

**Christ Community Covenant Church**  
**“Running for the Prize” 1 Corinthians 9:24-27**  
**Pastor Curt Vogt - May 24, 2015**

Intro: What to preach on? Current Bible reading; turning (being) 50; super-heroes; NO...running (Bolder Boulder tomorrow)

Several illustrations & allusions in the NT to running a race

Using the familiar to teach . Isthmian Games in Corinth, 2<sup>nd</sup> only to the Olympics

Passage: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

BIG Illustration:

In a race there are 3 kinds of runners . *show pictures*

- Just for Fun
- Recreation/Fitness
- Serious (Elite) Athlete

Which group will the winner come from? ð duh . serious athlete

Life . spiritual life or Christian life or life as a Jesus follower . can be a lot like running a race

Paul says: +Run in such a way as to win the prize.+(Or race to win.)

For clarity: It's not about competition or only one winner or even winning at all

Paul seems to be indicating that in our life as a Jesus follower we should get in that group

Be in that group that can win the race

We all (at some level) can/should get in that group

The significant correlation between the illustration and life is *training* or approach (or outlook/attitude ð ) vs. 25

**\*We can experience getting in that group when we recognize some important aspects:**

1) It takes Discipline vs. 27

Do the %los+& don't do the %lon;ts but also

Do some things you don't want to do

Don't do some things you do want to do

Do all this even (especially) when you don't feel like it

Big Ones: read Bible, pray, follow commands/direction

- Discipline involves routine & repetition

- Discipline involves control/self-control

2) It takes Purpose vs. 26

- Not aimlessly or lackadaisical or apathetic or glib or ð .

- Focus . %Keep Eyes on the Prize+

Illustration: prize = winning

Life: prize = being/becoming all God wants you to be/become . hearing %well done+

~ Illustration/quote from elite runners: %What kind of music do you listen to?+NO music

As a checkpoint reference consider the goal of each group in the illustration

1<sup>st</sup> group . fun, good time . easily accomplished, doesn't take a lot of focus

2<sup>nd</sup> group . stay fit, keep in shape, lose weight . harder to accomplish, takes some focus

3<sup>rd</sup> group . winning the race . most difficult, takes the most focus, intentionality, purpose

3) It might take Using a Trainer (mostly implied)  
e.g. music teachers, learning a craft or trade, physical trainers

- They have more knowledge
- They are more mature

Idea of having a %Paul+in your life (and being a Paul to others, having a %Timothy+)

## Wrap Up

Don't get lost/distracted in the illustration (if you hate runningō )

It's not about winning or competing

It's really about being what you're gonna be (hopefully what God wants you to be)

If you're gonna run a race, run a race!

If you're gonna be a Jesus follower, be a Jesus follower

## Community Group Questions

1. This message was centered on a big illustration. Does the running analogy work for you? Do you agree with the idea of the 3 groups? (In the illustration and in our spiritual life)
2. Does it seem reasonable that in our lives as Jesus followers (not the running allusion) we can all get into that winning group? Why or why not?
3. Some of the key factors of discipline that were mentioned are routine, repetition and control/self-control. In your group expand on each of these and add any other factors about discipline that seem significant.
4. Just for yourself think about things you should start doing and things you should stop doing. Consider sharing anything that would be appropriate.
5. Concerning our spiritual lives, what does %the prize+look like to you? What may be eternal implications or consequences about %getting in that group+or not?
6. What comes to mind about a person who is really focused?
7. The message suggested that trainers have more knowledge and more maturity. Are there other attributes of a good trainer? Have you utilized a trainer in your life? (either spiritual life or some other area) What were the benefits? Any negatives?