

Christ Lutheran Church

127 N. Spring St., Klamath Falls, OR 97601

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August 2021

"Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."
(1 Corinthians 9:24-27)

Lately the Summer Olympics are being held in Tokyo. As I have had a chance to watch some of the events, I am amazed at the strict training each athlete has undergone. They have spent many years disciplining their bodies, preparing for competitions that are often decided by a fraction of a second, inch, or point.



When the apostle Paul wrote the words above to the believers at Corinth, they were familiar with footraces in the Olympics. Athletes would discipline their bodies and run so as to win, for only one would receive the prize.

What is the prize the athletes train so hard to win? In Paul's day, the winner was given a crown of olive leaves. Today the top prize is the gold medal, and many are happy just to win the silver or bronze. Perhaps it is more – a moment of glory, national pride, or personal accomplishment.

Here, Paul compares and contrasts running such a race and living the Christian life: *"Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown."*

What is the "race" we are part of as believers in Jesus? First of all, God has graciously called us to a new life in Christ. He has called us from our former path of running in sin and unbelief, a path that would have ended in hell. He has called us to a new life of faith in His Son as our Savior – holding before us our heavenly goal, the prize Jesus won for us.

Yet until we reach our goal, God has not promised that the way will be easy. Satan, the evil world around us, and our own sinful nature tempt us to go off course, to lose our faith and become disqualified.

Running the Christian race is the challenge of fighting the good fight and keeping the faith, as we pass through this world with all its temptations and trials. It requires a kind of discipline, bringing our body of flesh into subjection, putting to death the sinful nature by daily repentance. It requires a temperate, single-minded focus – keeping our eyes on our heavenly goal, trusting Jesus as our Savior who has gone to the cross to win our forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life.

Hebrews 12:1-2 encourages us: *"Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

Here we are reminded that, if winning the race depended on our performance, we all would be lost. Just one sinful misstep, one crossing of the line and breaking God's commandments, would disqualify us from entering heaven. But as we listen to the Word of God and keep our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, we are reminded that He has run the perfect race for us. As our sinless Savior, He fulfilled every commandment for us. He went the distance for us, even going to the cross to take away all our sins. Now in Christ, God is no longer counting our sins against us; instead, He is counting Jesus' perfect life to us.

Therefore God, who graciously called us to faith in His Son, is awarding us with the heavenly prize Jesus won for us.

Even now, in the midst of our daily trials and temptations, God is present to strengthen our faith by the power of His Gospel in Word and Sacrament. He is present with His Spirit to give us His forgiveness and eternal life. Also, as believers we are here to cheer one another on through His promises.

He who called us to faith will keep us strong to the end that we may say: *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing"* (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

In the strength of His all-sufficient grace,
Pastor Glenn Smith

How Can I Distinguish between a True Prophet and a Fraud?

August 2021

When judges or attorneys enter a courtroom, they realize it will be necessary to determine if the witnesses involved are telling the truth. To do so, courts use generally agreed-upon criteria for identifying who is telling the truth and who is not.

Religious books may be approached the same way. We can apply reasonable standards that will allow us to determine which writings are trustworthy and which ones are not. Objective criteria help us distinguish between a true prophet and a fraud.

Although this is not widely known, the Bible itself provides us with the criteria we should use to determine who is a real prophet and who is a fake. The Bible additionally warns us to “beware of false prophets” (Matthew 7:15). And just as judges and attorneys apply certain standards to distinguish between true witnesses and liars, we too should apply the standards the Bible has given us to determine who is a real prophet and who is a fake.

Exodus 14:3 includes one such standard: “Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Israel saw the great power that the Lord used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the Lord, and they believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.”

We can here see that by the sensational miracle of the Red Sea crossing, God demonstrated to the Israelites that He and He alone is God, and that Moses was His trusted spokesman, His trusted prophet. This additionally meant that the Israelites were rejecting the false gods that many of them had followed in Egypt as well as rejecting the prophets of those false gods.

They did so based on important and very practical criteria for identifying true prophets, namely:

- Only the true God can accomplish the kind of miracle the people witnessed at the Red Sea.
- The prophet who told the people of this true God was a genuine prophet of this one true God.

God gave His chosen people other standards to use as well. There are ten such biblical criteria for true prophets, which apply to those living in both Old and New Testament times:

1. The one true God performs astonishing miracles.
2. True prophets promote worship of the Lord God, the one true God, and Him alone.
3. True prophets agree with the teachings of Moses.
4. The predictions of true prophets always come true.
5. True prophets proclaimed the coming of the promised Messiah and/or traced the line of descent from Adam and Eve to the Messiah.
6. True prophets exposed false prophets and false gods.
7. True prophets were quoted or referenced by writers of the New Testament.
8. The writings of true prophets were accepted as authoritative by the faithful religious leaders of their time.
9. True prophets stated that the information they were writing had been given to them by the Lord God.
10. Because Christianity is largely based on history, it is possible to evaluate and confirm many of the historical details that the true prophets of the Bible provide.

By applying these criteria, readers of the Bible can recognize not only the true prophets, but also the One concerning whom they wrote: Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, the Savior of the world.

Allen Quist is author of Evidence That the Bible Is True: The Apologetics of Biblical Reliability, which explains these ten criteria in greater detail.

Learn More:
www.els.org/apologetics

August 2021

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <i>Pentecost 10</i> Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship with Communion 9:30 AM Crystal Terrace 1:30 PM	2	3	4	5	6 <i>Happy Anniversary Jacob & Hannah Krause</i>	7
8 <i>Pentecost 11</i> Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship 9:30 AM Crystal Terrace 1:30 PM	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 <i>Pentecost 12</i> Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship with Communion 9:30 AM Crystal Terrace 1:30 PM <i>Happy Anniversary Dale & Bobbie Hauck</i>	16	17	18 <i>Happy Anniversary Steve & Desi Caldwell</i>	19	20	21
22 <i>Pentecost 13</i> Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship 9:30 AM Crystal Terrace 1:30 PM	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 <i>Pentecost 14</i> Radio Program 8:30 AM (KAGO 1150 AM) Worship 9:30 AM Crystal Terrace 1:30 PM	30	31 <i>Happy Birthday Desiree Caldwell</i>	<i>"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing." (2 Timothy 4:7-8).</i>			

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August 2021 Newsletter

Upcoming Dates:

Friday–Saturday, September 24-25

Circuit 12 Women's Missionary Rally

at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Grants Pass, OR

Guest Speaker: Rev. Thomas Heyn (ELS Board for World Outreach Administrator)

Topic: “Divine Comfort in Affliction”

Saturday, October 30

Regional Reformation Service

at Christ Lutheran Church in Klamath Falls, OR

Guest Preacher: Rev. Roger Emmons (Redmond, OR)

We celebrate our Lutheran heritage, emphasizing God's unchanging truth in Scripture Alone, and salvation by God's gift of Grace Alone, received through Faith Alone in the finished work of Jesus Christ.