

## **Not a Doormat**

n/a

### **Ready:**

From Him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building up itself in love by the proper working of each individual part.—Ephesians 4:16

### **Set**

Characteristics of the world's best athletes are: self-control, discipline, teamwork, an ability to focus and perform under pressure, intensity, teachability, and knowing how to win with grace. So why is it that when someone has a temper tantrum, gives a cheap shot, cheats, disregards a victorious opponent, and screams at a referee—it is rationalized as being competitive?

I recently met a man in his late 30s who was bragging about being kicked off the church sports teams. He assumed we would be impressed at his machismo. He faintly conceded that he was too competitive. I disagreed with him and suggested he was not competitive enough. Rather, he was indulging in selfish ambition, disrespect, envy, and lack of self-control. He needed to grow up.

The Latin word for competition means strive together—to push and test an opponent to make them the best they can be because they are challenged. No one is implying that the stronger we are in our Christian faith, the weaker we are in sports. The idea of “because I am a Christian, I should be a doormat and lose,” generally comes from those who have a poor understanding of competition. Non-athletes often do not understand that the better the opponent, the better the competition. We cannot strive together if we are doormats. We cannot compete well unless we give the best of our talents—a maximum effort. We would ask no less of a Christian surgeon. Let's be competitive, make the best use of our God-given abilities for His glory.

### **Go**

1. How do you compete?
2. Are you a doormat or do you bring your best every time?

### **Workout**

Extra Reading: Proverbs 27:17; James 1:19-20

### **Overtime**

Lord, in all I do, let it glorify You. Amen.

Devotion from A Sporting Guide to Eternity by Steve Connor. Used by permission.

**Bible Reference:**

James 1



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