

# **Before the *THRONE***

**Inner Court Ministries  
Spring 2002**

## **Run with the Horsemen!**

by Mark D. Spencer

“If you have run with the footmen, and they have wearied you, then how can you contend with horses? And if in the land of peace, in which you trusted, they wearied you, then how will you do the swelling of the Jordan?” (Jeremiah 12:5)

The Christian life is likened to a footrace. “Don’t you know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.” (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)

**“Run in such a way as to get the prize?”**

How many Christians do we find today who are running aimlessly! They have no vision or direction in their lives and so consequently they are perishing or, at best, confused and weary of running the good race. In effect, they have no vision: no criteria by which to direct and motivate their lives. (Proverbs 29:18) They simply do not have the endurance it takes to

finish the race. Many are endeavoring to run a short sprint only to find out the race they have entered is a marathon! “Let us fix our gaze upon Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of God. Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” (Hebrews 12:2-3)

The apostle Paul admonished us to, “Run in such a way as to get the prize.” The race in which we are running is for eternity. We only get one shot at the “Gold!” The stakes are high! The prize for which we run is not only for ourselves, but for an entire generation! We run not only to receive an incorruptible crown, eternal life and an inheritance for ourselves, but to proclaim the rule and reign of God’s Kingdom to this generation! Beyond our own eternal life is there another prize? Another crown? “For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For you are our glory and joy.” (1 Thessalonians 2:19-20) While our salvation is of utmost value to us, it is designed to be beneficial to others as well. Abraham, the father of our faith, was not only promised God’s blessings, but the full promise was that he would become a blessing. (Genesis 12:2) By its very nature, our redemption enables us to become a blessing to others. “Ask of Me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession.” (Psalm 2:8) The Father’s desire for us is to possess the nations, to bring them into the place of reconciliation and obedience to Him.

As high as these stakes are, as important as the ultimate prize is, regrettably many Christians are being wearied by mere footmen! After a brilliant start, many, within the opening few meters of the race, weary and begin to falter. The excess baggage and weight in their lives begin to take the toll. Love for the world and its pleasures weigh down the entrants. The cares of the age spring up speedily and choke their hunger for the Word of God. The heat of their zealotry for the will of God begins to cool. Not having spent time in preparation with the Word of God, as persecution and, affliction arises they have no endurance and so can only maintain their pace a short while.

**“Many, within the opening few meters of the race weary and begin to falter:”**

They are easily enticed by those along the sidelines enjoying the pleasures of sin for its brief season. Their race is soon over as they stop to become partakers of these pleasures themselves, having fully intended to only stop long enough so as to “catch their breath.” (Hebrews 12:1; Mark 4:14-20, 1 John 2:15-17, Revelation 3:21)

Every athlete has dreams; dreams of attaining certain goals and objectives in their lives, dreams of gold and wreaths. Those who attain these goals and dreams are the ones who have committed and disciplined themselves to achieve the ultimate realization of their dreams — Victory! Christians who attain their ultimate victory and prize have also committed their way to the Lord and then have been willing to pay whatever the price necessary to achieve the coveted goal. These are the doers of the Word, not merely those who dream and wish that some day they might finish the race! “The soul of a sluggard desires, and has nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.” (Proverbs 13:4) “But be doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves:” (James 1:22) Without faith we cannot please God, and winners demonstrate their faith by their actions.” (Hebrews 11:6; James 2:17-18)

How can we hope to run with horses when the footmen are tiring us? The nations are waiting for a revelation of Jesus Christ while the church is still struggling out of the starting blocks! How can we ever hope to go the second mile when we have yet to walk the first? And once the first mile has been walked out, what do our motives say? Was it done without murmuring and complaint? (Matthew 5:38-42) How can we run with the horses when the footmen have wearied us? Can the nations be brought the light of the Gospel when our lights remain hidden?

