

Preserved by Purpose – Winning the Race

When I made my list of resolutions and prayer requests for 2010, I thought about the things that were on the list this year that were also on the list last year...and the year before. I'd gotten frustrated watching other people be blessed with the same things that I'd prayed for. It was hard not to be envious of them and angry at God. It seems like the longer I've waited, the harder it's gotten to wait.

I asked God if the reason why the prayers were unanswered was because I was praying amiss (like it says in James 4:3). I then thought maybe my prayers were not strong enough, long enough or intense enough.

The answer came to me one evening as I prayed and wrote in my journal before I went to bed. "The last lap is always the hardest which is why only the best are chosen to run it." I laughed and wrote that I didn't necessary need to be last...but after thinking about it, it made a lot of sense. I even did a little research on relay races. The website trackandfield.lifetips.com described how saving the best runner for last is the normal strategy for relay races. Part of the reason the best runner is on the last leg of the relay race is because that runner usually knows what to do to win the race. By the time they get the baton, they know how to adjust their time including speeding up if necessary.

For a few years, I was the reigning 100 yard dash winner at Tinker Elementary in Oklahoma City. I even thought at one point, (remember this is the overactive mind of 9 year old) that I was going to go to the 1976 Olympics. One race that I remember running was the relay race. To me it was always challenging to see if I catch the baton without dropping it and then, of course, being the first over the finish line. Now that I'm older, I'm not interested in running track and field. The closest I get to track now is walking around one as my weekly exercise.

When you feel like you are still waiting for God to bless you and answer your prayers...and find yourself getting tired of waiting, just know that God is not deliberately trying to hurt you. He might just be allowing you to wait a little longer for the answer to your prayer because he trusts you to know what to do while you wait.

I Corinthians 9:24 encourages," Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain *it*."

It's about building your character while you endure.

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