

Go The Distance

This song was on the movie Disney Hercules that was released in 1997. Hercules sings this song as he is going to his father Zeus' temple. Let's read the words.

I have often dreamed of a far-off place where a great warm welcome will be waiting for me. Where the crowds will cheer when they see my face as a voice keeps saying this is where I'm meant to be. I will find my way, I can do the distance. I'll be there some day if I can be strong. I know every mile will be worth my while when I go the distance I'll be right where I belong. Down an unknown road to embrace my fate. I know that road may one day lead me to you and a thousand years will be worth the wait. It may take a lifetime but somehow I'll see it through. I will find my way, I can go the distance. I'll be there some day if I can be strong. I know every mile will be worth my while. When I go the distance I'll be right where I belong. But to look beyond the glory is the hardest part for a hero's strength is measured by his heart. I will beat the odds and I can go the distance. I will face the world and I'll be fearless, proud, and strong. I will please my God, I can go the distance till I find my hero's welcome right where I belong. I know every mile will be worth my while, I'll be right where I belong.

Today, I want to use this song to talk about us going the distance — of going back home like Hercules is wanting to do, and that home is Heaven.

Dreaming Of A Far-Off Place

Don't we all do this? We dream of going places all the time — maybe we think of Rome, Italy, Paris, or maybe places closer to home like Florida, California, New York, or bringing it back to the great state of Texas: San Antonio or Austin. You know places that would take us a whole day just to get there or instead, picture your dream home. What does it have? Lots of bedrooms, a hot tub, beautiful kitchen, and maybe even a man cave for all you guys out there, but the point is we have dream places that we hope to go to one day. I know for me, I dream of all these places, but the one I think about most is the greatest home we could ever have, and that's Heaven. The Bible tells us of so many great things about our home with our heavenly Father. In Revelation 4:3-6, John tells us, "And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads. Out of the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and pearls of thunder. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God; and before the throne there was something like a sea of glass, like crystal; and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind." It sounds amazing doesn't it? Just this small glance of what Heaven will look like already has me excited and ready to go. What about you? Do you want to go to your dream home?

The Road

If we are going to go home, we have a road that we all must travel and that is our life. We have to make sure that our bags are packed and that we are ready to go back home. We have a race to run, we have a life to live in order for us to make it back home. In Hebrews 12:1-3, the Hebrew writer tells us, "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." In 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, Paul tells us, "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified." Paul also tells us in 2 Timothy 4:7-8, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is a laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing."

Facing The World And Pleasing Our God

Like we just discussed, we have a race to run, but it's not going to be easy. Even Paul tells us that in the last passage we just looked at in 2 Timothy 4:7-8 where he said that he fought the fight and finished the course. What exactly did Paul go through? In 2 Corinthians 11:23-28, Paul answers that question. He says, "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as one beside himself) I more; in labors more abundantly, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from my countrymen, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in labor and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, there is that which presses upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches."

Almost every one of the apostles gave their lives for the cause of Christ. Think about what all the Christians went through in Rome. So many gave their lives because they said they were Christians and now let's think about today overseas. On the news we hear about our brethren giving their lives for saying that they are Christians and over in China, you can't worship God openly or you will be killed or thrown in prison. I thank God every day for the religious tolerance we have here in America that we can worship our God openly without being threatened, but we never know; one day our country

might start persecuting us and it seems like it is going that way. We are ridiculed for speaking out against homosexuality, people living together without getting married, people having children out of wedlock, and so much more and it's only going to get worse. We have to make sure that we are ready for whatever happens here if we want to please our Father and go home to Heaven.

Worth All The While

In 2 Timothy 4:8, Paul said, "... in the future there is a laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing." Yes it's going to be tough and yes it's going to be hard, but everything that we go through here on this earth will be worth going home to our Father in Heaven where there will be no more tears and no more sorrow. We will be home because that's what Jesus has told us if we obey the word of God. He has gone and prepared mansions for us (John 14:2). As we can see even from this Disney song, we have a home waiting on us. We don't know when we will be able to get there, but we do know that we have a road we have to travel and no matter how long or how far we have to go, we have to keep going. No matter how tough it gets, we must be strong and when the time comes that we are able to go home, we have to be ready.

Joseph Lachausse