**“Without faith we cannot please God,  
and  
winners demonstrate their faith by their actions:”**

Who are those who run the race and when confronted with the horsemen continue to run? Who are those who continue to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus? Who are those who with the apostle Paul can boldly say, "I have finished my course ... henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."? (2 Timothy 4:7-8)

Running with the horsemen requires the spiritual strength and character to bless those who curse and despitely use you. Running with the horsemen requires going the second mile with a willing and obedient heart. Running with the horsemen demands that Christ be allowed to live His life through you, having reckoned yourself dead to your own wants, desires and ambitions. Running with horsemen calls for entering into the rest of God and ceasing from your own works of righteousness and attainment. Running with the horsemen calls for waiting upon the Lord that your strength might be renewed and exchanged with His, that you might mount up with wings as the eagle; running and not growing weary, walking and not becoming fainthearted! (Matthew 5:41-44, Isaiah 1:19, Galatians 2:20, Hebrews 4:10-11, Isaiah 40:31)

It is at this place of abiding that the race is won. Not merely finished, but won. Being led by the Spirit of Grace, drawing upon the inexhaustible strength and wisdom of God, allowing His love to energize our faith. This is where the battle becomes the Lord's, and victory is experienced firsthand by the people of God! (Romans 8:14, Galatians 5:6, Exodus 14:13-14) At this point, once we have cast ourselves in obedience upon Him and the word of His grace, we will become like Elijah as he outran the chariot of King Ahab some seventeen miles! For "the hand of the Lord was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel" (1 Kings 18:41-46)

This is the place where "all things are possible to Him who believes:" (Mark 9:23). This is that secret place of abiding Jesus spoke of in John 15:7; "If you abide in Me and My Words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you:" It is at this place, where we can arise in God's strength, ask for the nations, and obtain that which is the prized possession unto the Glory of God the Father! It is here, in this place of abiding, that the race will not only be run, but it will be run with the horsemen, and the Church will finish victorious!

## ***STANDING ✂ IN THE GAP***

**Jesus said, "And whosoever shall compel you to go a mile, go with him two." (Matthew 5:41)**

When it comes to prayer, almost everyone desires to see themselves as able to "run with the horsemen." In reality, many fall far short of the desired goal. Could it be that we have yet to "walk the first mile"? If we are not able to advance past the first mile, running with horsemen will always remain just a desire and never become a reality, something always just a little out of our reach.

**"One of the first steps to becoming mighty in prayer is to become quick to forgive and to show mercy:"**

Could it be that the first mile in prayer is that place where we have positioned ourselves to walk in forgiveness and mercy? Jesus made it abundantly clear that if we are to have success in our prayer life we must walk in forgiveness. "And when you stand praying,

forgive, if you have anything against any, that your Heavenly Father may forgive your trespasses.” (Mark 11:25). And again Jesus said, “... First go and be reconciled to your brother then come and offer your gift.” (Matthew 5:24) ‘Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.’ (Colossians 3:13) “And this is how you should pray; Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. (Matthew 6:9-13)

One of the first steps to becoming mighty in prayer is to become quick to forgive and to show mercy. As we complete this “first mile,” we will be spiritually exercised to such a degree so as to be able to “run with the horsemen.

## **“Gratitude for the Gift”**

by Patricia Lockridge

“I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.” (Romans 9:1-3) In this passage Paul speaks of his intense burden for his countrymen who had not yet accepted the salvation that is found only in Christ. He is saying that he would be willing to go to Hell if that would save his countrymen. He would willingly, even gladly, give up the very thing that meant the most to him — his relationship with Christ — if that would result in the salvation of others. In the light of the indifference that we show toward those who are outside Christ today, that is truly an astonishing statement! How could Paul care so much? How could he be so unselfish?

There are many reasons why this great man of God had such an intense desire to see others brought into Christ’s Kingdom. One of these reasons was Paul’s keen awareness of the consequences of entering eternity without Christ. He knew that “there is salvation in no other Name.” (Acts 4:12). He understood that “he who does not obey the Son shall not see (eternal) life, but the wrath of God abides on him,” (John 3:36) and “he who has not believed shall be damned.” (Mark 16:16). Paul highly valued his own salvation. No doubt he often thought how he himself had nearly rejected Christ. His heart was filled with gratitude for God’s mercy. Paul himself may have written these words to the Hebrew believers; “How shall we escape if we neglect (are indifferent to) so great a salvation?” May we lose our indifference and regain our gratitude for the precious gift of salvation. May the message of His salvation flow freely from our grateful hearts. May we, like Paul, demonstrate our gratitude by unselfish sacrifice that others may receive this priceless gift!

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