



## Confident to Run

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2024

GALATIANS 5:7-10

Christian, let me talk straightforwardly. I do not believe anyone has what it takes to run successfully to get from where you are today all the way to glory. And that. Includes. Me.

But.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 says,

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup>He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.

‘Also WILL do it’ – what does that mean? God will rule your heart with His peace. God will make you completely into the likeness of Jesus. God will bring you to heaven as a blameless person – fully you; fully innocent. God will send Jesus again to come for you. **Why? Because of one thing – God is faithful!**

Let’s take up Paul’s words in Galatians 5:7,

You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?

You were passionate. You cared for God’s word for every step in your walk. You were often in prayer. You wept over the lost. All you wanted to do was hear of the love of God expressed through the cross of Jesus Christ. You ran well.

So, who hindered you from obeying the truth. Who put an obstacle in your way that should stop you from running and take you off course? You will notice the focus of this question, its subject, is ‘WHO’. It is not what they did, it comes back to who did it. WHO caused you to put down your Bible? WHO taught you to be ashamed of Jesus Christ? WHO told you to ignore the hurting? WHO told you your happiness could be found outside of Christ?

Now the second thing we must see is the object from which you have been diverted – obeying the truth. What does your enemy want to keep you from doing/being? From being a true disciple (follower) of Jesus, who told us in Matthew 28:20,

“teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...”

To observe means to do with your whole life on account of the life He gave for you. To do less is to fail to be a disciple that this world would in any way recognise as a follower of Jesus Christ.

▶ We see next where this did not come from, in verse 8,

This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you.

▶ God has not done this. The Spirit of God has not lead you to this life of comfort, of excuses, of passiveness and laziness. **This hindrance has been accomplished by the hands of those who do not care for the things of God.** In Matthew 16:23 it gets clearer in case you haven't seen it yet,

But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

Those people who have brought obstacles to your path so that you should not have time to be with God's people, so that you should ignore the Bible, so that you should adapt to the world's ways – they are an offense to Jesus, they are concerned with the things of men (this world) not of God

▶ Jesus did not worry about offending people. An old pastor of mine once said this **"As a Christian you will offend people you just have to choose who you will offend."** So will you choose to offend this world, or Jesus? Who will it be?

Just how dangerous is it when you go off course and stopping running by faith that way you once did?

▶ Verse 9 says,

A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

You put small amount of yeast into some dough it will affect the whole batch.

▶ **When your faith gets obstructed** by the ideas and comforts of this world, it will infect your marriage. **It will infect your family, your children, your workplace, it will also infect your church.**

▶ A small diversion is the enemy's start for every shipwreck as Paul writes to Timothy, (1 Timothy 1:18-19),

This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good

warfare, <sup>19</sup>having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck...

When you and I reject faith (living by what you cannot see) and reject a good conscience (a mind that every day fights to do what is right) your faith will get shipwrecked.

When your faith has been smashed on the rocks and you're clinging onto a splintered plank in the sea of life, it was never the storm that did it. It was your rejection of faith. It was not your health, it was not your family, it was not your boss, it was not your bank account, it was not your friends. You rejected faith, you stopped fighting for what is right and good and pure, and **you decided to offend Jesus rather than offend the world.**

So how can you run once again? How can you get back up again? Read verse 10 with me,

I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.

Listen carefully to what the Spirit is saying through the words of Paul. He is not confident you will fix this, you will find a way. **I am confident because you are in the Lord**, because you are in Christ Jesus. As Proverbs 14:12 says,

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

Brothers and sisters I am not confident that you will reignite that fire, or that you will learn sufficiently from your mistakes to run well all the way from here to glory. But the one thing I am confident as Paul was confident in Philippians 1:6,

being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ

And Paul finishes by teaching us not to go back and fix the person who threw that obstacle in your pathway and stopped you running the race of faith. No, turn and face the One who can put you back on course, the One who called you, the One who is faithful. The One who can right the wrong. **Because the wrong is not that someone put an obstacle in the way of your faith but that you took your eyes off Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith.**

This why Paul earlier ask WHO hindered you? It was not to put them right it was so you should turn away from useless ideas and look at the Son of Man in the eyes once again – that's WHO!



### **How shall we run?**

- Whatever the challenge – run to Jesus.
- Whatever the achievement – glorify Jesus
- Whatever the calling – do it in such a way that others see Him
- Whatever the pressure – stop and pray
- Whatever you think – surrender those thoughts UNDER the thoughts of God (His Word)
- Whatever the problem with others – bring them to Jesus in your prayers
- Whatever the pain – remember greater is He who is in you than He who is in the world.