

Introduction

In athletics for children and youth, there is a lot of discussion doing whatever it takes to win. Many today believe that every child needs to play a certain amount of time in each game. The goal is for everyone to play, have fun, and gain some experience. Many of the recreational leagues have adopted this attitude, and some junior and high schools have also begun to adopt this philosophy. There are others that feel strongly about winning, and they want to play their best players, and keep them in the game until a win has been secured. My son, Chad, was in a recreational basketball league when he was very young, and every player had to be played an equal amount of time. His coach wanted to win and he did not follow the rules. Other coaches complained to the league, because they felt it was unfair for him to keep his better players out there when they were playing by the rules and using all of theirs. My son's coach would have been better in a competitive league, not a recreational league. He got pretty worked up during the game, and even yelled at some of these young boys when they made mistakes on the court.

For as long as I can remember, I have been competitive. I have always tried to win, and I hate to lose. About the age of seven I knew what I wanted to do; play professional golf. I worked and trained hard to develop my golf skills. My father took me golfing almost every day, and played and practiced with me. As I got to my teen years, I did not need someone to make me practice. In the summertime in Iran, it was very hot, and I would get up at 4:30 a.m. and hit balls before it got too hot. It was only 87 degrees at 4:30 a.m., but it would get up to 125 degrees or hotter by mid-day. All through high school and college, I worked hard at my golf, and I turned professional after I graduated from college. There was not much money in professional golf in those days. In my first tournament, the Circle K Open at Dobson Ranch in Scottsdale, Arizona, I shot ten under par, and made a check for \$150.00. The money was very top-heavy, so you had to win or finish very high to make any money. I saw a post by Wally Armstrong this week that reminded me of that. At the Doral Open in 1975, Jack Nicklaus won and made \$30,000.00. My friend, Wally, shot five-under and finished ninth, and made \$3,325. Last week, at the ZoZo Championship, Keegan Bradley won, and made \$1,980,000.00. Ninth place paid \$297,000.00, which is a little bit more than the \$3,325 that Wally made that week. There was tremendous pressure to win or finish very high. I ran and exercised daily. I worked hard at my golf game, and did whatever I could to win. I ran my race in a way that I might win.

In our text today, Paul uses the word win six times and the word run, four times. Our passage is about running the race to win. Paul makes three important points about running our races to win. First, be determined to win. We need to have a determination to win. That determination to win will push us to do whatever is needed in order to win, which is Paul's second point. Paul did whatever it took to win the Jews, the Gentiles, the weak, and everyone to Christ. Third, we need to be disciplined like an athlete. We need to exercise self-control and discipline our bodies.

Even though this passage is about running our race in such a way to win, it is part of a bigger passage about using our rights and liberties. Paul was a free man, and last week we looked at how he did not use his rights to eat, drink, take along a believing wife, or receive offerings for his ministry from the Corinthians. He preached the gospel without charge, and did not make full use of his right in the gospel. Today is a continuation of that discussion, but his focus is now on how he made himself a slave to all men so that he could win them. Even though he was a free man, he made himself a slave to all. Paul did all things for the sake of the gospel. Paul wanted to win people to Christ. Paul's objective was to get the Corinthians to think about their liberties and rights with the gospel in mind. Winning people to Christ was more important than insisting on getting all of our rights, and using all of our liberties.

Run Your Race to Win

1. Be Determined to Win
2. Do Whatever It Takes
3. Be disciplined Like an Athlete

(1 Cor 9:19–27) “For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may **win** more. {20} To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might **win** Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law though not being myself under the Law, so that I might **win** those who are under the Law; {21} to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, so that I might **win** those who are without law. {22} To the weak I became weak, that I might **win** the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some. {23} I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it. {24} 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**. {25} 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. {26} Therefore I **run** in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; {27} but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.”

1. Be Determined to Win

Paul was determined to win people to Christ. He made himself a slave to all so that he could win more. He became all things to all men that he could save some. He also exhorted the Christians to run in such a way that they could win. It is very clear that Paul was determined to win people to Christ.

The word win is used six times. The first five times Paul used the Greek word, kerdaino (Strong’s G2770), which means to gain or to win. In verse twenty-four, Paul said, “Run in such a way that you may win.” This time, the Greek word, katalambano (Strong’s G2638) is used, which means to take eagerly, seize, apprehend, obtain, or take. Paul is encouraging the Corinthians to aggressively take, seize, and win the prize. There is a strong determination to win the prize.

(1 Cor 9:24) “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 (katalambano).”

