

## **Practice for the Prize**

### **Ready:**

Now everyone who competes exercises self-control in everything. However, they do it to receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable one.—1 Corinthians 9:25

### **Set**

Practice isn't always a player's favorite thing to do. At times there are two-a-day practices or extra-long exercises to get a team organized. In the beginning, practices are hard and exciting, then when the squad is picked, the coaches focus on teaching plays.

We've all heard "practice makes perfect." A better way to say it is, "practice makes permanent." How a player performs in practice is how he or she will play in a game, thus, the player who gives a half-hearted effort in practice becomes ineffective at game time. That is why setting specific goals for practice is important.

The Apostle Paul said that every athlete should go into strict training to compete for a prize.

He used this analogy to illustrate the spiritual training a Christian needs to participate in the Christian race. We must train our hearts, minds, and bodies to become more like Christ. In our daily lives, we should practice spiritual disciplines such as prayer, Bible study, worship, fellowship, and self-control. Focusing on these areas will prepare us for witnessing, serving, and teaching.

After all this preparation, what do we win in the end? Not only will we become the person God wants us to be, we also have the promise that someday we will be with Him in heaven.

### **Go**

1. What is your attitude toward practices?
2. What is your relationship like with your coaches?
3. Do you view them as guides to help you reach a goal?

### **Workout**

1 Corinthians 9:24-27; 2 Timothy 2:5; 4:7-8

### **Overtime**

Heavenly Father, forgive me for being half-hearted in both my physical and spiritual training. Help me be disciplined and focused so that I will be prepared when opportunities to serve and share my faith arise. It's hard work but I know if I rely on Your strength and not my own, I will

be able to practice for the prize. Amen.



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