

abandoned, afraid of contact, fearful of Jesus. No in Jesus we live this conversation, inviting him into everything as we share it with him through conversation.

'Run to win' Please don't limit prayer to asking God for what you want or think you need. 'Run to win' and invite Jesus into your heart and soul. Invite Jesus into every area of life as you spend time sharing with him; sharing your day, sharing your hopes and dreams, sharing

your fears and struggles. Being open to his voice, for conversation is always a two-way thing.

'Run to win'

Let us pray.

Jesus thank you for running to win me. Thank you for giving your life on the cross that I might have life with you now, a rich and satisfying life with you. Jesus I invite you to send the Spirit to open my

heart and mind to you that I might live intimately with you, knowing your love, experiencing your affections, hearing your voice. Jesus I'm running to know you, for to know you is to win. Thank you that you want to be known and have opened up your heart and soul to me. Fill me with the Spirit that I run to win, run to win knowing you.

11 February 2018

RUN TO WIN

1 Corinthians 9:24-27



In talking to the people at Corinth Paul uses something very familiar to encourage them in their life with Jesus. Paul said; 'You've been to the stadium.' Anyone here ever been to a sporting stadium, or a stadium of any sort. The Royal Show has a stadium where people compete. And they compete to win.

Paul is urging us to live life and not let it simply slide by; 'Run to win'. In other words, invest yourself, totally. For that's exactly what Jesus has done. He's invested himself totally in his pursuit of humanity. Jesus runs to win; to win you, to win your love, to win life; life shared together with you and his Father. Life lived intimately, lovingly,

affectionately, conversationally.

For Jesus the prize is you. Not that you become some sort of trophy but that he might share his life with you; that you might grow and mature becoming everything his Father has dreamed possible. Jesus has invested himself totally in you.

How do I know that? Simple, when you are born it is a total act. Nobody is half born. Jesus is born your brother, sharing your flesh and blood. No half measures there. When you die it also is a total act. Nobody half dies. Jesus died, crucified for seeking to love you. Shunned for wanting to heal us that we might know God personally as our heavenly Father, Jesus our brother,

the Spirit our closest friend.

That wasn't allowed to happen, because then the spiritual elite would lose their power and influence over people. They would lose their control.

When Jesus is condemned by the spiritual elite they do so because they are afraid of losing their temple and their kingdom. Jesus was a threat to their ideals of how the future should go. So Jesus is killed for not fitting into their perceived future.

Jesus doesn't lose focus, he runs to win. He stays focused on his Father. Knowing his Father results in trusting his Father.

It's hard to trust a stranger.

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

Father is no stranger to Jesus; he's invested his life in this relationship. What do we find Jesus doing on the eve of his death? Talking with his Father; we call that prayer.

So today Paul is calling us to invest ourselves totally in this relationship that Jesus has created for us to live in. 'Run to win', invest yourself whole heartedly.

The imagery is clear, if you're half-hearted about your preparation you won't run in a way that will allow you to win. If you only start preseason training a week before the first match, would you be ready to get the best out of yourself? 'Run to win'.

That is true of relationships. If I'm half-hearted and don't invest myself in a relationship, then

that's what I'll get, a half-hearted relationship. Not a totally committed one, where trust flourishes, intimacy grows, affection is shared, conversation flows. 'Run to win'.

Do you notice this involves risk? 'Only one wins'. In a race you can give it your

RUN TO WIN

all. Train for four years, be the best for four years. Go to the Olympic Games and come fourth. Then you might begin to wonder if it was all worth it; those years of sacrifice and self-discipline.

What do we win?

We're not trying to gain a temporary thing. I'm not out to be labelled the best. What do we run to win? Am I simply running to get into heaven, or at least

avoid hell? What are you running to win?

In the gospel reading for today we had the story of Jesus healing a leper. That is a common story; Jesus healing a leper. Leprosy is so symbolic of sin. You become an outcast, no longer able to embrace those you love. Cast out of society, isolated, rejected, like the living dead. So I see leprosy as symbolic of sin; that which keeps me from knowing God.

So I'm running to win; a living, vibrant relationship with God. I'm running to win an intimate, affectionate relationship with God. I'm running to win a personal relationship with God; knowing him for who he really is and in the process discovering myself for who he really has created me to be. I'm running for a conversational relationship with God where we share heart

to heart with each other. Where we share the most intimate details, my greatest fears, my hopes, my dreams, my loves, sharing with the one I trust with my life. The one into whose hands I place my life, knowing I can trust him because he's already given his life for me. This is what I'm running to win.

And I can run to win because Jesus has already won me. Jesus has already given his life for me. Jesus has already won forgiveness for me through his crucifixion. Jesus has already won new life through his death and resurrection.

I'm not running to create something that doesn't exist, rather I'm running to claim all that Jesus freely offers; life rich and satisfying in and through him.

If it depended on me, I'd miss out. I'd start competing with other people to get first place and lose God in the process.

Who can remember what the first commandment is?

The first commandment is to have no other gods.

WHAT DO WE WIN?

Don't run to create yourself. Don't run to build a future of your own dreams. Don't run ignoring God. 'Run to win'.

I win when I get God, or when I realise he's already got me. In Jesus, God is 100% committed.

Committed to sharing himself with you in all the ups and downs of life. It's this relationship that Jesus creates for us to enjoy, to live in, to discover God in.

The first commandment reminds me that God is committed to us. In Jesus, God comes and lives out that commitment, so the new commandment is; love one another, as I have loved you.

Good News, in Jesus you are loved. Loved beyond your wildest dreams by God. Jesus has run and won, you can trust him with your life. So we are invited to grow in this relationship, to mature in this relationship, to live in this relationship.

And with any relationship conversation is a must. For it is through conversation that we open ourselves up to another and allow them in, into our lives, into our hearts, risking rejection, hoping for intimacy and trust.

In Jesus we live this conversation; we're not lepers,