

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Fall Term of 2023**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES—
FIRST CORINTHIANS**

Message Eight

Running the Race to Obtain the Kingdom Reward

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 9:24-27; Phil. 3:12-14; 2 Tim. 4:7-8

- I. “Do you not know that those who run on a racecourse all run, but one receives the prize? Run in this way, that you may lay hold. And everyone who contends exercises self-control in all things; they then, that they may receive a corruptible crown, but we, an incorruptible”—1 Cor. 9:24-25:**
- A. The Christian life is a race, and we must run this race to receive the prize, the incorruptible crown, which the Lord will award to His overcoming saints who win the race—Heb. 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 9:24-25.
 - B. All the saved Christians must run the race to win the prize (v. 24), which is not salvation in the common sense (Eph. 2:8; 1 Cor. 3:15) but a reward in a special sense (Heb. 10:35; 1 Cor. 3:14).
 - C. The apostle Paul ran the race, finished his course, and won the prize, the crown of righteousness, with which the Lord will also reward all those who have loved His appearing—9:26-27; Phil. 3:12-14; Acts 20:24; 2 Tim. 4:7-8.
 - D. As His believers, we have all received salvation and eternal life through faith in Christ, and we will not suffer eternal perdition (John 3:16, 36; 10:28-29), but our being rewarded by Him and escaping dispensational punishment depends on how we run the race (Matt. 25:30):
 - 1. We need to subdue our body and make it a conquered captive to serve us as a slave for fulfilling our holy purpose—1 Cor. 9:27; Col. 3:5; Rom. 8:13.
 - 2. We must be very much on the alert to run our course so that we may not be disapproved and rejected at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10) and be found unworthy of the reward of the coming kingdom (Matt. 24:42-46; Mark 13:33-37; Luke 12:37; Matt. 7:21-23; 25:11-12).
 - 3. We must pursue toward the goal, the fullest enjoyment and gaining of Christ, for the prize, the uttermost enjoyment of Christ in the millennial kingdom as a reward to the victorious runners of the New Testament race—Phil. 3:12-14; Matt. 25:21, 23:
 - a. In order to gain Christ to the fullest extent, we need to forget the past, not even lingering in our past experiences of Christ—Heb. 3:7-15; 4:7.
 - b. Lingering in our past experiences, however genuine they are, frustrates our further pursuing of Christ—cf. Luke 9:62.
 - c. We must stretch forward day by day to gain more of the vast unexplored territory of the Christ before us.
- II. “I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, with which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will recompense me in that day, and not only me but also all those who have loved His appearing”—2 Tim. 4:7-8:**

- A. A proper Christian life involves fighting the good fight against Satan and his kingdom of darkness for the interests of God's kingdom—Eph. 6:10-19:
 - 1. Whenever we minister Christ to others, we find ourselves in a battle; hence, we should be soldiers fighting for God's interests—2 Tim. 2:3-4.
 - 2. To fight the good fight of the faith means to fight for God's New Testament economy; in particular, it is to fight for Christ as the embodiment of God and the church as the Body of Christ—1 Tim. 6:12; 1:4; Col. 2:9, 19.
 - 3. The overcomers are not delivered out of the present chaos; instead, they conquer the destructive satanic chaos and triumph in the constructive divine economy—1 Tim. 1:3-4, 19-20; 4:1-2; Titus 3:10; 2 Tim. 1:15; 2:17-18; 4:8.
 - 4. The overcomers suffer the chaos, but instead of being disappointed or discouraged, they are strengthened and enabled to stand for and live out the divine economy according to the truth by the processed and consummated Triune God as the all-sufficient grace—vv. 10, 14-18; 2:15; 1:9; 4:22.
- B. There is a "course" prepared for every believer at the time of his regeneration for the purpose of bringing the new life he has just received to its full maturity (Heb. 6:1a) and for the purpose of making his life useful to God to the uttermost (2 Tim. 2:21; Philem. 10-13, 20):
 - 1. The responsibility of every believer is to seek out this course and walk therein; others cannot determine and say what this course is; only God knows, and only God can make man know; only He can lead the believers into this course.
 - 2. Today the situation is the same as when He led Jeremiah and the other prophets, and Paul, Philip, and the other apostles—Acts 13:25a, 36a; 20:24.
 - 3. We need to run the race with endurance, suffering the opposition with endurance and never growing weary or fainting in our souls—Heb. 12:1-3.
- C. A proper Christian life involves keeping the faith for participation in the divine riches in God's economy; to keep the faith is to keep the entire New Testament economy of God—the faith concerning Christ as the embodiment of God and the mystery of God and the church as the Body of Christ and the mystery of Christ—1 Tim. 1:3-4, 19; 3:9; 4:1; 6:12; Titus 1:4; Jude 3; Col. 2:2; Eph. 3:3-4; 5:25.
- D. The wonderful Christ enjoyed by us as the power of resurrection and as the shining forth of God to be our overcoming strength for the expression of Christ as life is our crown of righteousness, our prize, our reward—Gen. 15:1; Isa. 28:5; 1 Pet. 5:4.

