

TALKING POINTS

RUN YOUR RACE - RUN YOUR RACE

LEANING IN

We often make new years resolutions, especially after a year like this one. But what if the coming year is the same as the year we just concluded? After all, years are much the same - 24 hour days, 365 days in a year - this never changes.

What if a date change isn't the answer to our problems? The reason we get excited about the New Year each year is there is a new hope. A fresh start. A clean slate. Suddenly, as January approaches, we look at what kind of changes we can make, what new habits we can form. Without new habits, the new hope is not going to change things.

To truly realize the hope the new year offers, we'll need to develop new habits. In specific, developing the habit of trusting God and following His will - responding to Him. The confidence we truly have in God is evidenced by the actions we take as Christians in our lives. Habits are the building blocks of discipline, and there's a disciple which is spoken about in the bible - running the race. The bible refers to our spiritual walk as a race, which we are called to run well.

Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

What can you do to make 2021 God's year no matter what happens?

LIVING IT OUT

If we find ourselves wandering in our own personal deserts (much like the Israelites in the time of Moses), we have to choose to follow God's plan. Here are four actions we can take to ensure we run our race well:

Get Ready - to be prepared for God to use us, we have to make a decision to trust God. We can't miss out on a miracle just because God's plan doesn't make sense to us right away.

Read 1 Corinthians 16:13, Proverbs 3:5-6

Are you prepared for God to use you? Are there things you need to attend to first?

Stay In Your Lane - where we look to is where we'll go. In the coming year, our focus needs to be on God. Our vision must stay on God. Look where He wants us to look, go where He wants us to go.

Read Proverbs 4:25-27, Psalms 105:4

How can you keep from running ahead of or falling behind where God is leading you?

Trust Your Teammates - we don't run this race alone. Who we run with matters. They either help or hinder us in our walk with Jesus. Who is in our inner circle - are our friendships moving us closer to Jesus or away from Him?

Read Proverbs 27:17, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, 1 Peter 5:1-5

Do you have someone in your life who can tell you the difficult truths?

Don't Quit - if you stop running, you'll never reach the finish line. You don't have to tackle everything all at once. Ask God to show you His will for *this* day. Commit to yourself - "today I am running my race, I am not going to quit". We will see God work in our lives if we don't give in.

Read Galatians 6:9, Hebrews 12:1-3

Where can you draw encouragement to run the race well - to finish well ?