Very often, you can tell how determined someone is by what they are willing to do. For me, it was getting up at 4:30 as a teenager and going to hit balls. It was going out in the freezing weather in the winter in New Jersey to hit balls. It was running and working out when others were taking it easy. You could see my determination by the things that I did. We can see the determination that Paul had by the things that he was willing to do. Paul made himself a slave to all so that he could win people to Christ.

You can also see Paul’s determination by another Greek word found in verse twenty-five. Paul said that “everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things.” The word competes is agonizomai (Strong’s G75), which means to struggle, contend with an adversary, to fight, or to strive. We get our English word, agony, from that word. Jesus used the word in John 18:36, when He said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would be fighting (agonizomai) so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.” It is a fight, battle, or struggle. The word generally means

to fight or to wrestle. The Word Study Dictionary of the New Testament said, “It also came to mean to take pains, to wrestle as in an award contest, straining every nerve to the uttermost towards the goal.”¹ In the ancient Olympics, “the mentality was “over my dead body!” They “preferred death to defeat.” This agonizomai was a struggle unto death. There was a determination to win.

(1 Cor 9:25) “Everyone who competes (agonizomai) in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.”

(John 18:36) “Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting (agonizomai) so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.”

In *The Story of Dawson Trotman*, there is a story of Dawson’s commitment to win people to Christ. One evening, he had just climbed into bed, “and realized he had not talked to anyone about Christ. Well, what if he spoke to two tomorrow? It wouldn’t do, he decided. He dressed and clattered off in his Model-T to find a listener. After several miles he saw a man with a briefcase who had just missed the train to Long Beach, and Dawson offered him a ride. ‘You may not believe this,’ he began after introductions, ‘but I got out of bed to come down here. It’s a rule of my life never to end the day without sharing with someone the most wonderful thing in life. I am a Christian.’”² Dawson was determined to win people to Christ and would not go to bed until he had found at least one person to share the gospel with.

What is the prize? The prize is winning people to Christ. Paul wanted to win Jews to Christ. Paul wanted to win Gentiles to Christ. Paul wanted to win the weak to Christ. Paul wanted to win people to Christ. In verse twenty-two he said, “I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some.” Saving some people was winning for Paul.

Athletes compete for a perishable wreath. The Greek word is stephanos (Strong’s G4735), which comes from stepho, to twine or wreath. They would weave the wreath out of oak, ivy, myrtle, olive leaves, or flowers, and award it to the champion. The champion would wear them down the streets for a few days, and they were emblems of joy. However, these wreaths were made of perishable items, and it would not take long for the wreaths to lose their beautiful appearance. The wins in recreational basketball games that Chad’s coach wanted so badly were perishable prizes. The wins in tournaments in professional golf that I worked hard for were perishable wreaths. Most of the trophies that I won as a youngster, high schooler, and collegiate golfer are in a big box in the garage. They are perishable wreaths. Paul contrasts this with the imperishable wreath that we earn when we win people to Christ. We have a much better prize than these athletes who work hard and strive to win imperishable wreaths.

2. Do Whatever It Takes (1 Cor 9:19-23)

My mother and father started their own business, and anyone that has started a new business understands what it takes. It requires you to do whatever it takes to get the job done. So, I have heard them make the comment, “Whatever it takes!” many times. They put in long hours creating drilling manuals, well control manuals, work books, and other materials. They worked hard getting all the legal paperwork done. They worked hard getting the accounting system set

¹ <http://ancientolympics.arts.kuleuven.be/eng/TD003EN.html>

² The Story of Dawson Trotman, by Betty Lee Skinner, page 67.

up, and then maintaining their books. They worked hard at programming simulators, and setting up classrooms. They cleaned toilets, mopped floors, took out trash, and did anything that needed to be done.

That is a little bit like planting churches. When you are just getting started, you do whatever needs to be done. I lead worship, prepare, print, and fold bulletins, preach, greet, clean up, and anything else that needs to be done. God gave me a wonderful partner, Karen, who leads prayer, helps lead communion, cleans, prepares meals, and also does whatever needs to be done. I am thankful for Chad and Tom, who both do a lot of work. In most of the church plants, I have had to do all the finances. Tom handles that for our church, and it is one less thing that I have to do. Paul was not a small business owner, but he was a church planter, and he had the same mindset. Paul did whatever needed to be done to win people to Christ. He made himself a slave to all, so that he could win more people to Christ. To the Jews, he became as a Jew, so that he could win Jews. They were under the Law, and though he was free from the Law, he lived as if under the Law, so that he could win them to Christ.

