

I. **“I have finished the course”**

- Paul began to run the heavenly race after the Lord took possession of him, and he continually ran that he might finish it. Now at the end he triumphantly proclaimed, “I have finished the course”; for this he will receive from the Lord a reward—the crown of righteousness.
[2 Tim. 4:7b] ... I have finished the course; ... [2 Tim. 4:8] Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, with which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will recompense me in that day, and not only me but also all those who have loved His appearing.

II. **A proper Christian life involves running the course, running the race, for the carrying out of God’s economy according to His eternal purpose**

- We need to seek out the journey that the Lord has ordained for us and faithfully walk on it, paying any price to wholeheartedly continue on our journey until we reach the end.
- The journey that the Lord has ordained for us is the race that we all run. [Heb. 12:1] Therefore let us also, having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, put away every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us and run with endurance the race which is set before us.
- We need to “run with endurance the race which is set before us”. Like the apostle Paul, all Christians must run the race to win the prize, not salvation in the common sense but a reward in a special sense. We need to run the race with endurance, suffering the opposition with endurance.
- We run the Christian race by “looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith”. Jesus is the Author of faith, the Originator, the Inaugurator, the source, and the cause of faith. The faith of the believers is actually not their own faith but Christ entering into them to be their faith. When we look away unto Jesus, He as the life-giving Spirit transfuses us with Himself, with His believing element. Faith is a substantiating ability, the ability by which we substantiate, give substance to, the things unseen or hoped for. Faith is in our spirit, which is mingled with the Holy Spirit. We do not regard, look at, the things that are seen but the things that are not seen. The Christian life is a life of things not seen, the Lord’s recovery is to recover His church from the things seen to the things not seen. Jesus is the Perfecter of faith, the Finisher and Completer of faith. As the Completer of faith, the Lord Jesus continually infuses Himself into us as the believing element and ability. As we look away unto Him continually, He will finish and complete the faith that we need to run the heavenly race.
[Heb. 12:2] Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.
[Psa. 27:4] One thing I have asked from Jehovah; That do I seek: To dwell in the house of Jehovah All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of Jehovah, And to inquire in His temple.
[1 Cor. 9:24-26] Do you not know that those who run on a racecourse all run, but one receives the prize? Run in this way, that you may lay hold. And everyone who contends exercises self-control in all things; they then, that they may receive a corruptible crown, but we, an incorruptible. I therefore run in this way, not as though without a clear aim... [2 Cor. 4:18] Because we do not regard the things which are seen but the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. [2 Cor. 5:7] (For we walk by faith, not by appearance)-
[1 Pet. 1:8] Whom having not seen, you love; into whom though not seeing Him at present, yet believing, you exult with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory.
[2 Cor. 3:18] But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.
- We need to be encouraged and warned by the type of the children of Israel, whose journey toward the good land typifies the Christian race toward our good land, the all-inclusive Christ. We have been redeemed through Christ, delivered out of Satan’s bondage, and brought into the revelation of God’s economy. We may yet fail to reach the goal of God’s calling, that is, to enter into the possession of our good land, Christ, and enjoy His riches for the kingdom of God that we may be His expression in the present age and participate in the fullest enjoyment of Christ in the kingdom age.
- The last part of the journey ordained by God for each one of us is the most difficult part of the journey. An important thing in the Christian life is to seek out the journey that the Lord has ordained and faithfully walk in it. We may be delighted to be on the right course, but how we run and end it is still a question.
- We should not grow weary, fainting in our soul for any reason; rather, we should be those who run the race to the end. To be weary is to be without strength in the soul; everything seems to be in vain. The one who falls down and rises again is the best runner. We should not give up, become weary, or faint in our soul but look away unto Jesus and run the race set before us.
[Heb. 12:3] For compare Him who has endured such contradiction by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary, fainting in your souls.
[Acts 20:24] But I consider my life of no account as if precious to myself, in order that I may finish my course and the ministry which I have received from the Lord Jesus to solemnly testify of the gospel of the grace of God.

The way to practically carry out God's ordained way is to build up a practice of the proper preaching of the gospel, build up home meetings and group meetings, build up the meetings to be full of mutuality, and build up the local churches for the building of the universal Body of Christ. We all must learn to do this. We cannot graduate from these four things. We need our entire life to finish the course.

<Excerpts from "The Scriptural Way to Meet and to Serve for the Building Up of the Body of Christ", Chapter 21, "The Practical Way">

The whole world is against us. We can only have one of two attitudes: stand fast or relax. If, at this time, we are not faithful, we will never be faithful. Many of God's children have suffered for the Lord and have taken the lonely journey, can we sit still in peace? Every one of us ought to faithfully serve the Lord and every one ought to take the journey that He has ordained until we reach the other side.

<Excerpts from "Collected works of Watchman Nee The (Set 1) Vol. 10", The Present Testimony (3) , "The Last Part of the Journey (Issue No. 24)">