

The Spiritual Exercise – Part 6, Run In Place

Sermon Title: **The Spiritual Exercise. Part 6, Run In Place**

Sermon Number: **5851**

Speaker: **Nathaniel Bronner**

Link to sermon audio - <http://www.theonlineword.com/mp3/5851.mp3>

Link to sermon video - <http://theark.s3.amazonaws.com/vid/5851.mp4>



BrothersofTheWord.com

Nathaniel Bronner: Sometimes, what you fear keeps you from what you can be, what you can do, and what you can have.

Female: You are listening to BrothersoftheWord.com. This is Part six of the sermon titled, The Spiritual Exercise. Subtitled, Run in Place, by Nathaniel Bronner. This sermon is number 5851.

(Music Playing: 00:00:20 - 00:00:32)

Female: And now for, The Spiritual Exercise, Part six, Run in Place.

Nathaniel Bronner: Welcome to Brothers of the Word because brother, you need the Word.

And today, we're into Part six of a multi-part series simply called, Spiritual Exercises. And in each one of these messages, I have actually outlined a physical exercise that you can do wherever you are with no equipment that will actually take your body to another level. But there is a deeper meaning to every one of the exercises that helps to take your spirit to another level.

And today, for Part six, I want to first of all read the scripture that this pertains to which is, 1st Corinthians, Chapter 9 beginning at verse 24 in the NIV version.

Do you not know that in a race, all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the price. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it together crowned that will not last. But we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore, I do not run like someone running aimlessly. I do not fight like, a boxer beating the air. No, I strike a blow to my body and to make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

And today for part six of Spiritual Exercises, the exercise is simply run in place. Now, this is probably one exercise that I don't need to even demonstrate, but just to demonstrate it, all you do is just run in place. And you can run with your knee high, you can run with your knees low, you can run for as long, as hard, or as fast as you want to run. It's just simply running in place. But I want to just take this exercise and the scripture just to illustrate some things about running in place in life and even about our running.

And number one, you need to ask yourself the question in life, for those of you who are really doing some running, ask yourself the question and put up the first slide. “What are you running for?” Now, this fella looks tired, his tongue is hanging out, he is sweating. When we truly don’t know what we’re running for, we get tired. Our spirits get tired. Sometimes you can’t stop your body from getting tired, but you can stop your spirit from getting tired just by knowing and understanding what you’re running for. And whenever you’re running only for yourself, you get tired a whole lot faster. Sometimes, we think, “I’m just running to retire.” And we get tired running to retire.

We just left a beautiful island in the country of Belize and we were there for a few days and it is so idyllic, but yet, even in the middle of paradise, there’s trouble. And some people run all their lives and they work just to move to a place where they can lay down and lay on the beach and just do nothing all day long. And after about a month or two of that, they get tired of retiring. So, you really have to know, number one, “What are you running for?” And if you don’t want to get tired, if you don’t want to give out, if you want to keep energized, you’ll always need to have something you’re running for to be bigger than you, to be bigger even in this life, to go beyond what you can see, think and feel and to be something on an elevated level.

So, just ask yourself that question, “What am I getting up every morning for?” That’s the equivalent of running in place. “What am I going out every day to do? What’s my real purpose? What am I really running for?” Now, that’s a deep question and it takes some wisdom to even answer that question. “What am I running for?” Now, just in the physical with the exercise, even though you’re not going anywhere, you see a different purpose for because I’m running to stay healthy. You’re not going to just sit there and running in place not going anywhere, but you have a different purpose in mind.

00:05:05

And you can see further than just where you are. See, some of you, you’ve been doing the same thing over and over and over, getting up, going to the same job over and over and over again. So, it’s almost like, running in place, but your just as content because you see a bigger purpose in you being in the same place.

I'm doing this for a higher purpose and you understand, I'm not just going to the job just to get a check. I'm rearing my children; I'm paying for their school supplies and food and housing and I'm creating a legacy and a dynasty. You begin to see a whole lot of things that's beyond just where you are when you can answer that question of, "What am I running for?"

Second question you need to ask yourself is, "What am I running from?" What am I running from? Put up the second slide. Do you know how much fear governs what we do? You'll be surprised how much we're limited by what we are afraid of and you will never go beyond what you are afraid of.

Do you know if you are afraid of heights, you'll never fly? You'll never go up a mountain. Some people are afraid of crowds therefore, they have never gone out in public. Some are afraid of speaking therefore, they will never stand up before people. What you are afraid of limits you because you cannot go beyond what you are afraid of.

Some people have a fear of success. Now, you might think that's crazy, but a lot of people actually do. They have a fear of success. What are you afraid of? Your fears will make a huge difference in where you go and where you don't go.

