“Run the Race God has set before you”
Each passage refers to running.
1. Accept that life is unpredictable (Ecclesiastes 9:11)
 a) We wrongly assume that the fastest, strongest, wisest, most discerning & able will always win and
 come out on top. This is not always the case, because time & chance overtake us all. Ecc. 3:1-11 tells
 God has His appointed times & He makes everything appropriate/beautiful in its time. This includes
 the unexpected suddenness of death (v12).
 b) This uncertainty & mystery should keep us humble & accepting of when the unexpected happens.
 c) We should also want to make the most of what we can do well (vs. 10) and works that God wants to
 do through us (John 9:4). We might not be the fastest runner, but we can still run the race God gives.
2. Stop running your sinful race (Isaiah 59:1-8)
 a) God’s people wondered why His deliverance delayed and began to question His might or awareness
 (vs. 1).
 b) The problem was not with God but His people (v2). “Hand, ear, face” used anthropomorphic of God,
 to contrast with our hands, fingers, lips, tongue, feet, thoughts. Their deeds, words & thoughts were
 sinful (vs.3-8). “Their feet run to evil” (v7) captures eagerly running a sinful race for selfish gain. This
 is not what God has for you.
 c) This description is true of everyone (Romans 3:15-17). Each one needs to confess that this is their
 racecourse & it has been anything but a path of peace (inwardly or outwardly, v8). The Lord hears
 such a sincere prayer & is able to save.
3. God’s mercy is not earned (Romans 9:15-16)
 a) After the golden calf sin, Moses sought God’s forgiveness and then requested to see God’s glory. The
 Lord responded with, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom
 I have compassion.” (Exodus 33:19) God’s mercy & compassion was not based on Moses’ desire or
 hard work/running with great effort, but on God’s free & gracious choice to have this experience.
 b) Experiencing God’s mercy & compassion does not originate from our desire for it or running after it
 with great effort (Isaiah described the opposite). It comes out of God’s free and gracious choice. The
 initiative comes from Him, not us. Every person saved from his/her sins has to point to God’s free
 gracious choice rather than how they ran.
 c) In a similar fashion, the privilege of where a group or Christian is placed in the race (Jacob
 preeminence rather than Esau, v. 11-12), comes from God rather than our desire or exerting great
 effort. This we are to accept with gratefulness & run hard.