

## **Rooted in Christ: God Deserves Our Best**

### **Ready:**

"Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So, run to win!" 1 Corinthians 9:24

### **Set**

One hundred percent. As coaches, we are always asking our athletes to give their all when they compete. But rarely do we get it! As a young track coach, I can remember having my athletes run laps as part of their seasonal training. There was a section of the route that went behind a building and I would lose sight of the runners for a brief time. It didn't take long for me to realize some of the athletes would take advantage of that situation and walk when out of my watchful eye. On one occasion, I even caught two runners hiding behind the building waiting for the other runners to come back around, cutting off a complete lap. To give 100% has a cost that not everyone is willing to pay. Athletes who take shortcuts, are lazy, or half-hearted in their efforts, seldom reach the finish line first. To win takes every ounce of an athlete's heart, body, and soul.

The Apostle Paul reminds us that the Christian life is like a race. To win takes great effort! He knew many Corinthians had attended the Isthmian Games near the city of Corinth and were quite familiar with athletic competition. He is telling them that they must do everything in their power to share the good news of Jesus Christ. To do this would take the discipline of a disciple. Paul was a great model for the people to follow. He did whatever was needed to lead others to the Lord. These efforts often resulted in hardship, but Paul was determined to give his all to the call God had given him. He was running with everything he had while keeping his eyes on the finish line. Paul refused to give in to the many distractions around him.

Are you giving God your all or are there times you settle for a half-hearted effort? Are you running, straining, and striving for the prize Jesus is offering, or are you content just to be in the race? These are questions that should be answered for competitors willing to give 100% of their race to Him.

### **Go**

1. Can you think of a time as a coach or parent when you had to teach the concept of giving your all to your athlete or child? What was the outcome?
2. Why is it also a good idea to look at ourselves when we're teaching others about giving 100%?
3. Why does Jesus deserve our very best?

### **Workout**

Philippians 4:13; Ecclesiastes 9:10; Proverbs 16:3

## Overtime

"Heavenly Father, guide me in my efforts to give You my very best today. Remove the selfish desire to take short cuts or the path of least resistance in serving You. Thank You for giving Your best, through the death and resurrection of Your Son Jesus, so that we might live in eternity with You. Amen."

### Bible Reference:

1 Corinthians 9:24

Philippians 4:13

Ecclesiastes 9:10

Proverbs 16:3



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