(1 Cor 9:19–22) “For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more. {20} To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law though not being myself under the Law, so that I might win those who are under the Law; {21} to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, so that I might win those who are without law. {22} To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some.”

To those that were not under the Law, the Gentiles, he was without the Law, though not being without the Law of God, but under the Law of Christ. He was not doing things that were sinful, but he lived without the Law, so that he could win them to Christ.

To the weak, he became weak so that he could win the weak. The word for weak was *asthenes* (Strong’s G772), and it means without strength, powerless, weak, without physical ability. It can also refer to those who have an infirmity or disease. Paul was gentle, compassionate, and caring with the weak so that he could win the weak. Paul became all things to all men, so that he could by all means save some.

I have known some people that have taken this completely out of context. Some go into bars and drink with people at the bar, and try to win them to Christ. I have no problem with sharing Christ with people that drink, but I do have a problem with drinking and trying to share Christ while you are drinking. I do have a problem with going into night clubs and trying to win them to Christ. Paul became all things and did all things to win people to Christ, but he was not without the law of God, but under the law of Christ.

Hudson Taylor was a man with Paul’s heart and methods. He founded the China Inland Mission (CIM) (now OMF International), and spent fifty-one years in China. He became as the Chinese and wore native Chinese clothing. He learned Mandarin, Chaozhou, and Wu, and was able to help prepare a colloquial edition of the New Testament in those Chinese languages. “*No other missionary in the nineteen centuries since the Apostle Paul has had a wider vision and has carried out a more systematised plan of evangelising a broad geographical area than Hudson Taylor.*”³ Hudson is known for his quote, “God’s work done in God’s way will never lack God’s

³ https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/4693730.James_Hudson_Taylor

supply.” Hudson was committed to winning people to Christ, and he became all things to all men, and he did it under the law of Christ. He did not use worldly methods. We cannot compromise our integrity while doing God’s work. Paul addresses this in the next few verses where he exhorts us to be disciplined like an athlete.

3. Be disciplined Like an Athlete (1 Cor 9:23-27)

Paul uses two different athletes to encourage us to be disciplined like an athlete. The first athlete is a runner who is running a race. The second is a boxer, who is not to box without aim. He ends by saying, “but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.”

a. Run with Motivation (1 Cor 9:23-25)

Paul asked, “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.” In the recreational league, all play in the game, but in the competitive league, only one receives the prize. When it comes to the gospel, Paul wanted to win the race. Paul was determined to win souls. And Paul was going to do everything he possibly could to win souls. We are exhorted to run in such a way that we can win.

(1 Cor 9:24) “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.”

Paul said that runners do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. We should run with motivation. There will be eternal rewards for our work here on earth, and we need to run with motivation.

(1 Cor 9:25) “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.”

People are motivated by different things. My oldest son, Bill, teaches golf. He has built up a great training program for juniors. One of the things that he works on is finding out what motivates the child. Simply telling a child he needs to do something does not usually work, but when you find something that does motivate them, that child will work hard at his game.

The church is the same way. Telling people they must go win people to Christ has worked for some people, but many others have not been motivated to win people. Paul goes beyond telling us that we need to evangelize; he motivates us by saying there are eternal rewards. There is an imperishable wreath or reward for winning people to Christ.

Sometimes we must figure out why someone is not motivated. Many people do not feel that they are qualified to share. They don’t think they know enough. Others think that their spiritual gift is not evangelism, so they do not need to be involved. There are many reasons why people do not get involved in evangelism. I believe that church leaders need to address these concerns. The Great Commission was not given just to evangelists. Paul was not an evangelist; he was a teacher and then became an apostle. Barnabas was not an evangelist; he was a prophet and then became an apostle. All of us are called to share the gospel. We may not all be called to preach from the pulpit, but we are called to share the gospel with others and make disciples. Church leaders need to equip the church in the area of evangelism. When people know they are included in the Great Commission, and are trained in how to share with people, then they are more apt to participate.

Paul said that he did all things for the sake of the gospel, so that he could become a fellow partaker of it. Paul wanted to participate, and he wanted to win an imperishable wreath.

(1 Cor 9:23) “I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it.”

b. Focus like a boxer (1 Cor 9:26)

The second type of athlete that Paul uses is a boxer. He said, I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air.” The runner had a goal; he had an aim. The boxer also had a target. The boxer was not beating the air, which we call shadow boxing today. The runner and the boxer were both focused on what they were trying to accomplish.

(1 Cor 9:26–27) “Therefore I **run** in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; {27} but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.”

