

# What to Do When You Hit the Wall

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Runners know all about breaking through that moment when they ‘hit the wall’ and cannot go another step...but then they do it! Whenever we try to accomplish a goal, make progress in learning, or move forward up a steep hill of some kind, we often hit the wall. We may not be at the end of our physical endurance, but it takes endurance to keep going in the face of interference, defeat, disappointment, distractions, and actual opposition. Much of the work of spiritual growth is practice dealing with what impedes us. We’re told to “run the race” and “win the prize” (Heb. 12:1,2; 1 Cor. 9:24-27), but the course is full of obstacles.



I’ve noticed that, among Christians who consciously seek spiritual growth, the big hurdles drive them right to God in prayer. Get cancer, get fired, get openly persecuted, and your first thought is, “Get grace!” When it’s huge, you’re on your knees right away.

The petty interference, the little things that force you to change course, the irritating delays and details, the minor pains with amazing power to distract – these are more likely to cause you to stumble, because they expose your biggest weakness: thinking you can handle things on your own. But God’s strength is made perfect in your weakness (cf 2 Cor. 12:9), and He expects you to learn that you need His help every bit as much in this daily obstacle course as you do in the few great races of life.



What you perceive as a barrier, or as Satan’s interference with your vocation, or as the failure of others to support your efforts (though it may actually *be* all those things, too), God perceives as your training ground. Where else could you practice – perhaps many times a day – giving back your work to Him? He has promised to “work in you both to will and to do” whatever He wants you to accomplish (Phil. 2:13), so it’s safe to hand it all over to Him when anything impedes your progress.

Today’s work may not be “teaching kids history,” or “writing a sermon,” or “running a business,” however good those goals may be. *Today’s* work may be “accepting the rejection slip with grace,” “forgiving the co-worker for undermining the project,” or “not cursing the driver whose texting just caused an accident that snarled up a whole day’s schedule and a whole month’s budget!” “Be still, and take heart, and wait on the Lord” (Ps. 27:14, Ps. 37:7) to get you over this speed bump, through this trial, or to the light at the end of this tunnel.

Today’s work, whatever else it may be, is to ask for God’s help, His grace and guidance, to return the soul to Him through every demand made upon it – even if the demand is to let go of a worthy goal. Frustration is the chronic state of impatient souls. You are willing to run the race, but are you willing to run it according to God’s timing?

Progress is good, but interference may be even better. God is not just using you to get good things accomplished, but is using that work and those obstacles to get YOU formed, strengthened, and filled with grace. Bless you as you learn to receive every one of these little obstructions and hindrances as a reminder from God to seek His perfect peace.

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*Editor's Note: For more of Charlotte's insights, check out her recently published book about the Sabbath rest, [Souls at Rest: An Exploration of the Eucharistic Sabbath](#)*

Art: Berlin-Steglitz, Skulptur vor der Matthäuskirche: Dieter Popielaty: *Leid an der Mauer (Suffering at the Wall)*, Dieter Popielaty, Sculpture in front of the St. Matthew Church:Berlin-Steglitz), 1965, Andreas Praefcke, own work, April 2009, CCA; *Lorbeerkranz (Golden laurel wreath)*, probably from Cyprus, 4th/3rd century BC, Andreas Praefcke, April 2007, PD-Worldwide; Corcovado National Park, Peninsula de Osa, Costa Rica, José R, 2010, CCA, Wikimedia Commons.