

## WINNING THE GREATEST RACE (Part 2)

Winning The Greatest Race requires studying the Instructor's Guide Book. It provides the information needed to **qualify** for the race, steps to take in **preparation** for the race, strategies for **performing** well during the race, and keys to **persevering** to the end of the race and receive the prize.

Once the contestants have qualified for The Greatest Race by having Jesus in their hearts, the one thing, the most important thing that must be done is to spend Time Alone With God (TAWG). When neglected, the results are disastrous for the person and grievous to God. Mary of Bethany, a woman of deep spiritual appreciation, got it right for we read Jesus' remarks in Luke 10:42, ***"only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better."*** While Martha, her sister, was busy doing good things, Mary sat at Jesus' feet, desiring to spend precious time with Him before facing the pressing issues of the day. Her doing so indicated her readiness to receive His word, learn from Him, and submit to the guidance He would provide. Spending Time Alone With God (TAWG) allows Him to do all He wants to do **in** us, so He may do all He desires to do **through** us so we can impact our world for good and bring glory to His name.

Our Time Alone With God (TAWG) provides the setting for the most important activity we can do in preparing to win The Greatest Race—aligning our character, attitudes and will with those of our all-powerful and loving Heavenly Father. What is the activity? **\*\* MEDITATION\*\*** Meditation unlocks the gate to God's riches----God Himself. ***"...they delight in doing everything God wants them to, and day and night are always meditating on his laws and thinking about ways to follow him more closely." (Psalm 1:2).***

Meditation for the believer is not emptying one's mind of logic and reason and sitting passively waiting for a word to chant over and over again. No, it is reading God's Word and allowing the Holy Spirit to illuminate it for us, worshipping Him, thanking Him, asking Him questions, seeking His guidance, knocking on the door of His heart and expecting Him to answer. It is during our daily time of meditation that we:

- (1) tell Him how great He is and how much we love Him (*Deuteronomy 6:5; Psalm 48:1*),
- (2) thank Him for all He has done for us (*Isaiah 12; 1 Peter 1:3-5*),
- (3) tell Him we are sorry for sins we have committed (*Psalm 32:5; 1 John 1:9*),
- (4) allow time for Him to speak to us (*Psalm 33:20-21 & 130:5-6*), and
- (5) listen to His voice (*Isaiah 28:23; John 10:3-5, 27*).

In our TAWG we learn that God:

- (1) is in control of every situation (*Job 42:2; Isaiah 14:24; Daniel 4:35*),
- (2) is constantly at work for our welfare (*Jeremiah 29:11; Romans 8:28; Philippians 4:19*),
- (3) is trustworthy in every situation (*Psalm 18:30 & 111:7-8; Isaiah 26:4*), and
- (4) pours out His love on His beloved (*Revelation 8:17*); and His wrath on the ungodly and unrighteous (*Romans 1:18*).

During our times of meditation the Holy Spirit will take the words we read in Scripture and speak to our hearts as to the kind of believers He wants us to be.

As we begin to look into the words of Jesus recorded in Matthew 5, we see that He spoke these words to individual believers, not to the unsaved world. We quickly recognize that in and of ourselves we cannot live by them. It must be Christ in us, sitting on the throne of our lives directing our thoughts, words and deeds. There are eight declarations of "blessedness" spoken by Jesus in these first twelve verses and each one begins with the word "Blessed." Next time we will look at the first one recorded in Matthew 5: 3: ***"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."***

### PRAYER:

*Father, as I look into your Word and discover the kind of person you want me to be, open my heart, make me sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit and show me where I need to change to become more like Christ. Perform open heart surgery by reshaping my inward attitudes so that my outward behavior is transformed (*Romans 12:1-2*). I want your will to be my will and your righteousness, grace, peace and contentment to be evident in my life as I submit to You this week.*