III. In order for us to enjoy Christ as our kingdom reward, we must love the Lord's appearing, which is His appearing and manifestation to us today and His presence with His people at His second coming, by staying on the constricted way of being watchful in life and faithful in service to be constituted as the bride of Christ—Acts 26:16; Rom. 8:19; 1 Thes. 5:23; 2 Thes. 1:10; John 14:21, 23; Matt. 7:13-14; 24:3, 45-51; 25:9, 13, 21:

- A. We must lean upon our Beloved, constantly taking Him as our "going-out" strength to leave the world behind and meet Him as our Bridegroom, trusting helplessly in Him as the God of resurrection—S. S. 8:5; 2 Cor. 1:8-9; 4:16-18.
- B. We must pray that He would set us as a seal on His heart of love and on His arm of strength and power, trusting fully in His mercy, love, grace, and keeping power—S. S. 8:6-7; Exo. 28:12, 29; 1 Thes. 3:13; Rom. 9:16; Jude 24.
- C. We must love the Lord absolutely in simplicity and purity, asking Him to constrain us with His love of affection to live and die to Him—1 Cor. 2:9; 16:22; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; 11:2-3; Rom. 14:7-9; 8:35-39; Rev. 12:11.
- D. We must consecrate ourselves freshly and thoroughly to the Lord day by day—Lev. 6:12-13; Exo. 21:5-6.
- E. We must have a direct touch with the Lord every morning, a time in which we speak to Him and He speaks to us, being dealt with thoroughly by the Lord under His light to have a

- thorough repentance and confession in His presence—Isa. 50:4-5; 1 John 1:7, 9; Acts 11:18; 2 Cor. 7:10.
- F. We must long for the Lord’s speaking to us, reading the sixty-six books of the Bible again and again and receiving God’s word by means of all prayer so that we can be sanctified, reconstituted, and ruled by the word of God—S. S. 8:13-14; Deut. 17:18-20; Eph. 6:17-18; Mark 4:23-25.
- G. We must continually call on the Lord, praise the Lord, thank the Lord, and sing to the Lord—Gen. 4:26; Isa. 12:3-5; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; 1 Cor. 14:15; Heb. 2:12.
- H. We must be praying persons with a prayer life aimed at the desire and economy of God—Dan. 6:10; 1 Kings 8:48; cf. Exo. 28:29.
- I. We must live in the Body and for the Body, keeping ourselves in the blending life of the entire Body of Christ—1 Cor. 12:24; Lev. 2:4-5; Judg. 7:13-15.
- J. We must exercise our spirit to live and walk by the Spirit and enjoy the oneness of the Spirit, being saved from the destruction of division—Rom. 8:2, 4; Gal. 5:25; 1 Tim. 4:7; Acts 24:16; Jude 19; Mal. 2:15-16.
- K. We must guard our heart with all vigilance, keeping our heart turned to Him and fully opened to Him so that our heart may be soft, pure, loving, and at peace—Prov. 4:23; 2 Cor. 3:16, 18; Matt. 5:8.
- L. We must present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God for the practice of the Body life to glorify God in our body—Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 6:20.
- M. We must drink and flow the water of life—John 7:37-39; Prov. 11:25.
- N. We must live a vital-group church life—John 12:2-3; Heb. 10:24-25.
- O. We must give our material possessions for the interests of God—Matt. 6:19-21:
 1. If we give faithfully and consistently ten percent of our income to the church, we will have money in abundance; the more we give, the more we will receive and the more we will be able to give—Mal. 3:10; Luke 6:38.
 2. Those who are responsible to receive and oversee the offerings from the saints have a solemn responsibility; they must always “exercise foresight for what is honorable not only in the sight of the Lord but also in the sight of men”; the church will suffer loss if we cannot give the saints a satisfactory answer and an account regarding our handling of designated offerings—2 Cor. 8:21-23.
- P. We must forgive others that we may be forgiven, not judging and condemning others but releasing them that we may be released—Matt. 6:14-15; Luke 6:37.
- Q. We must shepherd others by perfecting them to mature in life for the development of their faith and love by cherishing them in the humanity of Jesus and nourishing them in the divinity of Christ—S. S. 1:7-8, 10-11; 4:11a; 8:8-10; Acts 20:20, 31; Matt. 24:45; 1 John 3:16; Zech. 10:3; 11:7.
- R. We must prophesy for the building up of the church—1 Cor. 14:4b, 26, 31.
- S. We must keep ourselves on the highways to Zion to enter into God as our sanctuary that we might become His sanctuary—Psa. 84:3-5, 11; 73:17, 25-26; 77:13; John 1:14; Eph. 2:22; 1 Tim. 3:15.
- T. We must follow the Lamb wherever He goes, preaching the gospel of the kingdom to the whole inhabited earth—Rev. 14:4; Matt. 24:14.
- U. We must have the determination to gain the honor of being well pleasing to the Lord so that we may receive Him as the reward of the kingdom and consummate our divine romance with Him in the sinless domain of His sweet and beautiful kingdom, which will fill the whole earth—S. S. 8:11-14; 2 Cor. 5:9; Heb. 11:5-6; Col. 1:10-11; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2.