Jesus Christ as the ultimate prize and the flesh race that pursues worldly success. It emphasizes the dangers of getting caught up in the pursuit of success, leading to exhaustion and spiritual shipwreck, urging believers to prioritize seeking God's will above all else.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 9:24, 1 Corinthians 9:27, Philipians 3:14, Colossians 3:2, Matthew 6:33, Galatians 5:16, Hebrews 12:1, 1 Timothy 6:11, Proverbs 3:5

Topics: "Running the Right Race", "Prioritizing God's Will"

Description

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Transcript

I want to speak tonight about running the right race. Running the right race. Heavenly father, we thank you for the power of the Holy Spirit.

We thank you for being with us tonight in this house. We thank you for those that have come from around the United States and other parts of the world tonight and for this gathering and Lord, we can't do anything without you. We need the special unction anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Lord, who am I to say anything to pastors? Lord, I want you to speak through me. Let me be just a vessel. Bless Gary and bless me as we minister.

Now, you've told me that this would be a time of healing, that many have come hurt and bruised. Some are going through a testing time of their life and this would be an encounter with you Lord, that you would speak lovingly to our hearts and you would minister to us and we would leave this place. Unlike where we came, there would be a change.

There would be something deep. Now, Lord, we hear that in conferences all over and we're not trying to be something special or do something special. It's just that we're hungrier Lord than we've ever been.

We're needier than we've ever been. Holy ghost, I'm saying, if you don't come, this is just another meeting. Come Holy Spirit, give us ears to hear what the spirit has to say.

God speak. We want to hear from heaven. We don't want to hear anything else but from the throne of God.

Oh, Holy Spirit, you have to open our ears. You have to give us ears to hear what the spirit has to say. Lord, help us to run the right race, to be on the right course and to hear the right word.

I pray in Christ's name. Amen. Paul tells us that life is a race and he said we're to run that race to win.

He said, so run that you may obtain, or in other words, that you may win the race. Now there's nothing sinful about winning a race. In fact, Paul the apostle said, I run not with uncertainty, but to obtain the prize that's set before me.

But before you go after the prize, you better understand the race. If I were to ask almost everyone in this house, what race are you running? You'd say, I'm running the right race. Now, the older I get, the more I begin to comprehend that there are two races that Christians run.

There is the spirit race and there's the flesh race. And if I were to ask you what race you're in, you say, well, of course, I'm going after the price that is Jesus Christ and him crucified. But you see there, there are two races and there are two prizes.

The spirit race, the prize, of course, Paul said is Jesus Christ. The other race is the race of the flesh and the prize is success. And this is the race.

The majority I see all over the world are racing today for success. Success. Paul said all run, but one receives the prize.

One wins. When he says one wins, he's caught. He's talking about a corporate body, a holy remnant of believers who have set their heart on Jesus Christ.

He is not just first. He's everything. He's not on some totem pole.

He's not one out of 10. He's the only thing. It's the focus of life itself.

He is the prize. And there are people that are seeking that and seeking that alone that I may win Christ. Paul said, not that I may be successful.

Now let me speak to you first about this pursuit of success. This flesh race. Paul said, this is the race that ends in shipwreck.

And I tell you, after traveling all over the world in the last two years, over 50,000 pastors hearing, I've seen it all over the world. We've seen the shipwreck of pastors and their wives and ministries that have gone into the race of the flesh. Paul said, I keep my body or my flesh under and I bring it into subjection.

This by any means, when I've preached to others, I myself become a castaway. A castaway is someone who survived the shipwreck and left a drift on an ocean and he's moving. He's alive, but there is, he is just a drift.

He doesn't know where he's going. He has no direction. And Paul, the apostle said, I bring my flesh under this.

I find myself in the wrong race running the wrong course. If you could see in the spirit, this, this race, these, this flesh race, if you could just see the course, you would find people lying on the sides of this race course exhausted, worn out because the pursuit of worldly success or success among your peers, trying to find self worth out of accomplishing something, building something for God, something people can see that race is exhausting because it never ends because you put a stake out here and say, if I can reach this goal, you could be a pastor and say, if I could reach this 300, I'd be satisfied. But then you put the stake 500 and then 1000 and 2000 and finally you want to make it and find there's no end.

It's exhausting because it's the wrong course and it's the wrong prize. Let me give you some examples. The Lord used me to found team challenge some 40 years ago for drug and alcohol rehabilitation, drug addicts, alcoholics.

There are now over 500 of those centers worldwide and to God be the glory for what he's done. Everywhere we go, we meet the leaders, we meet the staff, but I have been so grieved over what I've seen in some of the majority, the vast majority of all of these drug centers around the world. The leaders are Godly men, women that truly love the Lord.

They are humble, they're broken and I've seen many of them start out so humble and so broken. They got saved at one of the centers. The Lord gave him a drugs and alcohol and they go to Bible school and they graduate and they come back or they go to another city and start a drug center.

And I've watched these humble men get so busy, get so busy witnessing counseling until they have no time for their families. They have no time to pray. They're not seeking God and when that happens, they open themselves up and they become a prey to the enemy.

And I've watched young men who did nothing but pray and seek the face of God for direction. They had to pray with the boys and the young ladies and young men that came into the programs. They prayed even for food money.

They prayed for money to pay the electric bill and so broken, so humble and many of them were like my sons and daughters in the spirit. And I've watched them. They go to conferences, they go to meetings of the leadership and staff.

This is all over the world and the shipwrecks that I have seen been astounding and heartbreaking because they started out so humble and so broken, but because they were not seeking God, they were, they were so busy. You can get so busy working for Jesus. You forget who he is.

You can get so busy doing for him. And I see pastors and Christian workers running, running, busy, busy. They're not praying.

They're not seeking God and they open themselves up to this flesh race and they go to a conference and this is the way it goes. Hey, hey brother, what's God doing in your place? How many guys do you have? Do you have a girl's program? We've got a girl's program. You have a girl's program.

No, no, we don't have a girl's program, but I got 50 guys and we're starting a children's program for little, you know, kids that are on pot and before they're getting hooked on heroin and how many buildings you

have. What's your income? What's, and another brother said, you've got any new ideas on how we can raise money and the guys that have the big centers, some of them I've seen just come in like the Pope. I mean it was such a, I'm not calling the Pope problem, but saying like I am somebody and the poor guys that have 10 or 12 in their center, they're struggling for finances to go home and they're frustrated because they say, I must be doing something wrong.

I don't have it right because everything I do doesn't turn out right. I must not have it because I can't even hold what I've got. I can't hold what I've got because I can't hold what I've got because I can't

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