

*Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize. 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (NIV)*

## Olympic Effort

**Your life of faith is like a race. Do you want to run well as you follow me? Are you running your race of faith with a desire to win?** Yes, I want to run well as I follow you. Yes, I am running to win. I don't want anything to distract me. I won't look left or right or behind me. My eyes will look straight forward as I follow you. I know that you will help me to run the race of faith. I know that you will make me able to win the race of faith. **Yes, I will.**

**What might distract on your race of faith? What might hinder you from running well?** Things that are of this world might hinder me from running well. **Like what?** The lust of the flesh might hinder me from running well. I will need to make sure that lustful and fleshly desires don't pull me off course and prevent me from running well. I will need to separate myself from any situations and circumstance that might powerfully tempt me. **That's true. What else?** The lust of the eyes might hinder me from running well. I will need to be very careful about what I allow my eyes to see. Many times I have wanted what I couldn't have or certainly didn't need. I will need to stop looking at whatever might allure and entice to want what I don't have and don't need. **That's right. What else?** The pride of life might hinder me from running well. I will need to be very careful that I am not attracted and drawn to prideful things in life. **Like what?** I have been tempted by power and prestige. I have wanted to be someone that does great things. These desires can lead me down the wrong path and take me off of the course you have laid out for me. **Yes, They can. You will do well to be on guard against any of these evils. You are right. They do have the potential to hinder you from running and finishing well in the race of faith.**

**How are you in training as you follow me? Are you giving an Olympic effort in your training as you follow and serve me?** I'm not sure. I do know that I am fully available to whatever training you have in mind for me. I will go anywhere you guide me. I will do anything you ask of me. I am meeting with you daily in your word. I know that you are teaching and training me. If you have more in mind I will welcome it with all my heart and mind and soul and strength. I am at your service. I am running hard in my life of faith as I follow you. **Yes, you are running hard and well. I do have more in mind for you. Follow me.** Yes Lord, I will.

*Lord, I have entered the race. I love you with all my heart and soul and mind and strength. You are my Savior and Lord. I am in training as I follow and serve you. Let nothing distract me from running well. Let nothing disqualify me from receiving the prize. Amen*

**Therefore** *Not...Running Aimlessly*

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

NIV 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

**Therefore** *Run With Purpose*

Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.

NLT 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

**Therefore** *Not Run Aimlessly*

Do you not know that in a race the runners all compete, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one. So I do not run aimlessly, nor do I box as though beating the air; but I punish my body and enslave it, so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified.

NRSV 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

**Therefore** *Do Not Run Uncertainly*

Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but [only] one receives the prize? So run [your race] that you may lay hold [of the prize] and make it yours. Now every athlete who goes into training conducts himself temperately and restricts himself in all things. They do it to win a wreath that will soon wither, but we [do it to receive a crown of eternal blessedness] that cannot wither. Therefore I do not run uncertainly (without definite aim). I do not box like one beating the air and striking without an adversary. But [like a boxer] I buffet my body [handle it roughly, discipline it by hardships] and subdue it, for fear that after proclaiming to others the Gospel and things pertaining to it, I myself should become unfit [not stand the test, be unapproved and rejected as a counterfeit].

AMP 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

**Therefore** *Run...Not Without Aim*

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.

NASB 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

**Therefore** *Do Not Run Aimlessly*

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

ESV 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

**Therefore** *Run...Not With Uncertainty*

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

NKJV 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

**Therefore** *Running Hard For The Finish Line*

You've all been to the stadium and seen the athletes race. Everyone runs; one wins. Run to win. All good athletes train hard. They do it for a gold medal that tarnishes and fades. You're after one that's gold eternally. I don't know about you, but I'm running hard for the finish line. I'm giving it everything I've got. No sloppy living for me! I'm staying alert and in top condition. I'm not going to get caught napping, telling everyone else all about it and then missing out myself.

MSG 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

**Therefore** *Run Straight To The Goal*

In a race everyone runs, but only one person gets first prize. So run your race to win. To win the contest you must deny yourselves many things that would keep you from doing your best. An athlete goes to all this trouble just to win a blue ribbon or a silver cup, but we do it for a heavenly reward that never disappears. So I run straight to the goal with purpose in every step. I fight to win. I'm not just shadow-boxing or playing around. Like an athlete I punish my body, treating it roughly, training it to do what it should, not what it wants to. Otherwise I fear that after enlisting others for the race, I myself might be declared unfit and ordered to stand aside.

