

Objective: to enable every believer to 'run the race,' with God's help and to finish it.

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NLBC a. m.

Grace For The Pace, In This 'Corona' Race

Acts 20:24; 1 Cor. 9:24-27; Gal. 5:7; 2 Tim. 4:7

Heb. 12:1; 2 Cor. 6:1; Phil. 2:14-17

Introduction

This character-building time of our lives, prepares us, for the next major global test, and how it will affect us and others. When lockdown is over, there will be other global challenges...will you be a veteran soldier or a casualty?

The 'race,' the Bible refers to, in the verses we have read, is the 'course of our life journey,' which we are given, to accomplish our 'life assignment.' Our lives are **not** merely a contest to survive, until we die. Our lifetime is a 'space of time,' allowed to us, by the Lord, to complete our mission, while in a loving relationship to Him.

As it lasts longer than a moment and it encompasses very difficult challenges at times, it requires us, to access the help and the strength, that we need, in order to finish well.

2 Cor. 8:6 says, "...So we urged Titus, since he had earlier **made a beginning, to bring also to completion** this act of grace on your part." – start and finish.

Lockdown is like, 'running in place.'

1 Cor 9:24-27 says, "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last for ever. Therefore, I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize."

The "engine" of modern life, is all too often, fuelled only by emotion. When positive and attractive emotions fade, endurance disappears.

Rom. 12:11 says, "Never be lacking in zeal, but **keep your spiritual fervour**, serving the Lord."

We are meant to "run with endurance...Heb. 12:1 NKJV says, "let us **run with endurance the race...**" Our lives, are in some respects, a contest of **endurance**...therefore, we need to develop the discipline, of patience, in the race...accessing the Divine help we need, to face each new set of opposing set of circumstances, never becoming weary in well-doing, but being 'strong in the Lord and the power of His might,' always 'pressing on to lay hold of the prize of life-mission completion.'

****You only develop endurance, if you have to endure some opposing circumstances. Let us not waste this present difficult opportunity and get impatient and foolish.**

We All Need Help To Keep Pace To Finish

The **help** that we need to maintain, in all of the seasons of life, is the unmerited favour of God, called grace.

*** You will require God's help to finish the life-assignment He has given you. It will not simply be 'a stiff upper lip and a gritted-teeth' operation.*

We need God's help—what we directly receive from Him and we can only get from recognising our need for others.

Two things that release the grace we need in this time:

1. Humility – James 4:6. God gives grace to the humble. If you are humble, you recognise the need you have for others. You need others. You are in a 'position' to serve. You need God more than ever, in His manifest presence. You are a lover created to love. 2 Cor. 5:15 says, "And he died for all, that those who live **should no longer live for themselves but for him** who died for them and was raised again." Rom. 5:5 says, "...because God has **poured out his love into our hearts** by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us."

Some are living in 'self-isolation' today even apart from Corona—they don't recognise and access the very specific grace they need that is **only** found in relationships with others. This is the great truth of the Body of Christ – 1 Cor. 12:21. To complete this 'Corona' segment, you must recognise that God will use others, in your relationship life-construction, to give you a portion of what you require to 'run well.'

2. Faith – Rom. 5:2 says we have ‘access into this grace’ – the warehouse of His supply, by the use of our faith. Rom. 5:2 says, “...we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.”

In this “seedtime,” we understand that the ‘walk of faith’ is a ‘walk in and of the Spirit.’ Heb. 3:7 says, “So, as **the Holy Spirit** says: “Today, if you **hear** his voice....” Creating more opportunities to **hear**, is vital to the ‘coming of faith,’ and the release of grace (unmerited favour) upon your life.

1 Tim 6:11-12 says, “But you, man of God, flee from all this, and **pursue** righteousness, godliness, **faith**, love, **endurance** and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith.”

How Do We Get the Grace to Keep Pace—To Endure

- Fix your eyes more on Jesus, more than ever. Heb. 12:1-2 says, “...let us **run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus....**”
- Reach out to lovingly help others. This is your Christian lifestyle. 2 Cor. 5:15. How many have you messaged to find out, how they are doing?

Make a decision to text or message 10 people this week. Start today. Who would be freshly shocked and blessed to think that you were thinking of them, praying for them and asking about them?

Acts 6:8 says, “Now Stephen, a man **full of God's grace** and power....”

“Corona Season Meditation Passage”

Rom. 12:9-17 says, “Love must be sincere. **Hate** what is evil; cling to what is good. **Be devoted to one another** in brotherly love. **Honour one another** above yourselves. **Never be lacking in zeal**, but **keep your spiritual fervour**, serving the Lord. **Be joyful** in hope, **patient in affliction**, **faithful in prayer**. **Share** with God's people who are in need. **Practise hospitality**. **Bless** those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. **Rejoice** with those who rejoice; **mourn** with those who mourn. **Live in harmony** with one another. **Do not be proud**, but be willing to associate with people of low position. **Do not be conceited**. **Do not repay** anyone evil for evil. **Be careful** to do what is right in the eyes of everybody.”

Family Reading and Discussion

Take some time today to read and discuss Psalm 33. Encourage any children to participate at their level, helping them to engage in the conversation. Focus: How does this passage relate to this ‘season of Corona?’ Spend some time in prayer and worship.

Songs to sing today: (one old and two newer) both found on the internet.

The old **hymn** you can find on the internet:

“I Need Thee Every Hour”

I need thee every hour
Most gracious Lord
No tender voice like thine
Can peace afford

I need thee, oh I need thee
Every hour I need thee
Oh bless me now my savior
I come to thee

I need thee every hour
Stay thou near by
Temptations loose their power
When thou art nigh
I need thee oh I need thee
Every hour I need thee
Oh bless me now my savior
I come to thee

I need thee every hour
Most holy one
Oh make me thine indeed
Thou blessed son

I need thee oh I need thee
Every hour I need thee.
Oh bless me now my savior
I come to thee

Oh I need thee
I need thee
Oh bless me now my savior
I come to thee

Chorus: The Greatest Thing in All My Life is Knowing You

Sing it to Him and then sing it to everyone else in your home,
and then with eyes of faith, sing it to your brothers and sisters.

The greatest thing in all my life is knowing you...x2
I want to know you more X2
The greatest thing in all my life is knowing you.

Loving...
Serving...

Song:

I need you more, more than yesterday...
I need You more
More than yesterday
I need You, Lord
More than words can say
I need You more
Than ever before
I need You Lord
I need You Lord.

More than the air I breathe
More than the song I sing
More than the next heartbeat
More than anything
And Lord as time goes by
I'll be by Your side
Cause I never want to go back
To my old life.

I need You more
More than yesterday
I need You Lord
More than words can say
I need You more
Than ever before
I need You Lord
I need You Lord.

More than the air I breathe
More than the song I sing
More than the next heartbeat
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I need You, Lord...