

WALKING OUT YOUR HISTORY WITH GOD

by George A Nel



TRANSPARENT AUTOBIOGRAPHY REVEALING GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

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CHAPTER 12: Finishing well – *the last mile*...

The fall of man into disobedience and sin has brought death to our planet. Every living thing on earth will die some or other time. Man brought all creation down with him under the curse of death.

Genesis 2:16-17 “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’ ”

Because of Adam’s disobedience, you and I face the inevitable: death. Each of us will eventually finish our “race” by running the “last mile”. For the unbeliever that is a tragic reality, in fact, that leads to the most horrible end... However, for the believer, death has lost its victory, and the end of our lives brings to us “the hope of glory”!¹

1 Corinthians 15:21-22,54 “For since by man (*Adam*) came death, by Man (*Jesus*) also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all (*believers*) shall be made alive... So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: ‘death is swallowed up in victory’.”

No matter who and what we are, we will all run a “last mile”. For some the finishing line will come suddenly and unexpectedly, for others it will be more of a visible “home stretch”. Some of the Biblical figures, like the apostles Peter and Paul, saw their ends approaching:

2 Peter 1:14-15 “knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease”.

2 Timothy 4:6-8 “...the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness...”

Even though eternity holds a far better future for us than this short earthly stretch, our lives on earth are extremely valuable, right down to the last day.

¹ Col 1:27 “...Christ in you, the hope of glory”.

Isaiah 46:4 “Even to your old age, I am He, and even to grey hairs I will carry you! I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you”.

For a senior person, what better promise can there be than that! And I want to encourage us, if we walk with God, our later years will carry wisdom that is much needed by the next generation. Oral Roberts once said: “Today is the first day, of the rest of your life”! The past is behind us and there is no human telling of what our future on earth can still bring!

We measure time differently from God. I remember saying to the Lord many years ago: “if only I had always been faithful to You, I would have been so much further spiritually...” And do you know what God answered me? “My plan with your life is not 1 day behind schedule! I can do in 1 day, what you cannot do in 10 years”!

God is not finished with you! He is not finished with me. In fact, we are eternal beings – we have eternal life!²

An Oxford philosopher once suggested that our lives are mere “simulations” and not real (you have probably also seen the movie “The Matrix”). Of course the entire hypothesis is imaginary and not true. Yet, realising that our current earthly lives are but a shadow of eternity, might help to not put our trust in earthly things. Behind this natural, visible world, there is a “more real” existence – the spiritual world. If you are a believer, you would know that your **spirit** was born again the moment you accepted Jesus Christ as your Saviour. In fact, the natural world we are living in is mostly determined by the spiritual realm!

The Bible is clear on this subject:

John 6:63 “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I (*Jesus*) speak to you are spirit, and they are life”.

2 Corinthians 4:17-18 “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal”.

Matthew 15:18 “But those things which proceed out of the mouth **come from**

² 1 Joh 5:11-12 “this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life...”

the heart, and they defile a man”.

Proverbs 4:23 “Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it”.³

I have considered writing this book for several years, but I’m only writing it now, in my 71st year of life. Had I reached the finish line earlier in my life, this book would never have seen the light. I say again, God is never done with us until HE calls us “Home”.

I have reason to believe that God has written a book (or “scroll”) about our individual lives, even before we were born. The question is, how well are we aligned with what He has written (prepared) for us. Have you ever thought about the words of Ephesians 2:10 “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them”?

Of Christ, the writer of Hebrews said:

Hebrews 10:5-7 “Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: ‘Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a Body you have prepared for Me’... then I said, ‘Behold, I have come – in the volume of the book it is written of Me – to do Your will, o God.’ ” (*a reference to Psalm 40:7*).

God’s “writing” of us was never to take away our freedom of will, but rather to stipulate our earthly assignment for His glory. Believe it or not, but every step of a believer is carefully watched by our loving Heavenly Father...

Proverbs 16:9 “A man's heart plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps”.
That depends, of course, whether we submit to God!

When we cross the finish line, will we also be able to say what Paul said: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith” (2 Timothy 4:7)?

My encouragement to you at the end of this book is encapsulated in the words of Hebrews 12:1-2:

“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let

³ NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by International Bible Society.

us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God”.

Epilogue

No life on earth is perfect. Even the saints of the Bible had their character flaws. The very first man on earth failed miserably. And today, God is not expecting perfection from you and me. That is why He sent the Saviour to the world, God in human form, to carry all of our sin and brokenness and pay the ultimate price to reconcile us to the Father. Now God look differently at us as believers. We are seen as completely righteous, and well-accepted in His sight.

All that God expects of us is to acknowledge Him and to obey Him in all humility:

Micah 6:8 “He has shown you, o man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?

Right from the beginning of time, it was all about intimate fellowship with God. Jesus did not come to our world to condemn us, but to save us from our sinful nature. He came to overcome evil so that we could flourish in His grace and overcome the works of the flesh.

And yes, our final victory over our sinful flesh will only be completed when we look at Him face to Face! I find so much hope and assurance in the following Scripture:

1 John 3:2 “Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

We are not winning in this life by the greatness of our efforts, NO, we overcome by the measure of how well we SEE Him! The quest is not perfection – the quest is intimate fellowship. We are changed into His image by the measure of our relationship and communion with Him.

2 Corinthians 3:18 “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord”.

As stated in the Preface, the purpose of this book was never meant to focus the spotlight on myself, but rather to encourage you to walk your own path with the Lord. Having read through the pages of this book, I hope you have seen a confirming testimony of God’s faithfulness in all circumstances. I trust that you

have also connected with the blessed Holy Spirit as your Guide through life. To God be all the glory, now and forevermore!

My story... Your story?

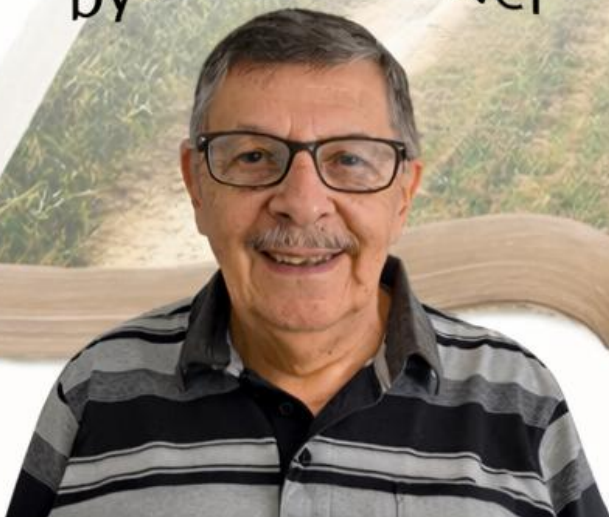
You are about to read the personal life-time story of someone having known God for 63 years. It is a real life story of highs and lows. It is a testimony of God's faithfulness. And even when we miss the mark, He has the amazing ability to turn things around for the better.

In the pages of this book you might find yourself... You might find answers to confusing questions, learn how to be more intimate in your relationship with God, learn how to deal with lack and sin.

We are all busy writing God's story. What will the page of your life look like in His book in the end?

Journey with me through a personal history of human experiences, and be encouraged – your every step matters to God!

by George A Nel



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