



Sermon Summary

February 12, 2023

A Champion in Life and the Life to Come 1 Timothy 4:8-10

The apostle Paul may have been a big sports fan since he used sports to teach about the Christian life.

Life Lessons from Sports

Discipline/Self-control – The first and sometimes hardest lesson to learn is that sports are a lot of hard work! There are practices, training, and diet. An athlete sacrifices time, pleasure, and comfort to be ready to compete.

Obedience – Before you play the game you must know the rules and compete according to the rules. If you don't, you can be penalized or even disqualified.

Focus on the Goal – While playing the game it's easy to get distracted by many things. For example, referees, personal statistics, or crowd. A successful athlete is laser focused on the goal, so the distractions don't affect him.

Endure – When training or playing in a game when things aren't going well, it's natural to want to give up. But those who do give up never win.

Receive the Prize – An athlete who is self-disciplined, competes according to the rules, focuses on the goal, and endures to the end of the game wins. He receives the prize, trophy, or reward he focused on and trained for.

What is More Important than Sports

Paul states the benefits of physical training are limited because they are only good for this lifetime. Trophies tarnish, records are broken, champions are forgotten, and bodies die. If we only focus on being a champion in this life, we will miss out on what is most important – our life after we die. What is more important than sports is our eternal destiny. For an eternity in heaven with God we must trust in Jesus Christ as our Savior. If we don't, the Bible teaches we'll be separated from God forever in hell.

How we Live our Christian Life

Discipline/Self-control (1 Cor 9:24-27) – We must constantly say no to sin and good things that aren't God's will for us. We must be self-disciplined to do what is right so God can use us for ministry.

Obedience (2 Tim 2:4-5) – We must live our lives in accordance with the Bible. In the Scripture God teaches us what is right and wrong and the value of living our life in obedience to Him.

Focus on the Goal (Phil 3:10-14) – Paul's goal in life was to know God. He knew that would happen ultimately when he would be with God in heaven. So, Paul didn't dwell on the past but kept looking forward to God and to heaven.

Endure (Heb 12:1) – Jesus endured the cross and focused on the joy that lay before Him. Because He endured, He was glorified. We must do the same. We lay aside any hinderances, focus on Jesus and keep going!

Receive the Prize (James 1:12; Rev 2:10; 1 Peter 5:4; 2 Tim 4:8; 1 Cor 9:25; 1 Thess 2:19) – Paul mentions five specific crowns (rewards) for living the Christian life well. (1) Crown of Life (2) Crown of Glory (3) Crown of Righteousness, (4) Crown of Rejoicing (5) Imperishable Crown.