We were walking out on the sidewalk in Belize and there were a lot of critters out. We heard frogs and there on the sidewalk was the largest spider I'd ever seen in my life. I mean, the spider was literally about the size of my hand. It was a huge, black, furry spider and the spider was right in the middle of the sidewalk. Now, the problem is, you all say, "The problem."

And see, we were going to dinner, but the spider was right in the middle of the sidewalk. For some people, they would have rather starved than go by the spider. And sometimes, what you fear keeps you from what you can be, what you can do and what you can have. And the spider never moved and I must admit, I wasn't overly afraid of the spider, but I wouldn't go and fool with the spider. A big difference.

So, what I did, I did walk around the spider. I wouldn't go near and pat the spider, I wasn't going to pick up the spider, I wouldn't go do any of that because number one, I did not know what kind of spider that was. But I did take my existing knowledge. One

thing I did know, I was far more dangerous to the spider than the spider was to me. And they said, “How can you say the spider couldn’t weigh more in three or four ounces even though it’s big. Spiders are fairly hollow; they don’t weigh that much.

I’m 187 pounds. So, if I stepped on the spider, I knew I could kill the spider and I knew the spider couldn’t be that fast. But the spider looks scary. See, some of the things that have you limited, they look scary, but when you stand back and analyze it, when you really think about this, you can take that spider. You are far more powerful than the spider, but the spider, because of all of the things we have sometimes been taught and been trained with, the spider looks a lot more damaging and some of you all are starving because you’re afraid to go around some of your spiders of life.

So, “What are you running from?” Some of you right now, you’re alone and you’re alone because you experienced a bad relationship and because you went through one bad relationship, “Because I am not going to fool with no more men. I’m not going to fool with no one, I’m just through.” And as a result, we never get what God intends for us to have because we are ruled by fear instead of faith.

“What are you running from? “And whatever you fear limits you. If you are afraid of relationships, you’ll never have a good one because your fear will limit what you can have and where you can go. “What are you running from?”

The third slide, put that up. “What are you running to?” So many of us oftentimes, our goals and our whole focus on life ties in with that what are we running for. The whole thing is, were just running for money.

00:10:00

And if you’re only running for money, you’re going to get tired because money never satisfies. Once you get it or once you keep striving for it or the case with most people they never get enough and money never satisfies. So, “What are you running to?” Are you trying to run the fame and fortune? Even running for a strong healthy body that’s not sufficient in life. If that would the case, none of the athletes would have any problems, that’s not sufficient in life. It’s good to have it, but it’s just not sufficient in life. You

got to understand what are you running to and if you're not running to the right thing, you'll end up running in place, you'll end up getting tired, you'll end never moving to the destiny and to the place that God truly has for you. So, number one, "What are you running for?" Number two, "What are you running from?" Number three, "What are you running to?"

Put up the fourth slide and number four, "What are you or who are running with?" "Now I have this slide this is running late does not count as exercise because some of you are running with folks who are always late. The people who you run with, determine how far and fast you go, it is simple as that. And if you run with somebody who is always late or worse, who never gets there, you'll never get there and you can determine where you're going in life by just taking a look around and seeing who are you running with.

The book says that, "You are the aggregate of you five closest acquaintances." And that's really, really accurate and it's true in almost every single area of life. "Whoever you run with, your friends and your acquaintances, their spirit will get on you and whatever arena of life that is." So, it makes a real difference who you are running with.

Now, just take minute just to think about, "Who you're spending all your time with?" And if you're spending all of your time with somebody who is really going somewhere, it's going to take you somewhere, but if you're spending all your time with somebody who is scared, didn't want anything, always complain about life, always belly aching, always late or never there, is going to drag you down. It's just as simple as that. So, when you are running in place, always ask yourself, "Who are you running with?"

And number 5, but before you start running, the speaker on Thursday dealt with this somewhat. Put up the next slide. There were actually five phases that you need to go through before you actually run. Number one, you need to kneel which is, "You need to pray." And if you can't get on your knees, you will never truly run because there are going to be sometimes in life, you just got to get on your knees, there are some stuff you cannot figure out on your own, there's some problems you can't conquer on your own, there's some situation you can't get out on your own, there are some situations you can't get in on your own, you're going to need help and you've got to learn how to first kneel.

Many times, we just want to run in life, but first you got to go through some phases. A baby doesn't start out running. Babies start out crawling and actually start out just lying in there. But you got to be immature to crawl.

