



August 23, 2021

My excitement built as I neared the end of a 5-kilometer race that wove through my beautiful hometown. Completing the race meant going the full 5 kilometers—not 4.8 or 4.9, but the full 5! Only then would I have finished the race and gone the full distance.

Jesus Christ often involved himself in people's lives, and he went the "full distance" with God's love to bring God's deliverance to their lives. God has called us to walk in love as Christ loved us (Ephesians 5:2). We can walk as Christ walked and go the full distance with God's love as we reach out to help others. Let's look at four keys to help us do this.

The first key to help us go the full distance with God's love is to prepare our hearts with God's Word.

Colossians 3:16:

Let the word of [pertaining to] Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

By our freewill decision we study and read the Word, letting it dwell, or live, in our hearts—not meagerly, but richly! This allows us to have God's gems of truth ready to lovingly share with others in every situation we encounter. God's Word never comes up short in meeting needs, but instead provides true deliverance for people in every category of life.

Another key to helping us go the full distance with God's love is to refuse to fear.

II Timothy 1:7:

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

I John 4:18:

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear....

When we walk in love, there is no room for fear. In fact, fear gets thrown out! With no fear in our lives, we are peaceful when it comes to helping others, and we aren't afraid to get involved in their lives. The word "love" shows up as a remedy to fear in both of these verses. Knowing that we can walk without fear and that God's love never fails (I Corinthians 13:8) gives us confidence to go the full distance in helping others.

The next key is to pray much.

Philippians 4:6:

Be careful [Be anxious] for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

When we pray, we let God be our partner in helping others. God is the Searcher of all hearts (Romans 8:27). There is no better teammate we could have than the One who knows the other person's heart! As we send our prayers to God, this removes any anxious thoughts we might have when helping others.

The last key to help us go the full distance with God's love is to provide others with instruction for right believing.

II Timothy 2:24:

And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient.

We can be apt to teach, providing instruction from God's Word to another believer or to someone who has not yet been taught God's Word. This may involve considerable tutoring and coaching, requiring our forbearance and long-suffering, or patience. We assist others as they grow, with the goal of helping them believe on their own with God as their sufficiency. Then *they* can have the opportunity to go the full distance with God's love and help others!

As I crossed the finish line in my 5K race, it brought me great joy to have gone the full distance. By preparing our hearts with God's Word, refusing to fear, praying much, and providing instruction for right believing, we can have great joy in going the full distance with God's love as we reach out to help others.

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