

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)

Run Well

That is what I want to do. **What do you want to do?** I want to run well and finish strong as your follower. **That is a very good goal. That is a great purpose and plan. How will you run well and finish strong as my follower?** I know one thing, for sure. **What's that?** I won't run well and finish strong without your help. You will keep me on track. You will help me to stay on course. **Yes, I will. In fact, you should know that I am praying for you. I want you to run well and finish strong. We both want the same thing.** That is not surprising. **Why is that?** You placed this desire in my heart. **Do you believe that I will also grant this desire that I have given to you?** Yes, I do. **That's good.**

What role do you play in your running well and finishing strong? I need to stay on course. I need to keep on track. **What does that mean?** I need to distance myself from anything that will hinder my running well as your follower. **How will you do that?** I will keep my heart and mind and life focused on you. When hindrances of any kind seek to entrap me and weigh me down, I will throw them off as I run to you. You will lead me. You will guide me. You will guard and protect me. **Yes, I will, you can count on me. What else?** I need to enter strict training. **What will that look like in your daily life?** In my daily life with you, I will meet with you in prayer. I will meet with you in worship. I will meet with you in your word. I will meet with you in service. I will meet with you in fellowship. In every way, I will live and walk in an intimate relationship with you. In our time together, I am sure that you will direct all my training. **Yes, I will.** Thank you, Lord.

Lord, it is my desire to run well and finish strong as your follower. I want to bear and abundance of fruit for your kingdom and bring glory to your name. With that in mind, I will distance myself from any hindrances and enter strict training as I follow you. Amen

The Virtuous Life*Strict Training*

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

The Virtuous Life*Disciplined In Their Training*

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

The Virtuous Life*Self-Control*

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

The Virtuous Life*Restricts Himself*

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

The Virtuous Life*Exercises Self-Control*

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

The Virtuous Life*Exercises Self-Control*

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

The Virtuous Life*Temperate In All Things*

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

The Virtuous Life*Train Hard*

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

The Virtuous Life*Deny Yourself*

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

The Virtuous Life*Use Self-Control*

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

Strict Training

Year _____ Week _____ Day _____ Date _____

The Virtuous Life – 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?)***

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

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

Lord, it is my desire to run well and finish strong as your follower. I want to bear and abundance of fruit for your kingdom and bring glory to your name. With that in mind, I will distance myself from any hindrances and enter strict training as I follow you. Amen

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

What will help or hinder you to run well as a follower of Jesus Christ?

How are you distancing yourself from what will hinder you from running well as a follower of Christ?

What results would half-hearted, hap-hazard, or inconsistent training yield as a follower of Christ?

What would entering strict training as a follower of Christ look like in your daily life?

What goal would you have in mind to enter strict training as a follower of Christ?

What spiritual disciplines are part of your strict training as a follower of Christ?

How has your life born fruit for the kingdom of God as you have entered strict training as a follower of Christ?

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

Enter strict training so you will run well as a follower of Christ.

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

Have faith that entering strict training will help you to run well as a follower of Christ.

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

Share with another person or your small group what spiritual disciplines are part of your strict training.

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?

What Prayers Are You Praying Today?

Prayer Of Blessing

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

May enter strict training so you will run well as a follower of Jesus Christ.

Prayer To Carry

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

Lord, I will enter strict training so I will run well as your follower.

What Do You Want To Remember About Today?

A Question To Ask God

(What Would You Like To Ask God?)

Lord, how can I enter strict training and run well as your follower?