TLB 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

**Therefore** *Do Not Run Without A Goal*

You know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize. So run to win! All those who compete in the games use self-control so they can win a crown. That crown is an earthly thing that lasts only a short time, but our crown will never be destroyed. So I do not run without a goal. I fight like a boxer who is hitting something—not just the air. I treat my body hard and make it my slave so that I myself will not be disqualified after I have preached to others.

NCV 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

# Not... Running Aimlessly

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Week \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Therefore – 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

**In Context:** Read 1 Corinthians 9

**Begin With Prayer:**

***Here I am Lord. I Am Listening.***

**Meditating On God's Word:** ***(What is God speaking to your heart?)***

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize. 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (NIV)

**Considering The Words:** ***(What words speak to your heart?)***

Do you | not know that | in a race | all | the runners run, | but | only one | gets | the prize? | Run | in such | a way | as to | get the prize. | Everyone | who competes | in | the games | goes into | strict training. | They | do it | to get | a crown | that will | not last; | but we | | do it | to get | a crown | that will | last forever. | Therefore | I do not | run like | a man | running aimlessly; | I do not | fight | like a man | beating | the air. | No, | I beat | my body | and | make it | my slave | so that | after I | have preached | to others, | I myself | will not | be disqualified | for | the prize. 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (NIV)

**Praying The Scripture:** ***(What prayer from your heart will you write?)***

Lord, I have entered the race. I love you with all my heart and soul and mind and strength. You are my Savior and Lord. I am in training as I follow and serve you. Let nothing distract me from running well. Let nothing disqualify me from receiving the prize. Amen

**What It Means:** ***(What questions speak to your heart?)*** *(Suggested questions for small group discussion are in bold)*

How has loving the Lord with all your heart motivated your desire to run well as you follow and serve Him?

**What are distractions that might prevent you from running well as a follower of Jesus Christ?**

How are you making sure that nothing distracts you from running well as you follow and serve Jesus Christ?

**How are you allowing yourself to be rigorously trained so you can run well as a follower of Jesus Christ?**

**How are you making an Olympic sized effort in running well as a follower of Jesus Christ?**

How do you know that you are not running aimlessly as you love, follow and serve Jesus Christ?

Why is it important to run well, right past the finish line, in your life of faith in Jesus Christ?

**Living It Out:** ***(What action step is God guiding your heart to take?)***

Train hard and run well as a follower of Jesus Christ so that nothing will disqualify you at the finish line.

**Seeing It Happen:** ***(What are you trusting God for in your heart?)***

Have faith that the Lord will help you to run to win the race of faith as you love, follow and serve Him.

**Get Ready To Share:** ***(What can you share with others from your heart?)***

Share with another person or your small group how you are in strict training as a follower of Jesus Christ.

**Close With Prayer:** ***Quiet Yourself Before The Lord***

*Pause And Offer Prayers Of...*

*With An Attitude Of Faith Listen To What The Lord Wants To Say To You*

Adoration... \_\_\_\_\_

Thanksgiving... \_\_\_\_\_

Confession... \_\_\_\_\_

Intercession... \_\_\_\_\_

Petition... \_\_\_\_\_

**Journal**

*As You Quiet Yourself Before The Lord*

**What Do You Want To Say To Me Lord?**

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**What Prayers Are You Praying Today?**

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**Prayer Of Blessing**

*(What Prayer Of Blessing Can You Pray For Another?)*

*May you go into rigorous training so you can run well as a follower of Jesus Christ.*

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**Prayer To Carry**

*(What Prayer Would You Like To Carry Throughout Your Day?)*

*Lord, I will allow myself to be trained by you so I can run well and finish strong as I follow and serve you.*

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**What Do You Want To Remember About Today?**

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**A Question To Ask God**

*(What Would You Like To Ask God?)*

*Lord, how do you want to train me today so I can run well and finish strong as your follower?*

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