**The “Secret” To Life**

(by Kevin Heaton)

We've all heard it: *"What is the meaning of life?" "What is the secret of life?"* etc. This is man's quest. Man's mission. Finding it out. Everyone (whether they realize it or not) is searching for it. And a lot of people are looking in all the wrong places. Some are searching for it in alcohol. Others in fornication and adultery. Many in lying, stealing, and murder. A number of folks in riches and pleasures of life. A great number of people are seeking the secret of life in evolution. A meaningless beginning with a meaningless end. When one really stops to think about it, if evolution is the secret to life, what's the point? It isn't worth anything. It has no meaning. It has no purpose, hope, or LIFE. Oh yeah, it's also impossible and not true.

So what is the secret to this life? How do we answer the good times of life and endure the bad times in life? Where is there hope? Where is there peace? Where is there strength? Where is their LIFE? Paul tells us. The English Standard Version renders Paul's words in **Philippians 4:12** as ***"I have learned the secret ."*** In what context did Paul say this? Take a look: ***"Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through Him (Jesus) who strengthens me"*** (**Philippians 4:11-13**).

The secret to life is JESUS! Paul said he could make it through the bad times because of JESUS. He could enjoy the good times because of JESUS. Knowing Jesus, His love, mercy, sacrifice, power, authority, etc gives us the strength of contentment to know the true meaning and worth of life. Without God, without Jesus this life is nothing, hopeless, meaningless.

Do you know Jesus? Do you know my Lord? Do you know my Friend? Do you know He loves you? And that He'll be with you till the end? Do you know the secret to life? Have you embraced Him? Are you following Him? Are you taking strength and

guidance through Him? There is no other way. No other joy. No other hope.

***"Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light"*** (**Matthew 11:28-30**).

All glory and praise be to God the Father and our Lord JESUS CHRIST!

**Run It To Win It**

(by Keith Wishum)

A young businessman staggered into his house panting and drenched with sweat. *“What happened to you?”* his surprised wife asked. The young man gasped, *“I had a great new idea. Instead of riding, I ran all the way home behind the bus and saved $1.”* *“You dummy,”* his wife said. *“You could have run behind a taxi and saved $15!”*

My guess is that most of us don’t think either idea sounds too smart. Who wants to run home from work? For that matter, who wants to run at all? Apparently quite a few people do. Last Saturday, more than 1400 people gathered in Albany, Georgia for a little 13.1 mile run. Well actually, 631 of them thought that was too short and ran 26.2 miles. And, they weren’t saving money; they paid to run!

Often, hearing about an event like that, people say, *“Whew, I couldn’t do that.”* What they really mean is not couldn’t but wouldn’t. After all, one guy with no legs completed the marathon last week! (He pedaled a hand cycle for 26 miles.) Most people could run 13 miles; they just don’t want to do the training necessary to make that possible.

And, that’s fine. Runners get no extra stars in their crowns. But, God did use runners to teach an important point about how to live life to its fullest. The apostle Paul wrote, ***“Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training”*** (**1 Corinthians 9:25-25**).

What prizes do you want? A happy marriage? You can have it – if you’ll do the “strict training” necessary. Like to have stronger friendships? They’re yours if you’ll practice the daily routines required to cultivate relationships. Do you ever wish for a deeper spiritual life? Sorry, but wishing won’t make it so. “Strict training” will.

Runners are not normal. Normal is inactive, overweight, and looking for the easy way. Runners deliberately suffer pain to push themselves over miles of hills through blazing heat and numbing cold. Many are fanatical about never missing a day of running.

***“They do it to get a crown that will not last,”*** Paul wrote; ***“but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.”*** If our prize is more precious, shouldn’t we practice even harder than the most dedicated runner? Let’s run our race like we want to win it!