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If I Had Only Prepared

How ready are you to run your spiritual race?

By Brother Ryan Lesperance

"If I had only prepared"... I remember saying that at mile 20 of my first marathon.

My wife and I had a goal of finishing a marathon together. If you don't know, a marathon is an event where you pay to run 26.2 miles. I know that sounds pretty dumb. But, in any case, my wife and I had this burning desire to be "dumb" together.

We had one year to train. About three months into our training, my wife got pregnant, so she was out. No marathon for her. It was all up to me to stay on track with the training. Needless to say, I did absolutely none. It felt like I blinked my eyes and race day was here. I hadn't prepared at all, but I was in decent shape. In the past, I had done this before with smaller races. I would train very little, show up on race day, and finish. I thought I'd do the same with this race.

I felt OK until about mile 20. My lack of training hit me. Not only was I having a hard time running at this point, but every step hurt. It took everything inside me to take the next step. It felt like my feet could break in half at any moment.

I ended up finishing the race, but I was hurting pretty bad. It turns out, because my joints and feet were not conditioned for the hours of pounding on



the pavement, I ended up with stress fractures in both feet. It was very painful to walk for about two months after the race. I finished, but I paid a price for not being prepared.

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How Much Do You Want It?

Preparation is one of those non-glamorous kinds of things. We dream about crossing the finish line with the music pumping — but not those early morning runs.

Spiritually speaking, we dream about converting hundreds of souls but not scripture study or fasting and praying. In reality, though, preparation is what makes running the race possible and running it to your fullest potential. When you want to be prepared, consider two important elements, time and effort. You must put in both to be prepared.

Consider Enos when he broke his heart to the Lord through the night (verses 3 to 6).

"Behold, I went to hunt beasts in the forests; and the words which I had often heard my father speak concerning eternal life, and the joy of the

saints, sunk deep into my heart.

And my soul hungered; and I kneeled down before my Maker, and I cried unto him in mighty prayer and supplication for mine own soul; and all the day long did I cry unto him; yea, and when the night came I did still raise my voice high that it reached the heavens.

And there came a voice unto me, saying: Enos, thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou shalt be blessed.

And I, Enos, knew that God could not lie; wherefore, my guilt was swept away."

His time and effort prepared his heart to receive salvation.

steps every day. Make Jesus more of a friend today. Read His word a little more. Trust He'll take care of you even when you're afraid. No matter how spiritually conditioned you are, these baby steps can get you prepared for any race.

Ready for Your Race

There is no quick or effortless way to prepare. Just do a little each day. To quote Bob Wiley from the movie "What About Bob," he says, "I'm baby steppin'. I'm doing the work I'm baby steppin'. I'm not a slacker." Just take baby



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