

How to Win When Victory Seems Lost

Roger Bannister broke the world record by running a mile under four minutes. The theory of the day was that it was impossible for anyone to run a four-minute mile and survive.

Just after Roger Bannister broke the four-minute mile record he collapsed crossing the finish line. The announcer was both excited and horrified at the sight as he announced that Bannister had fallen at the finish line.

Bannister was a part-time runner and full-time medical student with a strategy. He set a pacesetter ahead of him and followed them joyfully to break the world record. He had two of his partners run before him, setting the pace with fresh legs. His job was to keep up with the fresh legs; 3 minutes and 59.4 seconds later, he was a legend.

Jesus did the same thing. He set a pace ahead of Him to guarantee that He would have the proper posture to reach His goal. Jesus set Joy as His pacesetter.

The only way you and I will win the race is if we set a pacesetter in front of us just as Roger Bannister did. He knew that the record was too far to reach alone. Jesus also knew that He needed help to reach the finish line. Read the following passage, *"Let us look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2).*

We must look at Jesus and set our life pace based upon Him. He set Joy as His pace and was able to endure the most horrific things that any person could experience. All of mankind's sin and punishment was released on Him through the Cross. He was able to keep His head high and shoulders back to defeat

shame. He looked down on shame in the most shameful circumstances. His posture ultimately gave Him a preeminent place at the right hand of God.

You and I can overcome through the same pacesetter, joy. Joy will cause us to endure and not quit, cause us to look shamelessly at circumstances that would cause the strongest person to crumble, and lead us in the same victory lap as Christ; straight to the right hand of God in Christ Jesus. You may be thinking, "What do I look for, what is my joy-goal?"

The instruction is simple, "Look to Jesus." Look to Him for revelation of your eternal prize, for help, for guidance, for strength, and confidence when you could feel shame. Look to Him for an eternity perspective. Look for Him to always lead you to victory. Expect to win with joy! Expect to win every time.

Jesus showed us that we can win even when it appears that we have lost. James gives us the secret behind Christ's success. *"My brothers, count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations"* (James 1:2). James uses an interesting word "count." In English "to count" means to equate one thing with another thing.

But in Greek the word "hēgeomai" has a larger meaning. It means "to lead, to go before, to be a leader, to rule, command, to have authority over, governor, viceroy, chief, leading as respects influence, controlling in counsel, used of any kind of leader, the leader in speech, chief, spokesman, to consider, deem, account, think."

Only the very last meaning is "to take account." The primary function of the word count is that it's a leader. In order to endure challenges, we must allow joy to be our leader every time. Joy can lead us through every circumstance that we encounter.

Jesus knew that Joy was a dynamic leader and set Joy as His

own leader through betrayal, banishment, beating and crucifixion. Nevertheless, Joy caused Him to win through a victorious resurrection. You too will experience resurrection power and joy through everything that you encounter. You too can embrace Joy as your own leader as you pace with Jesus into a life of great victory in this eternity life.

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