**BEST DAYS MINISTRIES**

**Mr. Matt & Mrs. Sharon**

**Power to Persevere**

**Key Scripture: Philippians 3:14 (CEV)**

*14I run* ***(persevere)*** *toward the goal, so that I can win the prize of being called to heaven. This is the prize that God offers because of what Christ Jesus has done.*

**Prayer:***Dear LORD, thank you for giving me the power to keep trying even when life gets hard. I know I can persevere; because I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength. Amen.*

**Key thought:** *Protect your personal quiet time with God every day; to be able to persevere when tough times come.*

**Key word: PERSEVERE** (PER-SA-VEER)

**Definition:** *Steadfastness in doing something despite of opposition, discouragement, difficulty or delay in achieving success.”*

**Memory Verse:2 Timothy 4:7 –** *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”*

**The essence of** **perseverance**… Fighting the good fight, finishing the race of life, and keeping the faith the whole time.

**Philippians 3:12-14 (CEV) Running toward the Goal**

*12I have not yet reached my goal, and I am not perfect. But Christ has taken hold of me. So I keep on running and struggling to take hold of the prize. 13My friends, I don’t feel that I have already arrived. But I forget what is behind, and I struggle for what is ahead. 14I run toward the goal, so that I can win the prize of being called to heaven. This is the prize that God offers because of what Christ Jesus has done.*

Paul often uses running a race as a picture of the Christian’s life **(Acts 20:24; 1 Corinthians 9:24; 2 Timothy 4:7).** How many of you have ever run in a race? If you are intending to win the race I would guess that you would train and practice daily. You would eat foods that would strengthen your body and avoid junk food that will not make your body strong. You would place training over your other favorite activities.

**Grow: Reading Bible, Praying and Obeying**

Christians prepare to cross the finish line and spend eternity with Jesus by training our spiritual lives by growing. We grow by spending time each day in God’s Word learning about who He is, praying and seeing Him answer our prayers and when we read and obey what He is teaching us.

**Make Time for God a Priority**

Just like training for a race we must make daily time with God a priority. If we think we can do it every once in a while, it will be easier and easier not to do it at all. We won’t realize it at first but our eyes are no longer on the prize of spending eternity with Jesus but our eyes are on the prizes this world has to offer.

**When Times Get Tough…Don’t Quit**

It’s easy to persevere in the race when it’s going well, but what do we do when the race is difficult and it is tempting to quit? Make daily quiet time a priority; this helps you when you don’t think you can run the race anymore. If you read God’s Word when things are going well, you will remember the Word of God when things get tough. Jesus will give you the power to run the Christian race and finish it with joy. Remember, when it comes to finishing, being first does not cause you to win. You are a winner, when you keep on running to the very end.