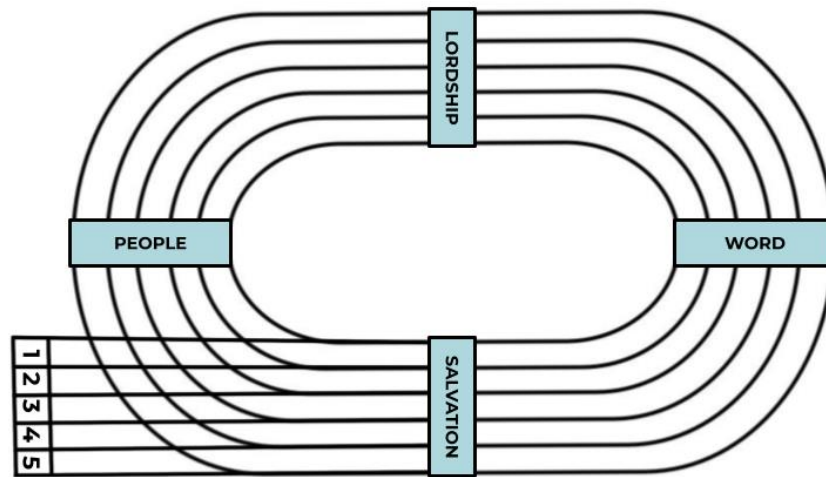


The Christian Race

One metaphor the Bible uses to describe the Christian life is a race. Scripture indicates that some start the race, but don't finish. Others run, but not in such a way as to actually win. Others run to win (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). The Bible encourages us to FINISH what we start (Luke 14:29-35). Salvation is the starting line in Christianity. Becoming like Jesus is the goal. This resource identifies the core elements of the Christian race, which are also the essential components of discipleship, and warns of the danger of starting but not finishing.



SALVATION

We must see salvation as the beginning of our Christian faith, not the finish line. *Philippians 2:12-13*

To start the "race" from anywhere other than the cross is disqualification. *Matthew 22:11-14*

To start and not finish the race could mean someone was not "saved" because the saved continue the sanctifying process of being saved. *Mark 4:16-17; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Philippians 2:12-13*

WORD

Hunger is a sign of physical and spiritual life, and the Bible describes itself as spiritual food. The lack of hunger or desire for the Word of God could be a warning sign that one may not be saved. *Deuteronomy 8:3; John 6:35; 1 Peter 2:2*

If saved, the absence of the Word of God guarantees a malnourished life and stunted spiritual growth with little to no real or lasting "fruit." *Mark 4:18-19; John 15:16; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15*

LORDSHIP

Surrender to Christ's Lordship is designed to be progressive, moving us from unbelief to belief in every area of our lives. *Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Galatians 2:20*

Resistance to or lack of surrender to the Lordship of Christ could mean that relationship with Christ never really started. *Matthew 7:21; Matthew 25:1-12*

It's possible someone could be "saved," yet unsundered to the Lordship of Christ which will result in eternal loss. (Example: unsundered regarding morality, ministry, relationships, habits, etc.) *Matthew 25:14-15, 24-29; Luke 12:47-49; Hebrews 10:26-27*

PEOPLE

As Christ-followers, we must learn to live and die for what Christ lived and died for: people. All lasting spiritual fruit and eternal reward are tied to how we treat people. *John 15:12-14; 1 John 2:3-6; 1 John 3:16*

The Great Commandment, New Commandment, and Great Commission are about people. Therefore, we cannot mature in our Christian faith without focusing on people. *Matthew 22:37-40; John 13:34-35; Matthew 28:19-20*

God will not allow us to love Him without loving His image, which is part of our conformity to Christ. *1 Corinthians 13; 1 John 4:20*

The goal of salvation is maturity in Christ (Ephesians 4:13). Hearing "well done" at the end of our lives requires that we run the race God has given each of us to run. When we choose to follow Jesus as Lord, Savior, Rabbi, and "Coach," He will lead us across that finish line of life and we will indeed hear, "well done."