



## WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

---

Prize that lasts forever

May 27, 2008

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 forever. 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. – 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

As Apostle Paul has described in the above verses there are two kinds of races that people run in this world. The first kind of race is the worldly kind and the second kind is the eternal kind. Although there are similarities between the two races such as strict training, hard work, determination, perseverance, etc., the nature of prize achieved at the end of the race is different. In the worldly race, the runners run to get a prize such as a high paying job or a position, a degree or a title or lots of wealth. This sort of prize will not mean anything for the person after he is dead and gone. All the hard work and effort put into getting the prize will account for nothing after the person is dead. Like someone said, “You never see a u-haul truck behind a funeral procession”. The bible says, “Naked a man comes from his mother's womb, and as he comes, so he departs. He takes nothing from his labor that he can carry in his hand.” [Ecclesiastes 5:15](#)

Let us look at the ‘Parable of the rich fool’ [Luke 12:13-21](#) for example. We see a rich man who had a great harvest. Surely he must have worked very hard to till the soil, fertilize it, and plant his seeds in a sufficiently large piece of land or at least he must have been smart enough to have hired laborers to work for him in his fields. Yet God comes to him at the height of his success and calls him a “fool”. Why is



## WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

---

that? Is it because the rich man acquired all his wealth by sinful ways? Is it because he mistreated his fellow servants? Is it because he forgot to pay his taxes? None of these things are mentioned in the scriptures. God called the rich man ‘a fool’ because the man forgot his dependence on God. The rich man was concerned about nothing more than his own self. So at the height of his success he died.

The worldly race has value only in this world. All the wealth and fame and titles that one accumulates in this world have very little value to him after he dies. I heard a story of a rich man who tried to get admission into heaven with his money. Money had bought him prestige, political power, and memberships in the best clubs while on earth. He told the angel who was guarding the gates of heaven of his wealth and the vast treasures that he had gathered on earth. But the angel only pointed to his gold and said, “We pave our streets with that stuff, you have not enough to buy even a glimpse into heaven”. Jesus said, “What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?” [Matthew 16:26](#) People search for peace and happiness in material things but they never find them. Some search for happiness and contentment in their jobs. They work very hard to accumulate large amounts of wealth and yet they cannot find peace of mind. Some search for joy in drugs and alcohol but they never find it. Blaise Pascal said, “There is a God shaped vacuum in the heart of every man which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God, the Creator, made known through Jesus”. The truth is “Man will never find rest until he finds rest in God.”

In the eternal race, however, runners run to get a prize that will last forever. Apostle Paul said this to Timothy: “For physical training is of some value, but



## WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

---

godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.” [1 Timothy 4:8](#)

The eternal race is run by those who have received Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.

The eternal race is run by those who have been washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of God. [1 Corinthians 6:11](#)

The eternal race is run by those who have decided to take up the cross and follow Jesus. [Matthew 16:24](#)

The eternal race is run by those who have put their hands on the plough and have decided not to look back. [Luke 9:62](#)

The eternal race is run by those who fix their eyes on the things that are unseen and eternal rather than on the things that seen and temporary. [2 Corinthians 4:18](#)

The eternal race is run by those who have put the world behind them and set the cross before them.

The eternal race is run by those who make every effort to enter through the narrow gate that leads to life. [Matthew 7:13](#)

The eternal race is run by those who overcome everyday in the name of Jesus. [1 John 5:5](#)

The eternal race is run by those who seek justice, encourage the oppressed, defend the cause of the fatherless, and plead the case of the widow. [Isaiah 1:17](#)

The eternal race is run by those who preach the good news to the poor, heal the broken hearted and bind up their wounds, and proclaim freedom for those who are bound by darkness. [Isaiah 61:1](#)



## WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

---

This is the kind of race that we run (or ought to run) as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Though we may have many obstacles on our path, we still press forward because we know that the Lord will deliver us from them all. [Psalm 34:19](#)

Though we may lose all our possessions or someone takes it away by force, we still press forward because we know that we will find true treasure in heaven. [Matthew 6:20](#)

Though men may hate us and spitefully use us, we still press forward because they despised and rejected our Lord Jesus. [Isaiah 53:3](#)

Though troubles may increase, we still press forward because our Lord Jesus overcame the world and so through Him we can overcome as well. [John 16:33](#)

Though outwardly we are wasting away, we still press forward because we are being renewed inwardly day by day [2 Corinthians 4:16](#)

Though our flesh and our heart may fail, God is the strength of our heart and our portion forever. [Psalm 73:26](#)

We may fall several times in the race but we will rise again. [Proverbs 24:16](#)

At the end of our race, we will be able to say with Job, “But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold.” [Job 23:10](#)

At the end of our race, we will be able to say with Apostle Paul, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith”. [2 Timothy 4:7](#)

What kind of race are you in? A worldly race or the eternal race?

God bless you,

VICTOR