



Part 18: Triumph Through Tough Times

There's a theme running through the biblical book of Second Corinthians: Triumph through tough times. Paul is like a marathon runner, persevering through the pain for the joy of victory!

Key verse: *"We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed."* 2 Cor. 4:8,9

4 truths that motivate me to run the race of life:

1. I have _____ to run with

"We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered... We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure; we despaired even of life." 2 Cor. 1:8 (See 2 Cor. 2:4)

Action step: Refuse _____

2. I have a _____ to run for

"For Christ's love compels us..." 2 Cor. 5:14

"...God ...reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ... We are therefore Christ's ambassadors..." 2 Cor. 5:18 (See 2 Cor. 1:3,4)

I find _____ in _____
"And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." 2 Cor. 9:8

Action step: Recommit _____

3. I have _____ to run on

"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us." 2 Cor. 4:7

"But he said, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness'..." 2 Cor. 12:9

"...when I am weak, then I am strong." 2 Cor. 12:10

I must focus on _____ not _____!

"He has delivered us ... and He will deliver us. On Him we have set our hope that He will continue to deliver us." 2 Cor. 1:10

"I am afraid... your minds may somehow be led astray from your simple and pure devotion to Christ." 2 Cor. 11:3

Action step: Realize _____

4. I have a _____ to run toward

"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." 2 Cor. 4:17,18

"Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands." 2 Cor. 5:1

"Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. Therefore we are always confident..." 2 Cor. 5:5

"We live by faith, not by sight." 2 Cor. 5:7

Action step: Remember _____

Daily Meditations

Based on this weekend's message

This week's memory verse: *"So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."* 2 Cor. 4:17,18

Monday

As you think back over our study of Second Corinthians for these past five months, what verses or themes impress you most?

Look over the four points and action steps from this past weekend. Which do you think you are best at? Where do you need work?

As we asked you to do last week, choose one of the points and place a star next to it. Think of a way you can practice that discipline this week!

Ask God to help you in this area this week!

Tuesday

Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-11. The first point from the message was that you have *people to run with*. Why do you suppose Paul does not want the Corinthians to be “uninformed” about his struggles?

How does it help to tell others of our struggles?

What help does Paul ask of the Corinthians in these verses?

On what does Paul set his hope? How does this differ from where we sometimes set our hope when we are dismayed?

Who do you know that is under intense pressure this week? Pray for them! Ask God to show you people with whom you could share your own struggles.

Wednesday

Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-6:10. The second point this weekend was that you have a *purpose to run for*... What “compels” you-- in other words, what allures you, what do you find compelling?

Judging from these verses, What “compels” Paul (verse 14) --what was Paul’s motivating purpose?

How can this purpose-- to be an ambassador for God-- be accomplished no matter what happens in your life: Through sickness, sorrow, imprisonment, or anything else?

Ask God to help you do an honest self-evaluation about your motivations in life. Ask Him to help you be motivated more purely to be an ambassador for Him!

Thursday

Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-11. How do these verses help you cope with your present difficulties and anxieties?

The third point was perhaps the major theme of Second Corinthians: That we have *power to run on*. How have you seen God’s power demonstrated in your times of weakness?

- ___ Answered prayer
- ___ Extra strength
- ___ Healing
- ___ Special insight or guidance
- ___ Supportive friendships
- ___ People brought to Christ through my illness or other struggle
- ___ Other:

Elaborate on your answer:

Thank God for His strength demonstrated in your times of weakness. Now ask God, your help in ages past, to be your hope for years to come!

Friday

Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:6. The final point in this weekend message was that we have a *prize to run toward*! What aspects of heaven do you like to think about? Why?

How does knowing that there is a home and a reward for you *eventually* help you go through difficulties *right now*?

Spend time in prayer thinking of heaven. Thank God that Jesus is preparing a place for you right now! Thank God specifically for some things that you know will be true of heaven and of your perfect, resurrected body. Ask God to help this idea of reward motivate you in this life!

Saturday

Today polish up that memory verse. Please pray for services this weekend, and for the Global Outreach Festival starting this weekend with a family concert in all services featuring the Light! Children’s Choir. Pray that we will have get a new sense of urgency and opportunity for world missions. Thank you!

Some questions this week adapted from *Serendipity Study Bible*