

# RUN

**OPEN #1: JEREMY PLYMALE/CARL:** I was asked to preach on Super Bowl Sunday, I was pretty excited. Seeing this as a chance to witness, I sent off some facebook posts to some friends (I mean, I am nothing compared to Jeremy, but I plan on doing my best), so I sent a facebook message to a guy I will say is named Carl.

**Tom Papez** January 19 at 4:27pm  
hey dude, im preaching on super bowl sunday...

also, im praying you guys join cross haven  
-tom

**Carl** January 19 at 10:23pm **Report**  
Whats the sermon going to be on? Green Bay Packers fulfill biblical prophesies? We should be coming back this week with my in laws, see ya there

**OPEN #2: SUPER BOWL:** Today is Sunday, February 6, 2010, and for those that do not know, there will be a football game played today in (pause to look at watch) exactly 6 hours, 31 minutes, and...14 seconds.

The game is called Super Bowl XLV, and will be played between the Green Bay Packers and... another team.

The game is being played at sold out Arlington Stadium in Dallas Texas. The game should have the largest attendance in Super Bowl history, with tickets going for \$200 to simply watch in the parking lot on the jumbotron. The television audience will reach over 1 Billion, and I am very, very excited (almost like a kid in a candy store to be honest).

And I can also tell you, that nothing you or I do today...is more important than learning about savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

If you agree, give me an Amen.

**OPEN #3 LORI & HEBREWS 12:** I was talking with my wife Lori, we both found it quite odd but fun, a football coach preaching on Super Bowl Sunday, imagine those odds. And I asked her what I should preach about. She then told me the exact same verse I was already thinking of, a verse from Hebrews 12, so that will be the primary focus today.

## **BIBLE VERSE: Hebrews 12:1-2**

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

## 1. WE SHOULD RUN WITH OBEDIENCE

### A. BIBLE VERSE: 1 SAMUEL 15:1-3

*1 Samuel said to Saul, "I am the one the LORD sent to anoint you king over his people Israel; so listen now to the message from the LORD. 2 This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up from Egypt. 3 Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy<sup>[a]</sup> all that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys."*

### BIBLE VERSE: 1 SAMUEL 15:7-9

*7 Then Saul attacked the Amalekites all the way from Havilah to Shur, near the eastern border of Egypt. 8 He took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and all his people he totally destroyed with the sword. 9 But Saul and the army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves<sup>[b]</sup> and lambs—everything that was good. These they were unwilling to destroy completely, but everything that was despised and weak they totally destroyed.*

**B. DID SAUL OBEY?** Let's look at the command again. The command was to totally destroy all the enemies including the men, women, children, infants (the King James calls them sucklings). Now I don't want to go into details the meanings of the commands for its pretty harsh for us to understand. But this was the command.

Instead, what did Saul do?

"Man, look at those animals, gosh, those are some great animals. Keep those. We can find something profitable to do with those—heck, I'll even give them as a spiritual sacrifice—or at least I'll say that I will."

"As for King Agag, I can use him to further my kingdom. He has some power that I can control and manipulate." Use that...

**OBEDIENCE & LOVE:** Friends, part of running our race is that we must come to the realization that God ultimately desires our obedience far more than the sacrifices/works that can bring to the table. God wants children who will obey his commands.

In fact, John 14 defines our love for God with obedience.

### BIBLE VERSE: JOHN 14:13

*If you love me, you will obey my commands.*

## 2. WE SHOULD RUN WITH PRAISE

### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PRAISE SONG?

**COLLEGE MUSIC:** Isn't it funny how Christian music and the praises we sing change over the years? I remember my college days in the basement of the chapel on my campus. We were crazy. Yeah boy...Bret Hartwig on the guitar, Sandy Hasselbring on the overhead, shouting out to Amy Grant's "Sing Your Praise to the Lord." No kidding, we'd sing "Hail Hail Lion of Judah, How Wonderful You Are!" We even altered the notes to Jesus Loves Me and felt we were radical. The Bible says a lot about singing.

