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# Wake Up Call

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## Building Up

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If you watch a city marathon you will observe thousands of people at various levels of health and fitness push themselves for up to six or seven and occasionally eight hours to make it around the course. Some will drop out, but it is amazing to see how many make it.

If you watch a major sports match you will observe the 'home advantage' effect where teams perform so much better at home than away.

While you have been watching the match the marathon runners are still running. Some are beginning to tire and struggle. At this point you will often hear voices from the side of the road shouting and cheering and spurring the wilting runners on towards their goal. It's not just the voices of strangers but friends and family turn out to cheer on their heroes for the day. The onlookers who have been runners themselves have special sympathy for the effort of the participants shouting them on with heartfelt fervour.

Each day and in each city (and town and village) there is a marathon. For five, six or even eight to ten hours a day people of various degrees of skill and ability push themselves through a race. The starting gun (alarm clock) signals the beginning and the goal is to make it to the same bed that night.

How much better the runners run when the crowds cheer. How much better still when there is a friendly face in the crowd shouting courage and giving encouragement. It creates the home advantage effect.

If encouragement is to work it needs to come from all sides and all quarters. It is great to receive the encouragement of strangers who just recognise the effort and wish you well or honour you for trying. So as a person of faith encourage the strangers on the phone, or in the shop or online - you may never meet or even know them but encourage them.

It is even more powerful to receive encouragement from a familiar face - a colleague, an employer or team mate. So as people of faith encourage those you know and work with.

And if you receive encouragement from someone who has been through what you are going through, it is powerful because it means you can make it - others have - so as a person of faith pass on your encouragement to those who are following your path.

The feeling of encouragement is warm, moving, inspiring, uplifting and exhilarating. It is like the world has become a better place - a utopian land where just for a moment the hassle subsides and it is a paradise gained.

*TopTips?*



*see below*

Bible Reading

There is a little metaphor in the letter to the Hebrew Christians which encourages us to run the race because we are surrounded by a big crowd. Some interpreters see the crowd as previous medal winners looking on in adjudication or scrutinising our performance, style, form and technique. I suggest that runners would want to hide from such a crowd rather than run well. It is more likely that the writer had the 'home advantage' crowd in mind. Shouting encouragement, cheering us on, including family and friends and those who were runners themselves this crowd is all routing for us.

And at some home matches a voice booms out over the PA system joining in the chorus of approval. And as you run the voice of the Father rises above the crowd and says in a loud voice: 'you are my beloved child; with you I am very pleased'.

All these voices encourage us as we run our daily marathons. And we should aim to be the givers as well as the receivers in the encouragement loop.

But if you listen very carefully you can hear the voice of the Champion of Champions. A peerless athlete himself who ran a perfect race. He pushed himself further and harder than any runner before or since and His exhausted but exhilarating words can be heard to say: 'I tell you the truth, today you will be with me' - and the place He invites us to experience - 'paradise'.

Run well,

Geoff Shattock

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**Here is some Biblical background for this week's Wake Up Call**

## **Hebrews 12 v 1-3**

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. <sup>2</sup> Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup> Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

# Wake Up News

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- **New 'WorkTalk TopTips' pages.** We are inviting you to share your TopTips this month on coping with 'Pressure and Stress'. At the end of each month we will be working on a new resource to create a series of WorkTalk TopTips combining WorkNet members' insights with Geoff Shattock's WorkTalk TopTips. Click [here](#) to post your TopTip.

- **WorkNet** is **ten** years old this year we are now planning celebrations and will invite your input -more to follow
- **WAKE UP CALL [ARCHIVES](#) HAS BEEN UPDATED THERE ARE NOW OVER 230 PAST EDITIONS**
- **Worktalk DVD set - Available NOW - Order your copy of the WorkTalk DVD set now click [here](#) to order**
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Also remember to have a look at the Bible sections for the biblical background to your Wake Up Call

**WorkNet, 56 Baldry Gardens, London SW16 3DJ**  
**T: +44 (0)20 8764 8080**  
<http://www.worknetuk.org/>  
[comms@worknetuk.org](mailto:comms@worknetuk.org)