

First

CORINTHIANS

CHRIST ALONE: TOGETHER

EAST ELEVATION

The Most Important Race Ever

Paul calls the Corinthians (and us) to live like training athletes who are focused on the goal of their efforts. He reminds them that the rewards are infinitely better than any competition, and the consequences more disastrous should we choose not to run the race.



Rio 2016

FELIX

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

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What's the Race?

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

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In The Context...

...Of Chapters 8-9

- Chapter 8 - Take care that the expressions of our freedom do not become stumbling blocks to other believers (8:9)
- Prioritize the spiritual health of others over your preferences

...Of Chapters 8-9

- Chapter 9 – Paul says, that is the way I treated you. I chose not to ask you for money (though I had a right to) because I didn't want any doubt regarding my motives
- I prioritized your spiritual health over my right to be paid

He Describes The Process...

1 Corinthians 9:19-20

¹⁹ For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them.

²⁰ **To the Jews** I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. **To those under the law** I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law.

1 Corinthians 9:21-23

²¹ **To those outside the law** I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. ²² **To the weak** I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, **that by all means I might save some.** ²³ I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

What's The Race?

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- Following Christ, sharing Christ

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- **Experiencing God's love and expressing it to others**

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- Experiencing God's love and expressing it to others
- **Loving God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and loving our neighbor as ourself**

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- **Enjoying God Together (and Inviting Others to Enjoy God With Us)**

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What's the Goal?

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Paul is saying...

- You know that Olympians work hard even though only one wins the wreath
- You know that we worked hard (Paul, Barnabas...) that you might experience eternal life
- You Corinthians...

Paul is saying...

- I want communicating Christ's love to be that Olympic race that you train for, work at, and focus your efforts on, so that...

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- I want communicating Christ's love to be that Olympic race that you train for, work at, and focus your efforts on, so that...
- **Together we share in its eternal blessings and rewards**

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What's The Big Deal?

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What?

- We know we're not saved by works or by effort – so what could possibly disqualify him?

What's The Race

- Love God with all our heart,
Love our neighbor as ourselves

Food Sacrificed to Idols

Food Sacrificed to Idols

- Love God with all our heart (we know there's no other gods)
- Love our neighbor as ourselves (we don't care about the impact it has on others)

Food Sacrificed to Idols

- We don't care about others ≠
loving our neighbor as ourselves

1 John 4:20-21

²⁰ If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. ²¹ And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

John 13:35

³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

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What's The Big Deal?

Not loving our brothers and sisters in Christ-
Is a really, really big
(potentially disqualifying)
deal

So What?

So What?

Love God & Love Those People

So What?

Live like Olympians

So What?

We All Need Trainers