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Up the Hill

Ready:

"… Let us run with endurance the race that lies before us, keeping our eyes on Jesus…" - Hebrews 12:1-2

Set

I love to run. It allows me an extra opportunity to connect with my Creator. It's more than just seeing His beauty in nature, so much more! The longer I run, the more I hear His voice. Is it the physical exertion? Can it be the steady cadence? I think it's more about just being quiet.

I hit the road taking my usual route. I crave the familiar. I run it many times each week and know it well. Halfway through, I prepare for my least favorite part: a sizable hill with a nasty bend. I'm tired and, yet, I'm far from done. In order to tackle this ascent, I need the Lord to carry me. I submit my inadequacies to Him and ask Him for help. His Word comes back to me and Scripture fills my head: "I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Phillipians 4:13).

Some days, I picture Jesus slouching low with the wooden cross on His back struggling to take an extra step. I am reminded of where He was headed, and I am strengthened. I persist up that hill. In the end, I am often amazed at how easy it seemed. I am overjoyed. I made it! I ran with endurance the race marked out for me. He carried me, and I am on a spiritual high. Then comes the crash. Every time.

My next mile is just plain ugly. I seem to have forgotten Scripture. No image of Christ remains in my head. I think that the run should be easy, now. Instead, it becomes more difficult. I expect to coast (Don't I deserve it?) and fail to prepare for its slight incline. I no longer rely on Him, and, instead, rely on my own strength. But in the end, I pray that on the next run, with God's grace, I will do it His way. I will keep my eyes on Jesus.

And I pray that today, no matter what challenge you face, you will do the same.

Go

1. Are your eyes fixed on Jesus?
2. Are taking any matter into your own hands and not arming yourself with His mighty power?
3. Do you stop communicating with Him because you believe you have gotten over the hard part of your life and feel entitled to coast?
4. What can you do to remain focused on Him?

Workout

Matthew 6:33 Phillipians 4:13 Ephesians 6:11

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