

# How To Win

(1 Corinthians 9:24-27)

# Isthmus – neck



# Isthmian games

1. Near Corinth
2. Every two years
3. 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 alludes to games

# 1 Cor.9:24-27 sits within greater context of chapters 8-10

1. Ch.8: however strong, enlightened, or protected, watch out for weaker brothers.
2. Ch.9: freedom does not allow the strong to do things that destroy souls.
3. Ch.10: applications of these principles: be faithful, not foolish.

I. Illustrations From  
Isthmian Games,  
1 Cor.9:24-27

## 24: all run, one wins

- Only one?
  - All can win this race (9:22, 24).
- Race: measure of distance; about 1/8 mile; then, a stadium.
- Strenuous effort makes the difference.
- Some succeed in business; others don't.  
Anyone **can** win spiritually – v.24; Ph.3:14.
- Winning is not guaranteed (v.24, 27).

## 24: so run

- 26: run *as if* only one can win; give your all.
- Ph.3:14; 2 Tim.4:7
  - Not all runners win.
  - Losing is tragic...
  - Work, train, love, self-control

24: that you may obtain it

25: singleness of purpose: eye on goal

1. Everyone competes: agonize, *fight, struggle*
2. Temperate (self-control) in all things
  - Gen.43:31, Joseph
3. They: perishable crown. 1 Co.15:53-54
4. We: imperishable crown. 1 Co.9:25



## Crowns

1. Imperishable, 1 Co.9:25
2. ...of rejoicing, 1 Thes.2:19
3. ...of righteousness, 2 Tim.4:8
4. ...of life, Ja.1:12
5. ...of glory, 1 Pt.5:4

## Dangers

Some allow their crown to be stolen, Rv.3:11

Some trade crown for earthly one, 1 Co.9:25

26: therefore I run thus...

Phil.3:14

26: fight the air?

27: I discipline my body

1. Not bodily abuse; asceticism; or gnosticism.
2. Corinth needs this lesson. 6:19; 8:9-13.
3. Our real opponent...

26: therefore I run thus...

Phil.3:14

26: fight the air?

27: I discipline my body

27: I bring my body into subjection

27: avoid sad conclusion

- After preaching to others, become disqualified: unqualified, worthless, base.  
2 Cor.13:5

I. Illustrations From Isthmian Games,  
1 Cor.9:24-27

II. Incentives From  
The Olympics

# Olympics encourage, motivate

Looking for a way to win, not an excuse to lose.

1. Paul uses illustrations as Jesus did; easy to relate, retain, repeat.
2. Winning is not guaranteed. 24, 27
3. Salvation is worth our best efforts (hard work, sacrifice). Mt.26:10
4. Excuses and laziness are deadly.
5. Examples are contagious. Phil.3:17

**I. Illustrations From Isthmian Games,  
1 Cor.9:24-27**

**II. Incentives From Olympics,  
1 Cor.9:24-27**

**III. Instructions From  
Olympics**

# Preparing to win

1. Obey rules. 2 Tim.2:5
2. Keep learning. Mt.13:52
3. Expect adversity. 1 Co.10:12
4. Live in faith. Hb.11-12
5. Be a servant (help others – help yourself).  
Mt.20
6. Maintain convictions. Paul
7. Train, train, train. Lk.6:40; Hb.12:11