So, as an adult, you've got to learn first how to kneel. Then after you kneel, you got to learn how to sit. Sit essentially means, to study. If you don't know God's Word, it's hard to follow what you don't know. So, you learn to kneel first, you learn to pray then, you learn to sit and you learn to study. You learn to stand on the Word.

You all know people who know the Bible really good, but don't live it, it all. They know it really, really good but they don't live it at all. You've got to learn how to stand on the Word. Then, you got to learn how to walk in the Word and then you got to learn how to run for the prize.

So, when you are running, you're going through all of these phases in your walk with Christ. And finally, most of us as we are running through life, we have a tendency to run in place because we have an inverted view and that inverted view is an inverted view of problem versus Christ.

Put up the next slide. This is the way that most of us view our problem. You see that big old problem up there? You see down to the bottom to the right, can you read what that word says? It says Christ. But that's the way most of us are. Our problems are big and Christ is small and as long as we look at life like that, is there anybody here who does not have problems? All of us have problems, but when the problem is bigger than Christ in your life, the problem will always dominate you, it will always rule you.

00:15:03

And how can you tell whether the problem is bigger than Christ in your life? People well you talk about all the time and then, she even relates to that group you're running with. If all they're talking about all of their time is their problems, now you got to talk about problems sometimes, I do understand that. But there are some folks that all they talk about are the problems of their lives.

Put up the next slide. This is where you need to be. When you elevate Christ to a certain level in your life where it is bigger than everything else, your problems become small. And what problem do you have that God cannot solve? What problem do you have that God cannot solve? I mean, you don't have one iota of a problem not only can God solve, but He can completely solve it, He can restore anything, or He can take you way above the problems. And now where the problem looks very, very small and what you thought was a huge problem, is now built on nothing.

Let me give you a good example. I want you to think of your biggest problem right now, just your biggest problem. With some people the name popped in their heads. But you just think of your biggest problem right now. Then I want you to imagine you went to the doctor and the doctor told you, you had three months to live, there was no cure, there was no operation, there was no medicine, there was nothing to fix in, in three months you're going to be dead, you're just going to be dead. And you came to God heals, and you got touch or spoken over, you went back to the doctor and the doctor said, "I can't find a thing. I can't find a thing wrong with you.

Now, I want you to put yourself in that situation and I want you to imagine the problem that you thought about when I asked you to think of your biggest problem. If the doctor told you, you had three months to live, how big was your biggest problem? Now, if you came to God heals and you got healed and you went back to the doctor and the doctor told you, "You weren't going to die in three months, that you're going to have a normal lifespan." Now, how do you feel?

Well folks, for the vast majority of you listening to me right now, you're going to die in three months. You don't have the terminal disease, but your problem that you initially thought of is still the same. The thing that changed is your perspective of your problem. When you've got Christ in your life, your problems seemed smaller. They don't necessarily disappear; they just seemed smaller. When you understand it and when you can look at from a Christian perspective, all your problems seemed smaller.

There was a story of a man in the city and he was a criminal and he saw a fella driving an armored truck and he followed the armored truck and the armored car driver got out, he opened the bag and he had all these bags of money in the truck, he run up

and knocked him out. So, he knocked him out and he grabbed two bags of money and started to run, but the problem is, after he run about 50 feet, he just slowed way down in the police car. The reason he slowed down so much is he had grabbed a bag of pennies. So, he was trying to run but -- because you can't tell what was in the bag and he just have a bag full of pennies and if they would just weigh.

Some of you are running through life and you're holding bags of pennies. It's weighing you down, but it's worth almost nothing. See, that's one of the things and you know I'm a runner and when you run, it's like even riding a bus if you're going to a long distance, you need to lighten your load and when I run, I've got these running shoes and they're really, really light and then you don't want to have all anything heavy because if you going to run 10 miles, you don't need a whole lot of heavy stuff weighing you down.

I want you to just think about the problems that you have that you are carrying. And I want you to ask yourself, "Are these problems pennies?" Am I weighing myself down with stuff that really not even worth that much? And often, when we begin to think about the loads that we carry voluntarily. Jesus said, "You know, my yoke is easy, my burden in this light." But you got to do like, that second slide. You got to have Christ big in your life and your problem small. And when you think about it, all your problems, pennies. And you're just holding all this stuff struggling and you go to bed and you put the bag of pennies on your chest as you try to go to sleep. You get up, you pick your bag up and take them with you wherever you're going. You haul them, you get in the car put them on the seat and some of us we have issues and we have problem like that and they're pennies.

Sometimes they're significant, but most of the time, that stuff gets emotional. Somebody said something about you three years ago, it's a bag of pennies, but you're still carrying that load around.

