

## **The Starting Line: The Big Win**

### **Ready:**

“But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God’s grace that you have been saved!)” -- Ephesians 2:4-5

### **Set**

As coaches and athletes, we have a strong desire to compete—whether we’re trying to make the team, set a personal best or win a championship. The competitive spirit seems wired into our DNA—that’s because it is!

God uses competition to draw us closer to Him. As we work for excellence in sports, we eventually realize that true satisfaction doesn’t come from winning trophies, medals, applause, or high-dollar contracts. No achievement or award can equal the rush of discovering new life in Jesus.

Ephesians 2:1-9 highlights three major differences between prizes earned on earth and the ultimate prize our salvation gives us: a personal relationship with our God and Creator.

### **Difference 1: Salvation is based solely on GOD’S EXTREME LOVE for us. (Eph. 2:1-4)**

Unlike our athletic accomplishments, we have not earned the privilege of salvation. We’ll always fall short of His standard: perfection. But God made a way for us to be with Him forever.

### **Difference 2: We are saved by GRACE. (Eph. 2:5-7).**

God’s grace is His favor toward us who don’t deserve it. Yet He still offers grace to anyone willing to accept Jesus as Rescuer and Redeemer.

### **Difference 3: We are saved through FAITH (Eph. 2:8-9).**

God doesn’t stop with saving us from judgment. He also gives us a spot on His team and lavishes us with “immeasurable riches” in His kingdom.

God accomplished the Big Win when Jesus died for our sins. God has marked out a unique race and role in your new life in Jesus. Are you ready to give everything you’ve got to the race He’s laid out for you?

### **Go**

- What are some things that motivate you to compete?
- How has choosing to accept God's incredible free gift of salvation in Jesus changed your life?

## **Workout**

Ephesians 2:1-9; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

## **Overtime**

“God, give me a vision of the big win you have for me. Help me to stay motivated in my faith and run my race well. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.”

## **Bible Reference:**

Ephesians 2:4-5

Ephesians 2:1-4

Ephesians 2:5-7

Ephesians 2:8-9

Ephesians 2:1-9

1 Corinthians 9:24-27



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