

HOW ARE YOU RUNNING?

Victor Sohmen – Sunday, Feb. 5, 2023 – Roxborough Bible Chapel

Eric Liddell’s 1924 Olympics story of ‘Running for God’ was celebrated in the Oscar-winning movie “Chariots of Fire” (1981).

Eric Liddell of Scotland refused to run the 4x400 meters’ relay and 100 meters’ sprint he was expected to win, on a Sunday at the 1924 Olympics in Paris in order to keep the Lord’s Day holy. He ran instead in the 400 meters’ race, tripped, but amazingly, went on to claim Gold (47.6 seconds). [He also won the Bronze medal in the 200 meters’ event]. He declared, “When I run, I feel His pleasure.” (“...For them that honour me I will honour...”- 1 Samuel 2:30). Later, Eric Liddell joined his missionary parents in Tianjin, China. He died in 1945 in a Japanese internment camp in China during World War II at 43. Eric Liddell's last words before he died were, "It's complete surrender."

As a figurative illustration of how we may ‘run’ as Christians, we will look broadly at the Book of Jonah. There are only 48 verses in the Book of Jonah, and thus there is an *average* of 12 verses per chapter (actually, 17, 10, 10, and 11 verses respectively in each of the four chapters). The city of Nineveh was established by Nimrod of Gen. 11. The modern venue is Mosul in Iraq.

Jonah 1:2: Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

In Chapter 1, Jonah is commissioned to go to Nineveh, but flees in the opposite direction to Joppa, as if to ‘hide’ from God. Nineveh was nearly 500 miles east for Jonah to travel, but Joppa was around 2,500 miles west for Jonah (5 times the distance in the opposite direction towards Spain!).

The Bible says in **Psalms 139:7: “Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?”**

We cannot hide **from** God, but we can hide **IN** Him, the Rock cleft for us.

Psalms 119:114: Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in Thy Word.

Psalms 32:7: Thou art my hiding place; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble; Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

God has called ALL Christians to some calling. But our *basic* calling is to the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19). The mission of ALL Christians is to share the Gospel with the unsaved—in diverse and creative ways. Our *faithfulness* is the key, not our success—which is orchestrated by the Spirit in God’s Will.

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ROXBOROUGH BIBLE CHAPEL

www.roxbiblechapel.net

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BIBLE VERSES ABOUT 'RUNNING' THAT HONOR GOD

(REMINISCENT OF WHAT ERIC LIDDELL PRACTICED AS A CHRISTIAN WHO FAITHFULLY HONORED GOD IN EVERY ASPECT OF HIS LIFE)

HAB. 2:2:	RUNNING WITH A VISION
HEB. 12:1-2:	RUNNING WITH PATIENCE
1 COR. 9:24:	COMPETITIVE RUNNING
1 COR. 9:26:	FOCUSED RUNNING
ISAIAH 40:31:	TIRELESS RUNNING
PSALM 18:29:	RUNNING THAT OVERCOMES
PSALM 119:32:	RUNNING TO KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS

BIBLE VERSES ABOUT 'RUNNING' THAT HONOR GOD (Cf.: ERIC LIDDELL)

RUNNING WITH A VISION: [Hab. 2:2](#) - And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may **run** that readeth it.

RUNNING WITH PATIENCE: [Hebrews 12:1-2](#) - Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us **run** with patience 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 is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

COMPETITIVE RUNNING: [1 Corinthians 9:24](#) - Know ye not that they which **run** in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So **run**, that ye may obtain.

FOCUSED RUNNING: [1 Corinthians 9:26](#) - I therefore so **run**, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air.

TIRELESS RUNNING: [Isaiah 40:31](#) - But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall **run**, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

RUNNING THAT OVERCOMES: [Psalm 18:29](#) - For by Thee I have **run** through a troop; and by my God have I leaped over a wall.

RUNNING TO KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS: [Psalm 119:32](#) - I will **run** the way of Thy commandments, when Thou shalt enlarge my heart.

3

HOW DID JONAH RUN?

- In Chapter 1, he is running AWAY from God.
- In Chapter 2, he is running TOWARDS God.
- In Chapter 3, he is running WITH God.
- In Chapter 4, he is running AGAINST God.

How are you running?
February 5, 2023

HOW ARE *YOU* RUNNING?

Running AWAY from God

Jonah 1:1-3: Now the Word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa.

1 Kings 19:12-13: And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, *What doest thou here, Elijah?*

HOW ARE *YOU* RUNNING?

Running TOWARDS God

Jonah 2:9: But I will sacrifice unto Thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. *Salvation is of the Lord.*

Psalms 27:4: One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to *enquire in His temple.*

Psalms 51:3-4: For I *acknowledge* my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight.

HOW ARE *YOU* RUNNING?

Running WITH God

Jonah 3:2-3: And the Word of the Lord came unto Jonah the *second time*, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, *according to the Word of the Lord.*

Acts 17:16: Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, *his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.*

Joshua 6:16, 27: And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city.... So the Lord was with Joshua.

HOW ARE *YOU* RUNNING?

Running AGAINST God

Jonah 4:1: But it displeased Jonah *exceedingly*, and he was *very* angry.

Numbers 22:12: And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed.

Acts 8:3: As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

HOW ARE *YOU* RUNNING?

8

KEY LESSONS FROM JONAH

Our Christian life is dynamic, not still—we are always moving forward or backsliding.

At any moment in time, we are running **in** God's Will or **against** God's Will:

Jonah 1: Running *away from* God: ***Against God's Will***

Jonah 2: Running *towards* God: ***In God's Will***

Jonah 3: Running *with* God: ***In God's Will***

Jonah 4: Running *against* God: ***Against God's Will***

Running *towards* God in prayer to seek His Will empowers us to run *with* God.

Running *away* from God can likely result in running *against* God towards backsliding.

As disciples of Christ, let us always be running TOWARDS God and WITH God!