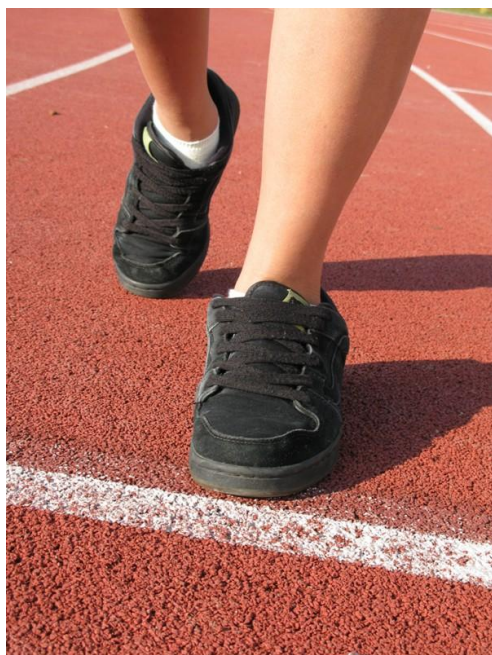


Pray for Schools Fortnight 2012

6-20 May



RUNNING THE RACE



The theme for Pray for Schools fortnight 2012 is 'running the race'. Many aspects of the Christian life can be likened to running a race, and prayer is one of them. As we pray for schools, we are reminded that it is a marathon, not a sprint and requires perseverance. It takes time too, and an element of focus and determination. But just like the endurance runner, we are not alone – we are part of a team of people around the country who are also supporting their schools in prayer. And so, Pray for Schools fortnight is an opportunity to spur each other on, as well as bless the schools in our area – and perhaps encourage others to join the race!

The meditation below can be used as the outline for a special event, either as prayer stations, or for everyone to pray through in small groups. You could even use it for one of your regular meetings in May. You can be inspired further with the *Programme ideas for a Pray for Schools event* document available from the event resources page of www.prayforschools.org.

HEBREWS 12:

In the race together

v1: we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses

Pray for people involved in education throughout the UK, in many roles: students, teachers, other school staff, Christian volunteers in schools, Governors, Local Authority and other support staff. Remember too Michael Gove MP, Secretary for Education and all who work with him.

Travelling light

v1: lay aside every weight and sin

Ask for God's forgiveness and grace for anyone who has done wrong in any way; students with major issues that affect them and others too. Pray that schools will be places where children and young people can focus on the good things and achieve their potential.

It's a marathon not a sprint

v1: let us run with endurance the race that is set before us

Remember students who are now coming up to important exams after many months of preparation and hard work. Pray especially for those who find studying difficult; that they won't get distracted or give up even when the going gets tough.

Following Jesus

v2 : the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Praise the Lord for all His goodness! Pray for Christian students and others in schools to be courageous and tell others about their faith and how it affects how they live. Pray that Jesus name and God's ways would be respected in schools.

Not giving up

v3 : consider him so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted ... lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees

Ask the Holy Spirit to help those in trouble: afraid, lonely and worried about the future. Remember those giving pastoral care in schools and friends who are there to support each other in the hard times. Pray for hope and solutions to their problems.

Relay race

v14: Work at living in peace with everyone

Pray for unity and a great sense of team in schools; that the people there will not hang on to resentments, distrust, rivalry and unkind attitudes. Instead, like a harmonious choir or orchestra may school communities work together in peace.

Celebrate the victory

v28: Let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe

Give thanks in advance for the races we will see finished and the tasks that will be successful in our schools. Remember it is not us but Him who is gives us the strength, determination, patience and faith we need every day.



Hebrews 12 v1-14 (New Living Translation)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne. Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won't become weary and give up. After all, you have not yet given your lives in your struggle against sin.

And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said, "My child, don't make light of the LORD's discipline, and don't give up when he corrects you.

For the LORD disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child."

As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children at all. Since we respected our earthly fathers who disciplined us, shouldn't we submit even more to the discipline of the Father of our spirits, and live forever?

For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God's discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness. No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.

So take a new grip with your tired hands and strengthen your weak knees. Mark out a straight path for your feet so that those who are weak and lame will not fall but become strong.

Work at living in peace with everyone, and work at living a holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord.