

# RUNNING WITH A PURPOSE



**Background Reading:**

Proverbs 6:18; 1 Corinthians  
9:24-26; Galatians 5:7

**Devotional Reading:**

2 Samuel 18:19-33



## Central Verse

“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.”

Hebrews 12:1, KJV

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.”

Hebrews 12:1, NIV

## Key Terms

**Connipition**—a fit of rage, hysteria, or alarm.

**Superpower**—excessive or superior power: a superhuman power.

**Endurance**—the ability to withstand hardship or adversity: the ability to sustain a prolonged stressful effort or activity.

## Introduction

Running is something that people do for many reasons. In the world that I live in, one of the primary reasons is for health. Good health has been brought to the forefront in many circles and running for health has begun to be seen as a very worthwhile activity that is helpful to one's health and is not too costly. Now there are other reasons that running is a favorite past-time which include appearance, social opportunities as well as enjoyment. But whatever the reason a person runs, he expects some benefits from his activity.

When running is used in the Bible it characterizes a person who will not swerve from his purpose and will remain loyal to his faith during great trials

and much suffering. It is a time when a believer is developing great self-control in his spirit and body. It is a time of learning how to be steadfast and unmovable, learning how to gain steady progress. God wants the believer to run, but He wants him to have the right motive. Some are running, but they are running to do mischief, which is the wrong reason to be running. Believers run to obtain the prize that God has waiting for them.

## Discussion

Paul writes to the believers to run with endurance the race that is set before him. He knew the importance of a believer having patience on this Christian journey. The believer is running with Jesus Christ his Savior and his fellow believers around him. It's extremely easy to perceive this race as a contest, but he does not want the believer to see his race as a contest, but as an activity of faith.

The believer is told to run this race with patience, which is very necessary to his life. It is with patience that he can control his soul. The believer must stick with the race because his total being is involved in this race for life, his thoughts, his memory, his passions, and his desires. In this race the believer's faith will be tried, his strength will be tried, and he will have times when he wants to give up. But he must persevere, because the trying of his faith will bring patience, and patience gives experience, experience gives hope and hope makes the believer proud, not shameful.

Patience is a virtue and is especially important to spiritual growth and victory in the life of a believer. Patience will cause a believer to go after a promise of the blessings that God promised as long as it takes. Patience will keep the believer standing and believing the Word of God until he receives the full manifestation given to him. Patience takes faith, and God is pleased when the believer uses his faith. Patience mixed with faith has great benefits if it is allowed to have its perfect work, for patience is a fruit of the Spirit.

Many times, people will take the position that a patient person is passive. Not so, patience is a positive choice that a believer makes, so he can endure, run, and finish his race. He cannot allow anger and frustration to get in the way of his goals and hinder him from running. He knows that he must maintain a pleasant spirit so that he may be victorious.

Sometimes circumstances are not always pleasant, but God can take them and use them to help mold the believer's character so the believer can

approach his race with a godly sense of patience. This helps the believer to realize that patience is a real superpower. From his experiences, the believer learns that God gives each of them the superhuman ability to wait, slow his pace down, listen for the voice of his master, and act according to God's time. The believer cannot afford to run too fast, nor can he run too slow; he must adjust to God's timing. When his faith is mixed with patience, no other influence can hinder him from striving for the best running possible.

Most believers do not like to wait, they want things to happen right now. But in the most frustrating times, the believer must decide whether waiting will be his friend or his foe. Whether it will be positive in his life or negative, whether it will be joyous or filled with sorrow. For after the believer has done the will of God, he needs patience (Hebrews 10:36). The believer must learn to wait, he cannot allow himself to have a conniption or a crying fit when his race is not going well. He must trust in God and work with His timetable.

## Conclusion

Believers must be careful about the activities they involve themselves in. David's son Absalom wanted to take his father's place as the King of Israel. The time came when David could no longer avoid war with Absalom, whom he loved. He divided his men into three groups and sent them to fight. He told his Captains to deal kindly with his son. There was much fighting over twenty thousand of David's men were killed in just one day.

As Absalom was riding his horse, he passed under a tree and his beautiful long hair got caught in the branches, and his horse kept going and left him hanging. One of the warriors saw him and told Joab. Joab asked him why he did not kill him when he saw him hanging from the tree. He reminded Joab of David's words concerning his son and explained that he could never kill David's son, for it would mean death for himself.

Joab decided to kill Absalom, by putting three darts through his heart, while he was still alive ten other warriors finished the job. When this was known, two runners headed toward King David to tell him. They were running, but they were not going with good news. Cushie bowed himself to Joab and ran. Then another servant Ahimaaz ran after Cushie and overtook him, by that time David's watchman saw them running, one after the other, to bring unwelcome news. They ran, but they had a bad purpose. As believers, let us run with a positive purpose.

## Questions

1. What are some of the positive reasons for running?
2. What are some of the benefits of running?
3. Why do believers run?
4. How does patience help a believer?

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## Essential Thought

The race is not given to the swift, but it is to the one who runs and endures.