



“Run with Determination”

1 Corinthians 9: 24 - 27 *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. 25 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. 26 Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. 27 No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.*

Opening Prayer -

Precious Father, help me to run with self determination to be among the winners, in the name above all other names, the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, amen!

Observation

Doubtless as the apostle wrote the words found in verse 24, he was reminded of the Isthmian games that were held not far from Corinth. The Corinthian believers would be well-acquainted with those athletic contests. Paul reminds them that while many run in a **race, not all receive the prize.**

The Christian life is like a race: It requires self-discipline. It calls for strenuous effort. It demands definiteness of purpose. The verse does not, however, suggest that in the Christian race only one can win the prize. **It simply teaches that we should all run as winners.** We should all practice the same kind of self-denial that the Apostle Paul himself practiced. Here, of course, the prize is not salvation, but a reward for faithful service. Salvation is nowhere stated to be the result of our faithfulness in running the race. Salvation is the free gift of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

9:25 Now Paul changes the figure from running to wrestling. He reminds his readers that everyone who competes in the games, that is, wrestles, **exercises self-control in all things.** A wrestler once asked his coach, “Can’t I smoke and drink and have a good time and still wrestle?” The coach replied, “Yes, you can, but you can’t win!” As Paul thinks of the contestants at the games, he sees the winner stepping up to receive his prize. What is it? It is a perishable crown, a garland of flowers or a wreath of leaves that will soon wither away. But in comparison he mentions an **imperishable crown which will be awarded to all those who have been faithful in their service to Christ.**

Implementation:

There things to do and to observe if we are willing to run and win the race:

1. Be as earnest to make heaven as men are to win a race

Gal. 2:2 (NIV) *I went in response to a revelation and, meeting privately with those esteemed as leaders, I presented to them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. I wanted to be sure I **was not running and had not been running my race in vain.***

The race of faith Hebrews 12: 1-2 *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

2. Be temperate in all things

1Cor. 9:25 - *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 -*

This refers to the months of severe training before a contest of wrestling or fighting with an opponent.

2 Peter 1: 4-10 - *by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, **having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.***

But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

3. Fight with absolute confidence in victory -

1Cor. 9:26 - *Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air.*

1Tim. 6:12 - *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.*

2 Tim. 4:7 - *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*

4. Keep the body under and bring it into subjection

1Cor. 9:27 - *No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.*

Rom. 6:14 - *For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.*

Sonship Through the Spirit (Romans 8 : 12-17)

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors - not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

1Cor. 3:16-17 - *Do you not know that **you are the temple of God** and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.*

Take Away: what you may need to become a winner

1. Discipline
2. Dedication
3. Determination