**SKATING PROMO:** Oh, by the way, off the record...being an 80s guy...I can't wait to hear the great music that could be played at next week's family skate night. I have great memories of skating around with disco lights singing one of my favorite secular songs...."Double Ore-Gato Mr. Roboto." Classic!

My family hopes you come on out and has a great family time!

### BIBLE VERSE: REVELATION 5:11-12

*11 Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. 12 In a loud voice they were saying:*

*"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"*

**HERE'S A SECRET: I CAN'T SING!** I know this will come as a shock to many of you, but actually I'm pretty bad. I think if you took a frog (you know ribid ribid), and sort of squeezed the side of his face in squishing lips together like a fish, then took a sharp needle...(well, the sound would be close to what comes out from my vocal chords from time to time).

**BROTHER'S HOUSE:** One time I was hanging out at my brother's college house in a sort of Milwaukee alley. I was singing off the edge of his balcony (something dumb...you my brown eyed girl). But then I made eye contact with a dog. The thing had like three legs, one eye, a half eaten year...I think his name was lucky...and we peered at each other. Then we both stopped singing, we looked at each other, he spoke to me and said, "hey buddy, would you stop singing, you're killing me down here!" Yeah, its that bad.

### I MAY BE A BAD SINGER, BUT...

I may be a bad singer, I admit that, but there are 2 things you cannot keep from doing...

#### A) YOU CANNOT KEEP ME FROM PRAISING THE LORD

**ALBANIA:** I was on a mission trip praising the Lord in Albania, the song was “Lord I Lift Your Name On High” in Albanian, and you know what, there wasn’t a person there NOT singing? Why? Because the members of their church had an element of danger—so they had something at stake. And the missionaries like myself were singing because we were sold out.

PEOPLE WHO RUN WITH THE LORD SING!

And the 2<sup>nd</sup> thing you cannot keep me from understanding...

**A) YOU CANNOT MAKE ME UNDERSTAND...HOW A MAN OR WOMAN WHO SAYS THEY KNOW JESUS...DOESN'T PRAISE THE LORD**

**ANGELS:** According to this verse, the angels sing. Other verses in Revelation indicate that people sing. Praising the Lord has something/everything to do with heaven. And every time I read about the great worship concerts in heaven, not once does it say...

AND THE CREATED BEINGS GATHERED AROUND THE THRONE OF HEAVEN SINGING PRAISES TO THE LORD AND ONLY A FEW STOOD STARING FORWARD AT THE MUSIC DIRECTOR.

So without speaking aloud, what is the proper response to the Lord during Praise & Worship time?

We want to run with the Lord, friends...let’s run...and running involves praise. Amen? Amen?

### **3. WE SHOULD RUN THE RACE MARKED OUT FOR US**

**BIBLE VERSE: Hebrews 12:1-2**

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

**SPECIFIC MINISTRY:** Now, when we read this verse, most of us think like...okay...the Race/the Path marked out for us. What does that mean? That means I should be a pastor? Or maybe a youth minister? I know, I know, I should be a missionary to China? Hmm...

**BUT...** But in reality, though this verse does mean this, it also means for us to check our daily path? And I understand the fact that if we really look at our daily path upright, there are several oddities that we American Christians do.

**THE ODDITIES:** To find truth, we must examine it sometimes from the opposite direction to see if we are being truthful. Though hard to explain, let me put up the concept and see what I mean (let’s have some fun with this okay?)

**MY PATH IS TO READ MY BIBLE 0 TIMES A WEEK**

**MY PATH IS TO READ MY BIBLE LESS THAN I WATCH FOOTBALL**

**MY PATH IS TO READ MY BIBLE LESS THAN I WATCH JERSEY SHORES**

**CHRIST DIED FOR THE CHURCH, SO MY PATH IS TO ATTEND ALMOST HALF THE YEAR**

**MY PATH IS TO WITNESS TO MY FRIEND SOON...FOR SURE BY 2015**

**MY PATH IS NOT ATTEND YOUTH GROUP**

#### **4. WE SHOULD RUN WITH PERSEVERENCE**

**DID YOU KNOW?** Did you know that perseverance has something to do with our salvation? Let me explain...

In December of 1989, Tom Papez said a prayer to Jesus, dedicated my life to the savior, and at that moment Christ came in and dwelt in my life, it was the greatest decision I have ever made in my entire life.

