

## **Compete in Love**

### **Ready:**

“Be alert, stand firm in the faith, be courageous, be strong. Do everything in love.” – 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

### **Set**

There is a misconception that if you are a Christian competitor that means you are less of a competitor.

Christians are supposed to turn the other cheek and be peacemakers, so how does that align with competition where you are vying for the victory the other team also is striving for?

1 Corinthians 16:13-14 delivers a string of instructions; among them the charge to do everything in love. That means to compete in love. Because Americans have misconstrued the word love, we are left with a sense that Christians are soft or weak competitors, but that isn't what we are called to at all.

Colossians 3:17 instructs us to “do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Earlier in 1 Corinthians, Paul commands that “whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)

If we are competing to bring God glory and in the name of the Lord Jesus, we are wise to remember that doing our best honors the LORD as worship. It honors our commitment to our team. We love our team by doing our job. It also honors our opponent because they are worth our best efforts.

The world spews the message that winning is most important; that if you want to be a fierce competitor you have to compromise your character for a few hours during competition. But God's Word through Paul would stand in contrast to that.

Be alert to where you are compromising. Stand firm in the faith by connecting with God daily and holding fast to your godly character. To compete with godly character and excellence takes courage and strength – stand firm!

### **Go**

- In what ways are you compromising your faith or character during competition?
- Do you view your athletic efforts as a form of worship? Why or why not?
- Name a pro athlete who is a Christian and fierce competitor. How can their example help you?

### **Workout**

Colossians 3:17

1 Corinthians 10:31-32

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

### **Overtime**

“Lord, I want to be a fierce competitor. I want to honor You in and out of competition. Give me the strength and courage to stand firm in the faith. Help me to do everything in love – love of You, love of my teammates and love for my opponent. I can only do this with You. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”



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