



Life Lessons from 1 Corinthians, Chapter 9

I remember when I joined the track team in the 7th grade. I wasn't much of a "runner," but my friends went to practice, so I thought I'd join them. The first meet was a bus ride to a high school not so far away in Raleigh, but it felt like a great distance to me. But not as great as the race I was to run in the meet.

I hadn't trained for any particular race, but they needed another runner for the 1600-meter race, so the coach looked at me and told me to run. So, I ran, and I ran, and I ran. I finished fourth out of 8 runners, and I was pleased with myself, especially since I hadn't trained for such a race. But it was exhausting, and my brief track and field career was over.

The Bible teaches us about running a race. In 1 Corinthians 9, Paul encourages the Corinthians to run the race to win the prize.

"Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! 25 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. 26 So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. 27 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." [1 Corinthians 9:24-27](#)

What race is Paul writing about? It's the race God has given you to run. It's your life lived for Christ. The writer of Hebrews also uses the race metaphor.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. 2 We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne." [Hebrews 12:1-2](#)

We are each uniquely designed for God's purposes and are to run the race He has "set before us." Therefore, we should not attempt to run someone else's race. Instead, we run the race God has given us. And as Paul encourages the Corinthians, we should run in a way to win the prize.

How do we run? We run with discipline and purpose. We run with obedience to Christ. Are



Run, Believer, Run!

you exhausted in your race? Run with your eyes on Jesus, looking to him for strength to complete the race.

The prize Paul writes about is not a monetary prize. It's not a trophy or medal. It is a prize that will last forever. It is salvation and a "job well done" commendation from our Savior, Jesus Christ.

What race has God given you? Are you running with discipline and purpose?

Your race may be exhausting, just as the 1600-meter race was to me. But while there was no prize at the end of that race, I know the race God has given believers is worth the effort, and we're on the winning team.

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