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RUNNING THE RACE

As a young girl I was a “tomboy.” I had two older brothers that participated in sports including pole vault, high jump, baseball (not softball) and relay races. I wanted to do what they did. I was a fast runner. I could jump over the pole vault bar, and I could throw a baseball as far as any boy. I wanted to be accepted as a girl along with the boys in our neighborhood.

Sports were a big thing in the Greek and Roman culture. The Olympics started out of Greece and continues today. There are rewards for those that win. In childhood relays I took home blue ribbons and sometimes red ribbon, which was second place. I wanted to win!

The apostle Paul, like Jesus, used what the listeners were familiar with and used everyday life as examples. In Philippians 3:14 he said, “***I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.***” Being part of the Greek culture that involved sports, the common man of his day understood the race for the prize. They understood the winner would go before the Judge’s Bema Seat to receive their reward for winning. He would be given a victor’s crown made of vines and flowers. In this verse Paul is telling those in Philippi that they needed to press in. Anyone that runs knows that they save the most energy for the final moments. They give it their all to press to win the prize.

As we get older, oftentimes we want to slow down but upon reading this scripture, I see it differently. We should make an effort to press in harder in this race of life than ever before. We should be running it with all we have, so when we come to the end of our race, we will receive the crown that is given to the victor. Do not ever think it is too late to run the race my friends. There is always a way for each of us to finish in victory with the help of the Lord.

The wisdom that each of you seasoned saints have that are reading this should be passed on to the younger generation. Press into that and show them how to run the race, then pass the torch to the next generation!