

## Go For the Gold

1Corinthians 9:24-27

**THEME:** Paul used sporting events to describe the spiritual life. He especially used the foot race. Believers are compared to runners in a race. Are you ready to run so that you may obtain the prize?

### I. THE COURSE (Acts 20:24)

A. There is a Course for the Believer. *"...so that I might finish my course..."*

B. Each Course is Personal – *"my course"*

- 2Corinthians 4:1 *"—seeing we have THIS ministry..."*
- Acts 9:15 *"for he is a chosen vessel unto me..."*
- 1 Thessalonians 5:24 *"Faithful is He that calleth you who also will DO it."*
- Ephesians 2:8-10 We are *"created in Christ Jesus unto good works."*

C. The Course Can be Finished

- You cannot undo past sins and wrong choices.
- God can use you where you are if you will take the course that He gives you.
- You don't have to do everything perfectly to finish your course.

### II. THE CROWD (Hebrews 12:1) *"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses..."*

A. They Challenge us by their Testimonies

- They're not watching you. Their faithful lives provide a witness to you, proving that you also can live a life of faith and finish your course.
- **Hebrews 11:33-12:1.** Here is the challenge.

B. They Cheer us with their Encouragement

- Luke 15:10 *"there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."*
- 1 Peter 1:12 *"which things the angels desire to look into."*
- 1 Corinthians 11:10, women submit to God's authority *"because of the angels."* They're watching.

### III. THE CONTROL

A. Temperate in All Things (1Corinthians 9:25-27)

- We've got to exercise self-control in all areas of our life so we can focus on doing what God has called us to do.
- Participating in things that are *"lawful unto me"* (1 Cor 6:12) can waste time and take control of my life if I allow them to. Self-control is important in those areas.

B. Run the Race with Patience (Hebrews 12:1)

- Pace yourself. Save some strength for the end. Don't burn yourself out by overdoing it in the beginning.
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#### IV. THE COMPETITION

##### A. Run to Obtain the Prize (1Corinthians 9:24)

- Not a competition against fellow believers (2 Cor 10:12).
- When you repent and get right with God, you revenge yourself against the devil and all disobedience (2 Cor 7:11, 10:6). You win the battle.

##### B. Lay Aside Every Weight (Hebrews 12:1)

- Sin will hinder your success in your race.

##### C. Don't Look Behind You (Philippians 3:13-14) "forgetting those things which are behind..."

- Don't look back to the person you used to be or the sins of your past. That is going to cause you to put limitations on your service to God. Keep looking forward, eye on the finish line.

#### V. THE CHEATS

##### A. Those Who Run in Vain (Galatians 2:2; Philippians 2:15-16)

- If you don't serve God according to His instructions, you will be wasting your time. You can't win.

##### B. Those Who Run Unlawfully (2Timothy 2:5)

- If you serve God your way while ignoring God's way, that is "unlawful." Your service won't be recognized or appreciated in the day of judgment (Mt 7:23).

##### C. Those Who Quit the Race (Galatians 5:7; 6:9)

- Gal 5:7 *Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?*
- Gal 6:9 *And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*

##### D. Those Who become Castaways (1Corinthians 9:27)

#### VI. THE COMPLETION

##### A. By Looking Unto Jesus (Hebrews 12:2-3)

- Remembering what Jesus did for you will inspire you to do your very best.

##### B. The Joy Set Before Us (Hebrews 12:2; Acts 20:24)

- Meditating on our glorious future with the Lord will encourage us to keep going.

##### C. By Finishing the Course (2Timothy 4:7)

- *"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."*

#### VII. THE CROWN

##### A. The Prize (1Corinthians 9:24)

##### B. The Mark (Philippians 3:14)

##### C. The Masteries (2Timothy 2:5)

##### D. The Crown (2Timothy 4:7-8)

- *"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day."*