Having said that, if someone asked me if I am a Christian and why...my response would NOT be that I am a Christian because I said a prayer on one single day of my life.

Instead, I am a Christian because I was once a bully who harmed others, really harmed others. Then I committed myself to the Lord, and I became convicted of my bullying sin, stopped it, and now dedicate my life to Christ to live in accordance with ALL the scriptures.

See, my salvation is not cause I recanted a prayer, but that I committed my soul completely to the Savior BEGINNING with that prayer. Did you catch the difference?

**BIBLE VERSE: Mark 13:13**

*But he who perseveres to the end will be saved.*

**TRYING TO GO TO CHURCH?** Now allow to explain the significance of that verse and other duplicate verses saying the same thing. If someone says, "I walked the aisle as a child, hung out in youth ministry during high school, but haven't been back to church for 20 years, but I am trying to go." Is that person saved?

Of course, I don't know. But if I am to read the scriptures correctly, than persevering is one of the key fruits of a saved person. Friends, from the bottom of my heart, I need to tell you something that is vitally important to the rest of your lives...and that is how you end is a key indicator of how you live. And if you live for Jesus you will continue and end for Him. Don't you agree?

**HARD TIMES:** “But Tom, you say that, but you don’t understand my hurt, you can’t possibly understand how hard it is.”

**FROM MY HEART:**

Okay, you’re right, I don’t understand. Though I too have suffered from some enormous tragedies, and been around some awful, awful situations. After serving as a youth pastor for almost 12 years, sometimes I feel like I have experienced enough pain to last two lifetimes. Still, you’re right, I cannot comprehend, and no, I am not here to tell you that it is fair. If I could wipe the pain away of the horrible thing that happened to you, I would.

I don’t have YOUR answer, but I know something, I know THE answer. And his name is Jesus. He was born of the Virgin Mary, he suffered, died, and was buried. On the third day he rose again, he opened the gates of heaven, and to those that believe upon his name, he has written your name in the lamb’s book of life, and wishes to spend the rest of eternity with you. Amen?

Let me close with this story...

**CLOSE:**

**DEREK REDMOND STORY:** I am a big fan of the Olympics, I mean I really love the Olympics. It doesn’t even matter which sport either. I would watch the glory sports like hockey, or even the unique sport of curling in which participants slide this 50 something pound curve-shaped rock as two participants play shuffleboard with it.

Well, in 1992 I was watching the Games, as British runner Derek Redmond began running the finals of the 400 meters. Derek Redmond’s whole history of running is a history plagued by injury, plagued by setbacks. Despite owning the world record in the 400, he came up limp in the ‘88 Games and had to gracefully bow out of the competition.

While I was watching from my living room, the gun sounded as 8 great runners raced around the track. But at the halfway point, tragedy struck. A pow-pow sound was heard of in the distance as Derek Redmond went stumbling down to the ground. Does anyone know how painful it is to snap a hamstring completely in half? The pain must have been unbelievable.

But as the medics came running with a stretcher, Derek Redmond makes the decision to get up...in order to finish the race. As he was hobbling painful on one leg, it was at that moment I saw something amazing.

Out of the crowd came this man, fighting his way through security guards racing up to Redmond. Derek Redmond’s father, his hero and best friend puts one arm around his fallen son and says exactly, “Son, You Don’t Have to Finish.”

Derek Redmond retorts back, “Yes I Do, Yes I Do.”

“Then If You’re Going to Finish, I’m Going to Finish With You.” As father and son, arm in arm, circle the remaining 100 meters of that track together. That day in Barcelona, there was a first, a second, a third. But no runner received a great ovation than Derek Redmond for just finishing his race.

Friends, dear friends, when you commit your life to your spiritual father up in heaven, you pledge to finish—as he pledges to finish with you. And when you fall, when it hurts, when the best you can do is hobble on a single leg, I promise as the Bible is my witness that the Lord will finish with you.

**CLOSE OPTION:      [YOUTUBE.COM \(DEREK REDMOND-YOU RAISE ME UP VERSION\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9K111111111)**