

Preparing for Victory

You must prepare yourselves for every victory! If you are not adequately prepared, you won't be ready when opportunity knocks.

Many times success is merely a matter of being ready (fully prepared) when opportunity comes your way. And, it's no good taking short cuts if you intend to win the race. Correct training and preparation is vitally important. Many Christians like to skip the preparing and go right to the receiving. They want the prize (the glory, the trophy, the gold medallion) but they are not ready to get involved in any physical training or spiritual preparation. Still, without preparation it is impossible to run a skilful race, and if you are not able to run a skilful race, you cannot "*run in such a way as to obtain the prize.*" Remember, without preparation there can be little or no reward. Preparation is the first step to victory and to achieving your goals.

Almost everything we do in life is dependant on some measure of preparation. It is the same with spiritual matters. We cannot neglect our *training for reigning* and expect a crown. Training is hard work and it requires much discipline. As I said before, you cannot take short cuts and expect to do well in life. How many of you remember never disciplining yourselves to study for a test or exam until the night before? You would probably stay up all night cramming in every piece of information you could get your hands on (studying at the last minute). Yet, even if you passed the test, you were unlikely to know much about the subject because it's almost impossible to retain information by cramming it into a short space of time. It has been proven that the best way to obtain, and then retain, knowledge is to study a little consistently (day by day).

Concerning spiritual matters, too many believers are 'cramming' their faith into a Sunday service in order to get their prayers answered. The prayer of faith does work. However, there are principles which must be obeyed in order to see the full manifestation. One of these principles is that you must continually prepare yourselves to receive from God. **John 15:7** says, "***If you abide in Me, and My Words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.***" His Words must abide in you. This is preparation to receive and get your prayers answered.

You need to continually prepare and keep yourselves built up spiritually. The way you do this is through reading and meditating on God's Word until it is part of you. Therefore, in your spiritual race, you must start your preparation by finding out what the Word has to say concerning your goals. Your goals (the winning post) must always be in line with God's Word. This way it is easier to see yourself winning the race! Remember, it is useless setting goals for yourself unless you can see yourself achieving them. You must get to that place where you really believe that you can win!

Now, the Bible helps us in this regard because we have many wonderful promises to meditate on. For instance, **Philippians 4:13** says that we can do "*all things through Christ who strengthens us [equips us].*" This means that we can reach our goals, natural and spiritual, when they are founded and grounded on God's infallible Word. But note - you must first believe that you can, and this is only possible if His Words are *abiding in you*.

In spiritual matters, you often have to stand your ground against the enemy. And sometimes you may even have to go out and face him! When this happens you must be prepared (girded and ready). Then, because of this preparation, you are able to see yourself triumphing over him - in the victory that Jesus Christ has already secured for you.

Do you remember how David defeated Goliath? As a shepherd boy David had fought both a lion and a bear (with the help of God). This was part of his preparation for taking on even greater enemies. He was just a teenager but he was already being prepared for a victory that would change the course of history.

It is the same with you and me. We have the opportunity to prepare for a victory every day of our lives. This is the **good fight of faith** which the Bible mentions. So ask yourself this right now, "Are you preparing yourself for a victory or are you preparing for failure?"

In all things we are more than conquerors through Christ who loved us (**Romans 8:37**).

Romans 8:28, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

Deuteronomy 20:4, "For the LORD your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory."

1 Chronicles 11:14, "But they took their stand in the middle of the field. They defended it and struck the Philistines down, and the LORD brought about a great victory."

Psalm 18:35, "You give me your shield of victory, and your right hand sustains me; you stoop down to make me great."

Proverbs 21:31, "The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but victory rests with the LORD."

1 John 5:4, "For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith."

1 Corinthians 15:57, "But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."