Having played professional golf for a living, I know that a golfer cannot be focused on winning while playing. The focus on winning is during the practice and preparation. The golfer who is thinking about the awards ceremony during the round will generally struggle. They cannot let their minds get ahead of themselves; they have to focus on each shot. Golfers need to be motivated to win, but to win, they have to focus and play each shot one at a time.

When a runner runs with aim, he normally has a time in mind. A runner in the 100-meter will have a time he is trying to beat for that race. A runner in a marathon will have several different time targets. They will try to pace themselves in the early part of the race, and then finish strong. They run with aim.

A boxer will also have a plan, but during the bout, he is focused on landing punches and combinations. Beating the air expends energy, and may look nice, but it does not win fights. The boxer needs to box in such a way, as not beating the air.

Sometimes I feel like I am just beating the air, and not bearing fruit. Those are the times that I go before the Lord and lay out my concerns to Him. I want to bear fruit in my life, not beat the air. Two of the verses that God encourages me with are Galatians 6:9, and 1 Corinthians 15:58. In Galatians 6, God tells us not to lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. In 1 Corinthians 15:58, God tells us to be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that our toil is not in vain in the Lord. For my part, I just try to abide in Him, seek His input and direction on everything that I am doing, and then try to faithfully do those things.

(Gal 6:9) “Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.”

(1 Cor 15:58) “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.”

c. Be Disciplined and Exercise Self-control (1 Cor 9:27)

Athletes are motivated to win the race that they are running, and focused on what they are doing. They are also disciplined. Paul said, “I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.”

(1 Cor 9:27) “but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.”

The Greek word that Paul used for discipline is hypopiazo (Strong’s G5299). It is a compound word. Hupo (Strong’s G259) means under, and piazo (Strong’s G) is a derivative of optanomai (Strong’s G3700), which means to look, see, or gaze with open eyes. The compound word means to hit under the eye or bruise under the eye. The word was used in boxing to describe disabling your opponent by hitting him under the eye. It was also used to describe someone who annoys a person until they comply. Paul was saying that he inflicted self-punishment on his own body to bring it into compliance.

Paul had an internal motivation that he used for motivation. He did not have someone else irritating him into compliance, or bruising him to make him do something. Paul trained and buffeted his own body, and had self-discipline. I used to tell young golfers that if someone had to make them practice, they would probably not make it in professional golf. They need to have an inward motivation and drive, and then discipline will not be an issue. When a person is motivated and excited about what they are doing, getting up early and working hard is easy. When a person does not have passion for what they are doing, and are not motivated, discipline can be a real issue. Athletes are passionate, motivated, and discipline their bodies.

I will never forget what Charlie Moritz told me one day while we were standing beside his barbecue pit. Charlie was the CEO of Dunn & Bradstreet at that time, and we were staying at his house during the Westchester Classic. I had asked him what he looked for when they were hiring people, and he said that he wanted to see what they were passionate about. He said when they found a person who was passionate about what they were doing, they did not have to motivate them, and the person would do a great job. He said they could teach a person whatever job skills or knowledge, but they could not teach passion. Charlie was right. When a person is passionate about what they are doing, discipline is not an issue.

Paul said he made his body a slave. A slave does what his master tells him to do. Paul did not let his body dictate to him what it was going to do and not do; his body was a slave and Paul made his body do what he wanted to do. Many people today feel sleepy and hit the snooze button. Or, they taste how good the dessert is, and end up eating two or three pieces. Athletes have the discipline to say no to their bodies. When an athlete is training and he feels tired, he makes his body keep going. Athletes push themselves in their training.

One year my weight training started decreasing, and I saw other things happening in my body. I went to see Dr. Van Lou, and he told me that my body was exhausted, and was shutting down. He told me to take six weeks off before resuming any training. I followed his counsel and in a few weeks my symptoms went away. After six weeks I began running and lifting weights again. Athletes will push themselves, and make their bodies their slaves.

(1 Cor 9:27) “but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.”

Why did Paul discipline his body and make it his slave? He did it so that he would not be disqualified after preaching to others. Paul is referring to the Olympic Games, and the Isthmian Games, which were very similar to the Olympic games. They were held every three years on the outskirts of Corinth. Tourists can still see the starting blocks where the races began, which are embedded in stone. The Corinthians were very familiar with these games. To participate in these games, the athletes had to take some oaths. They had to take an oath that they had trained for ten months, and had given up certain indulgences. They also took an oath not to cheat, and to abide by the rules. They had umpires to supervise the contests. Athletes that violated those rules were disqualified, and then corporally punished with a beating of a stick or whip. The punishment was not just physical, but it was psychological. Athletes that cheated were publicly shamed. Paul disciplined himself for the purpose of godliness. He did not want anything that he said or did to prevent anyone from coming to Christ.

