

*My Faith Journal*, July 18, 2010  
Outcomes #6  
**Long-Distance Runners**

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**Saturday, 7/24/10 – Read Romans 5:1-5**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

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A Question to Answer: Today's reading affirms that life's difficulties are purposeful. Their aim is our growth. Their purpose is to deepen our trust and to awaken in us a deeper hope. And all of this is the work of the Spirit of God within us. The point is not simply to grit our teeth and get through life's difficult times. Patience and endurance are aimed at hope, making us more hopeful people! ... Do you feel hopeful? How is God's Spirit awakening hope in your heart?

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**Sunday, 7/25/10 – Read Psalm 130**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

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A Question to Answer: Spend some time today meditating on verses 5 and 6 of Psalm 130. When life is hard, we naturally get impatient and want the skies to clear and our mood to become more cheerful. But the hard times come to us all. And they invite us to focus ourselves on the faithfulness of God -- and to wait, to wait "trust-fully." Today, pray this prayer and make it your own: "Lord, today life seems really hard. Yet I know that you will see me through this time. I trust you. I put my trust in you. Help me to wait confidently on your good time. Amen."

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**What do I hear God saying to me today?**

**What action do I intend to take this week?**

*Each day this week, take a few minutes. Begin with PRAYER. Then READ through the Bible passage indicated on the inside of this guide. WRITE down your own thoughts, reactions, observations. ANSWER THE QUESTION to begin connecting the Bible with your life. Use additional paper or your own notebook if you need more space to write.*

**Patience**

**Monday, 7/19/10 – Read John 16:20-24**

My Observations \_\_\_\_\_

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A Question to Answer: We are all impatient people -- most of us -- most of the time. Patience, though, is one of the fruits of the Spirit. So this week let's see what the Bible says about patience. ... The Bible reminds us that some things just take time. They may take longer than we wish, but patience is remembering that some of life's processes (like childbirth) just take time. Is there something happening in your life right now that you'd like to rush along – something though that just takes its own time?

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**Tuesday, 7/20/10 – Read James 5:7-11**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

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A Question to Answer: Farmers know from experience that the growth of crops takes time. Today's reading reminds us that God will make all things right, but God will do that at the right time. So we wait, the way a farmer waits for the crops to grow. Do you find it hard to wait for God's right time? Talk with God in your prayer today about how hard it is to wait for God's right time.

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**Wednesday, 7/21/10 – Read Isaiah 40:29-31**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

A Question to Answer: For the person of faith, waiting is an act of trust -- trusting that God will fulfill God's purposes at the right time. When we relax and trust God's timing, there is a new strength that comes. Remember a time when you felt especially impatient. Were you trusting God in that moment?

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**Thursday, 7/22/10 – Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

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A Question to Answer: The Bible understands that patience -- waiting, trusting -- is purposeful. It has the purpose of strengthening us. It's a kind of spiritual training -- similar to the training an athlete undertakes to prepare for a race or a competition. ... Can you think of waiting on God as training? Would it feel different to you to think of daily trusting God and God's timing as spiritual training?

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**Friday, 7/23/10 – Read James 1:2-4**

My Observations: \_\_\_\_\_

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A Question to Answer: God's goal for us is maturity. God wants us to become fully grown-up adults in the Spirit. The difficulties we go through in life are opportunities to grow, to get stronger, to move toward maturity. Remember some difficult experience that God has seen you through. How did that experience strengthen you, make you a bigger person spiritually?