

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED ON PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN ROME

PATIENT IN AFFLICTION

Romans 12:12 “. . .patient in affliction. . .”

Your Christian life is like a marathon, not a sprint race. Sprint races last for a mere few seconds and they are over. Marathons are 26.2 miles. Sprints require a quick burst of speed and endurance. Marathon runners train by running miles and miles knowing that stamina and endurance will determine whether they finish the race. Sprints are run on a flat course. Marathons have hills, valleys, and curves all which add to their difficulty.

Putting your faith into action anticipates you will be living your life like a marathon runner. There will be good days and not so good. Some days you will struggle and other days will have few or no difficulties at all. In today's devotional verse St. Paul addresses those days in your life that are more difficult. The word for affliction he uses means “trouble involving direct suffering. . .and even persecution.”

In Acts 14:22 Luke says that Paul and Barnabas were “. . .strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith.” They said to the disciples, “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God. . .” Jesus says to you, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” (Matthew 11:26)

The writer to the Hebrews in chapter 10:26 wrote, “You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised.” And, Jesus encourages you to persevere with this word of promise, “Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor's crown.” Matthew Henry in His Commentary on Romans 12:12 wrote, “Patience for God's sake, and an eye to His will and glory.”

The key to running your personal life marathon is given in Hebrews 12:1-2, “And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith . . . “

Prayer: Holy Spirit, enter into my heart and keep it focused on Jesus in my good days and those that are not so good until He comes to take me to be with Him. In His name. Amen.

Fight the good fight with all your might;
Christ is your strength, and Christ your right.
Lay hold on life, and it shall be Your joy and crown eternally.

Run the straight race through God's good grace;
Lift up your eyes, and seek His face:
Life with its way before us lies;
Christ is the path, and Christ the prize.

Cast care aside, lean on your guide;
His boundless mercy will provide.
Trust, and enduring faith shall prove
Christ is your life and Christ your love.

Faint not nor fear, His arms are near;
He changes not who holds you dear;
Only believe, and you will see
That Christ is all eternally.
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