Many years ago, Karen and I were being trained in lifestyle evangelism. The pastor said that there were two reasons that people did not become Christians. The first reason was because of Christians. Christians had never shared the gospel with them. The second reason was also Christians. They had been offended by the things that Christians did or said, and because of that, they wanted nothing to do with Christianity. Paul did not want to be the cause of anyone not coming to Christ. This is what he meant by being disqualified.

In verse twenty-five, Paul said, “Everyone who competes in the games exercise self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.” The athletes had to be disciplined and exercise self-control in order to win. This past week, NASCAR suspended Bubba Wallace from the next Cup Series Championship event. During the race in Las Vegas, Kyle Larson forced Wallace’s car into the wall. Then, Wallace struck back by hitting the rear of Larson’s car and forcing it to spin out. After the crash, Wallace got in Larson’s face and shoved him. He was not just disqualified from that race, but also the following race. He had not exercised self-control in all things.⁴

(1 Cor 9:25) “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.”

In Paul’s first letter to Timothy, he encouraged him to discipline himself for the purpose of godliness. He said bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also the life to come. Paul is disciplining himself to godliness so that nothing he did would hinder someone from coming to Christ.

(1 Tim 4:7–8) “But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; {8} for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.”

Conclusion and Applications

The Corinthians wanted to make full use of all their rights and liberties. Their attitude about their liberties is similar to our attitude about tax deductions; we want to take advantage of every legal deduction. They sent questions to Paul asking about marriage, divorce, drinking, and eating meat

⁴ <https://www.foxnews.com/sports/bubba-wallace-suspended-after-altercation-vegas-race>

that had been sacrificed to idols. Paul told them that though all things were lawful, not all things were profitable. Sometimes, we need to give up a liberty because it is not a profitable activity. Paul told them that some of our liberties might cause a weaker brother to stumble. Therefore, we should not do anything that causes our brother to stumble. In determining our use of liberties, we should not rely solely on knowledge. Instead, we need to base our decisions on love, which edifies others.

Paul gave some personal examples to illustrate ways that he gave up some liberties. He was an apostle, and had a right to take along a believing wife. He had a right to receive support from the Corinthian church for his ministry work. Paul gave up these rights for the sake of the gospel. Our passage today was a continuation of that discussion about giving up rights. Paul was free, yet he made himself a slave to all so that he could win people to Christ. He was a slave to the Jews, the Gentiles, and the weak, so that he could win more people to Christ.

Paul used an example of an athlete in the Olympics or Isthmian Games to encourage the Corinthians to set their sights on winning, to be disciplined, and exercise self-control in all things. He encouraged them to run their race in a way that they might win. The race he was referring to was soul-winning. He wanted them to be willing to give up liberties so that they could win people to Christ.

In your life, are you trying to win people to Christ? Are you determined to win people to Christ? God wants all of us to be part of the Great Commission. We are to share Jesus with others, and then disciple them. We cannot present every man complete in Christ if they do not know Jesus, so the process begins with evangelism. Let me exhort you to make a commitment to the Lord and to yourself to share Jesus with others. If you need training or help, let me know. I will be glad to work with you.

Paul encouraged the Corinthians to have self-control in all things, and to buffet their bodies, make them their slaves. Does your body control what you do, or do you make the body your slave? Do you have self-control? Do you have discipline in your life? Many people make New Year's resolutions, but you don't have to wait until January. Today is the first day of the rest of your life, and a great time to start disciplining yourself to godliness.

Prayer

Father God, thank You for Paul's letter to the Corinthians. What a great word to our generation today, who want to make full use of all of their liberties. Help us to do the things that are profitable. Help us to consider the most loving action. Help us to do what is best for our brothers and sisters. Father, give us a heart for reaching the lost. Help us to become all things to all men that we might win some. Help us to run our race in such a way as to win people to Christ. Help us to use self-control in all areas. I pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Introduction (1 Cor 9:19–27)

- 1. Be Determined to Win** (1 Cor 9:24, John 18:36)

- 2. Do Whatever It Takes** (1 Cor 9:19-23)

- 3. Be disciplined Like an Athlete** (1 Cor 9:23-27)
 - a. Run with Motivation (1 Cor 9:23-25)

 - b. Focus like a boxer (1 Cor 9:26-27, Gal 6:9, 1 Cor 15:58)

 - c. Be Disciplined and Exercise Self-control (1 Cor 9:25-27, 1 Tim 4:7-8)

Conclusion and Applications