00:20:05

Somebody did something to you five years ago, it's a bag of pennies and you're still carrying that load around. Some of you got situations even with your mother or your father who didn't do right and they're dead and gone and you're still carrying that bag of pennies, and you can never run because you've got this load and

we have to learn how to lighten our load before we're ever going to run. Before we ever going to get the prize.

And see what I'm running for, number one, I am running for my heavenly award. I want to have the crown of glory because this life is short and it's passing by fast, and I'm well aware this body is going to turn to dust, but my spirit won't. So, I'm running. My ultimate prize, my ultimate of what I am running for is the same as Paul.

I'm running for the real prize, that is eternal. All the prizes in this life, fade and go away. That eternal prize stays with you forever. I need to keep Christ big in my life, so my problems remain small. And when you do that, oh, you'll be able to run, and you'll able to kick your knees up high, and you're able to run without getting weary. See, the body works very much the same as the spirit does. When you have trained your spirit, you can go much further, much harder, much longer without getting tired.

When I was in Belize, I swam in the ocean and for some reason, I could not understand why I could swim so far. I went normally, it would probably would have been 10 to 15 pool lengths and I just wasn't even tired, I just turned back. And I couldn't figure out, "Why am I swimming so far?" Hadn't swim in a long time, why am I swimming so far, but I'm not getting tired?

And I didn't understand it until I got up this morning and I was working out, and I bought an exercise machine at Pastor James had recommended and the machine is an elliptical stepper, and what it does, you get on it and you step up and down and your arms move like this, and you can adjust the resistance higher and higher. And I had that resistance set up to 9 and I was doing it this morning, I realized these are some of the same muscles I use swimming. It wasn't even the same thing. You see it isn't the same problem that has come, you got some new problems coming.

See, some of you all thinking, I got my partner, you guys have new problems coming. So, it wasn't the same thing but it was working out the same muscles. So, when I started swimming, it wasn't this, but it was close to this, and because I had that machine on 9 for 45 minutes, somehow the ocean was just – I couldn't even understand why am I not getting tired?

I'm not getting tired, because I have conditioned something doing something else. And some of you, when you learn how to handle that problem, well what problem? That problem, yes that one. When you learn how to handle that problem with the love of Christ, you'll be able to handle the next problem. And you'll be in it swimming just as smooth, just as tireless and other folks will be wondering, "How come they're not getting tired?"

Why don't I -- because you conditioned yourself and this is what Paul understood with the training. He wasn't talking about physical training; he was talking about training your spirit. And see it makes a difference when you're going through stuff just in how you view it. If you view it as training, on the trip we had a difficult situation that we encountered and it upset a couple of folks and I said, "Look, you need to view this as training because when you handle this move, you can handle the next thing even smoother." You need to look at this not as a tough situation, you need to look at this as training. And once they began to reframe it, it changed how they felt and they were able to continue without getting tired.

People, you've got a race to run, but you're not competing against anybody else. All you're competing against is, you and the devil. The devil wants to take your crown. So, you only got two folks you're competing against, there's you and the devil. Christ wants to give you a crown of eternal life, but we have a race to run. And we have to run and not faint and not get weary. And we will trip and we will stumble, and we will make errors. I made an error yesterday. I made the error actually before yesterday. I realized it yesterday, and when I realized I had made the error, you just need to apologize and keep going. There's another, you're going to mess up. You're going to mess up, you're going to make errors, you need to apologize, keep going and don't make the error again. So, there are things people that as we run through this life.

00:25:00

And some of us are running in place, we're trying to get in shape and the weaker your spirit is, the more it has been buffeted and battered, the more things you fear, the harder it is to get started. But it doesn't matter where you are, it just matters that you get started and that you start moving towards Christ. You start elevating your spirit, you start seeing God in every thing that happens in your world. And when you do that, it just changes

things and you're able to win that prize and you're able to put that crown on.

This is Part six of the Spiritual Exercises, Running In Place. Training you to move to where you need to go, to get and to do and to be who and what you need to do.

Nathaniel Bronner: Thank you for joining us at Brothers of the Word, because brother, you need the Word. Amen., amen.

Female: You are listening to brothersoftheword.com. This was Part six of the sermon titled, The Spiritual Exercise. Subtitled, Run in Place, by Nathaniel Bronner. This sermon is number 5851, that's 5851. To listen to thousands of free sermons or to send this sermon number 5851 to a friend, go to brothersoftheword.com.

Nathaniel Bronner: If this message has been a blessing to you and you would like to help support this ministry, go to our iwanttogive.com. That's iwanttogive.com.

Female: Listen to brothersoftheword.com often because brother, you'll need the Word.

(Music Playing 00:26:30 - 00:26:36)

00:26:37