

THINK ON THESE THINGS (Philippians 4:8)

Athletes and Soldiers

OUR FAMILY NEWS

Pray: Jennifer Morigeau, Alice Stone, Josiah, Wayne and Cathy, Helen Spicer, Peggy

Traveling/Working: Slope workers. Steve and Abby are in Juneau.

Radio Programs: Listen to "Searching the Scriptures", our weekly radio program on KMBQ 99.7 Sunday mornings beginning at 9:00 AM.

Today's Scripture: "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." **1 Corinthians 9:24 (KJV)**

Wisdom for Today: "Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race." **Psalms 19:5 (KJV)**

Evening Sermon: "Fellowship" By Daniel Schramm

Attendance Last Sunday 64/43: Our Record: 107

For more information, visit our website at www.churchofchristwasilla.com

ELDERS:

Ed Maxwell	(907) 373-5583	ed@churchofchristwasilla.com
Hans Nicholson	(907) 230-2969	hnichs@gmail.com
Paul Stone	(907) 491-1170	good_nooz@yahoo.com

DEACONS:

Daniel Schramm	(907)355-4088	schramm_03@yahoo.com
Joe Murdock	(907) 715-0089	montana2189@hotmail.com
Phillip Kelly	(907) 632-1118	affordablehydroseeding@hotmail.com

EVANGELIST

Bill Beebe	(907) 841-9261	bill@churchofchristwasilla.com
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March 14th, 2021 BULLETIN for the

Church of Christ AT WASILLA

God's Plan of Salvation

Hear.....	Romans 10:17
Believe.....	Mark 16:16, Hebrews 11:1-6
Repent.....	Acts 2:38, II Corinthians 7:10
Confess.....	Romans 10:9-10, Matthew 10:32-33
Be Baptized	Mark 16:16, Acts 22:16
Arise & Walk in Newness of Life	Romans 6:4

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth..."

CONTACT INFORMATION

MEETING TIMES

Sunday:

Bible Classes:	10AM
AM Worship:	11AM
PM Worship:	5PM

Wednesday:

Bible Study:	7PM
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OFFICE HOURS

Tue./Thur. Call or Ck Web

COME JOIN US!

The church of Christ at Wasilla meets at:

2061 N. Merciful Circle
Wasilla, AK 99654
(907) 373-5773

Visit our website at:

www.churchofchristwasilla.com

Visitors Always Welcome; Members Expected

Athletes and Soldiers

When I was in elementary school in Arkansas we had a day of races and games on May 1. This was called May Day and we all looked forward to it. We ran 50 yard races, three legged races where two students were tied together so that the right leg of one was tied to the left leg of the other, and sack races where the student had both legs in a burlap bag and racing was actually hopping for 25 yards or so. As we got older, May Day was passed out. But we began to run track and field races against other schools. And we began to learn about war. Viet Nam was in our school, in our Boy Scout troops and in our living rooms. Very few people survived those years without knowing at least one person whose name is on the wall in Washington DC. One of the boys in the scout troop I was a part of wound up on the wall. Kids I knew in college left after being drafted or volunteering and I haven't heard from them since. So we understood what it meant to be an athlete and several learned what it meant to be a soldier. Those who, like me weren't drafted, learned the awful price of war and the sacrifices of the soldiers who fought in them.

Paul uses an athlete to teach us lessons about being a Christian. In **1 Corinthians 9:24 (KJV)** Paul tells us "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." The goal of running a race is to win it. In the races held in the games of Paul's day, like our modern Olympic Games, there is one winner. In Christianity there can be more than one winner in that more than one person can enter paradise at death. However, to be a winner we have to run consistently and earnestly just like a person who runs a physical race. We can not run for a while then sit and rest, that is the lesson we learned about the race between the rabbit and the turtle when we were young. Neither can we run in any direction we want to nor can we run outside the race course. Doing so would cause the athlete to lose by default. Paul warns about this in **2 Timothy 2:5 (KJV)** "And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." A person trying to get to Heaven and who chooses run a different course than that described in the Bible will find out that there is only one way to get to the Father and that is through Jesus. In **John 14:6 (KJV)** John tells us "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." We cannot run any course we choose. We can not run in any direction we want. To get to the Father, we have go through Jesus. And we have to get there by the directions we have been given.

Paul also uses soldiers to teach us lessons about Christianity. In **2 Timothy 2:3-4 (KJV)** Paul tells Timothy "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." Paul is telling Timothy, and us, that a good soldier of Jesus will endure hardness. There is no way we can be true Christians without having to face difficulties in

Sermon: Paul Stone; Article: Bill Beebe

this life. Jesus Himself told us that this would be true. In **John 15:18-20 (KJV)** John records Jesus saying "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also." We will suffer as Christians, so we need to be like a soldier in our ability to endure the difficulties that we will face as we fight the battles that Satan will send our way. In this passage, Paul also tells Timothy that he needs to keep from becoming tied up in things outside his mission. If a soldier becomes entangled with cares and concerns of this world, he will lose focus on the battle he is facing and will then become a less effective warrior. Our situation is the same. If we lose focus on our mission as Christians we will begin to stray from the course that is set before us. Jesus told us that if we start, then look back we are not fit for the kingdom (Luke 9:62).

Whether we are an athlete or a soldier in our service to the Lord, we all have a mission. That mission will often be difficult. A top athlete will train, keeping his or her eyes on the goal. They will learn the course of the race, being able to recognize the boundaries that they must run in so that they will not lose by default. They may walk the course to find any hazards that may cause them to lose a step and fall behind. And they will compete within the rules. A soldier is much the same. They will train with one goal in mind, to win the battle. They will study the battle field. Miyamoto Musashi, a famous Japanese Samurai who fought in numerous sword fights and several wars wrote a book called "The Book of Five Rings". In it he discussed the ways that he won so many duels. One of those was learning the battlefield. He would go to the designated area and memorize the layout of the land. He would memorize the distances between ridges and depressions. He would study where the sun rose and set, where there were shadows and what time of the day they would appear and disappear.

To be the servant of Jesus that we should be, we should have the attitude of an elite athlete or a top warrior. We will understand the course and the battlefield. And we will keep our goal foremost in our mind. Our course is the Christian life set forth by Jesus and the inspired writers. Our battlefield is the world. To be successful we need to study to know the rules and the boundaries of the course. To be successful we need to understand the battlefield and be ready to avoid anything that will cause a misstep or that will result in us tripping and falling. Our goal is Heaven. So lets all run the race, lets all fight the good fight. And lets do it like an elite athlete or a top warrior. Constantly keeping the goal foremost in our minds.