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# ***Which Race Are You Running?***

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*Keeping Life in Perspective*

**Willie McLaurin**

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Willie McLaurin

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## ***Dedication and Acknowledgements***

This book is dedicated to the Glory of God! Without God this writing project would have not been possible. The King of Kings and the Lord of Lords has placed some special people in my life who have shaped me and supported me beyond measure.

I thank God for my wife Antonia who has been the Model wife. She has respected me, supported me, and loved me with the Love of Christ. She is my number one cheerleader. My love for her has grown each day. "I Love you baby!"

The Bible says that our children are a gift from God. My two daughters are precious gifts that I cherish each day. They look up to me as Protector, Provider, Priest, Prophet, and Professor. But most of all they look up to me as Daddy.

David and Polly McLaurin raised me in a Godly Christian home. My love for dad and mom grows each day. They taught me the value of loving God, loving, myself, and loving others. They

taught me the difference between right and wrong and wrong and right.

Grandmother Brim is the only grandparent that is I have who is still alive. I thank God for this praying woman! She prays for me constantly.

I'm grateful for hundreds of Pastors, churches, and missionaries who have invested in my life over the years. You took a chance on me and I'm grateful for the safe places you provided for me to grow and mature in ministry.

My Tennessee Baptist Convention family has been a great platform for me to be me! I'm thankful to our convention leadership for providing me the opportunity to live out my calling.

Last but not least I want to thank the Maryland Farms YMCA and the North Rutherford YMCA leadership and trainers who have coached me along my personal journey. Lori, Dwight, Dawn, and Stacy have walked with me on the journey of TLC "Therapeutic Lifestyle Change. I pray that God will use you to make a difference in countless number of people.

## **Chapter 1**

### ***Race Matters***

*God has a race for you to run!* What a challenging and exciting thought. God has designed a purpose for your life that you can discover and fulfill. The race is living out the unique role God gives you to influence others for Christ.

This race begins, not when you are born, but when you receive Christ and his gift of complete forgiveness. The race for me began twenty three years ago when I asked Christ to forgive me of my sins and come into my life and lead me. That decision was the end of my lostness—but it was also the starting gun of the race God set before me, and I'm still running that race!

My race has revolved around developing and encouraging leaders. Your race will be different than mine—but it will always revolve around showing and sharing Christ's love both to people who don't know Him and people who do. It is a race whose focus and end is the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the Christian race.

There is another race raging around us, the world's race. In this race the final aim is not the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not a race that is run focused on Him. Instead it is a race with various shallow "goals". It is a race for financial success, career success, self-fulfilment, and influence. It is a race for the "nice, beautiful and settled life". Please don't think that I am anti-prosperity because I will be the first to admit that I like to have the better things of life. Those "better things" assist me in fulfilling my calling and purpose. However, the pursuit of things as your ultimate goal will leave you empty. Sadly, it is this race that billions of people are running every day, filling shopping malls, filling houses with things, things, and more unnecessary things. It is this race that people are running getting into more debt to satisfy the American dream. Only to discover its end result is emptiness and stress. It is this race where so many are seeking satisfaction and fulfilment only to find that the reward for this race is less than satisfying!

Thousands of people are running in the wrong race. Many of us have bought and are running for the "beautiful, blessed, problem free life". Many people believe in a god that is not the God of the Bible, but rather the gentle grandfather that sends blessing and never holds us accountable. So many Christians need to repent and return back to the Kingdom race. It is time to stop

putting up with the internal emptiness and turn to the source of all life and truth.

In my short career as a runner I have found that you are either running one of the two types of races. You are running a sprint or marathon. A sprint is an act or an instance of sprinting or running a short race at top speeds. So many people have opted for the temporary pleasures of the sprint and fail to endure. The Marathon is an event or activity that requires prolonged effort or endurance. This race is a metaphor of the Christian race. It is a race of endurance maintaining focus until Jesus returns.

It is not possible to run two races at the same time. It is not possible to serve two masters. It is not possible to be up on two horses at the same time. You have to recognize which race you are running. Yes we go to church every Sunday. But this by itself says nothing. Many of us go to church, go through the motions, but by Monday evening do not remember what Sunday's sermon was about. I believe the best indicator of the race that we are running is the fruit that is bearing in your life. Do you feel full of the power and life of God or do you feel empty and disorientated? Getting closer to God brings life. Getting closer to the world brings death.

## **You Choose**

The race that you run really matters! It matters because it is the difference between happiness or joy, turmoil or peace, life or death. You Choose! But as you choose remember that God is the only source of life. Jesus said in Matthew 16:25 those that seek their life will lose it and those who will lose their lives will find it. The Lord said in Jeremiah 2:13 that his people had forsaken Him the source of the living waters and had opened holes that were impossible to keep any water. God is the only source of living waters. He is the only one from whom life and peace comes. If God seems very remote could it be that you are running the wrong race? Could it be that you have bought the wrong gospel? Absolutely yes! The further we run in the wrong race, the further from God we will be. But there is a path of return. Let's join the prophet and examine ourselves and let's return to the Lord. As the prodigal son did, let's come to ourselves and let's return to the Father's house. Determine in your heart that you're going to run a winning race. Join your voice with Joshua of the Bible and choose ye this day who you will serve. The race that you run really matters! Choose today to get in the race and make a difference in your own life and the life of those around you!

## About the Author



**Willie McLaurin**

Willie's heartbeat is forged in developing and encouraging leaders to live out their calling to the Glory of God. Willie is highly sought after as a seminar leader, revivalist & motivational speaker. Local, national, civic, and religious institutions have recognized this God-given gift. This gift has afforded him the opportunity to minister in a variety of capacities. He has ministered in Africa, Belize, Brazil, Mexico, Paris, Netherlands, and Jamaica. Willie is a native of Roseboro, North Carolina. Willie serves as a Ministry Strategist with the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, Brentwood, TN. Willie's sixteen plus years of ministry has afforded him the opportunity to study at North Carolina Central

University, Saint Thomas Theological Seminary, and Duke University. Those years also have allowed Willie to serve as a Youth Pastor, Singles Minister, Executive Pastor, Interim Pastor, and Senior Pastor. Willie currently resides in Nolensville, Tennessee. He is married to Antonia and they are the proud parents of two daughters, Sierra and SiChanna.

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