

LIFE LESSONS FROM THE OLYMPICS

SERMON NOTES

Week 1 August 1, 2021

“Training for the Games”

I Corinthians 9:24-27



I. Ancient Olympic History

- A. The Olympics were started in 776 B.C. in _____.
- B. Isthmian games happened in the town of _____.
- C. In 393 A.D., the Olympics were ended. In _____, the Olympics were restarted in Greece.

II. Do No Harm

- A. If we are going to win the imperishable crown, we need to exercise self-_____.
- B. The first general rule of Christian living is to do no _____ and avoid every kind of evil.

III. Staying in Love with God

- A. Wesley said if you want to grow in your faith you need to attend to the _____ of God.
 - a. Worship.
 - b. Receiving communion.
 - c. Studying scripture.
 - d. Prayer.
 - e. Meeting with other Christians.
- B. When we are not praying, going to worship, gathering in small groups, our spiritual life _____.

IV. Doing Good

- A. The race is about the _____ you have on others.
- B. We should think about what type of _____ we want to leave behind.

Things I Would Like to Remember About This Message



ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE *August 2-7, 2021*

INTRODUCTION

Going to the Olympics requires intense training and focus. As followers of Christ we are called to work hard on our spiritual growth. Prayer, worship, fasting, small groups, spiritual conversations, reading and discussing books on the spiritual life strengthen us and help us to see the ideal we strive towards. The ordinances or spiritual disciplines are to us spiritually what exercise is to us physically. Pursuing them requires time and energy, but just as you begin to feel stronger and better when you exercise, you find your soul lifted up, your spiritual strength increasing, as you practice these things.

Monday: 1 Timothy 4:7b-16

The apostle Paul agreed, and urged the young pastor Timothy to “train,” “work,” “struggle,” “practice,” and “focus.” He compared physical training (what Olympic athletes did) with spiritual “training.” Spiritual strength doesn’t “just happen” any more than physical stamina—it’s built by intentional practices. How much time should we put into spiritual training? When do we practice spiritual training?

Tuesday: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

The phrase “practices self-discipline” in verse 25 used two words right from the vocabulary of Olympic athletes. The IVP Bible background commentary: New Testament notes: “Participants for the Olympic games had to swear by Zeus to follow ten months of strict training beforehand.” What kinds of sacrifices do Christians make in order to train spiritually? Has self-discipline ever helped you to avoid things that would be bad for you?

Wednesday: Luke 5:15-16, Luke 6:12-15, 1 Thessalonians 3:9-11

Prayer is a basic spiritual practice by which Christians grow stronger. In the gospels, we repeatedly find Jesus praying—his “conversational” relationship with God was even more important to him than social connections or sleep. His followers learned from his example and teaching—Paul referred to his practice of praying “night and day.” What prevents us from praying more?

Thursday: Luke 24:25-45, Acts 17:2-12, 2 Peter 1:16-21

Throughout the New Testament, we read passages like, “they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.” Reading and studying the Bible is one of the most important of the spiritual disciplines. How important do you think this is to your spiritual health and why? Christians refer to Jesus as “the Living Word of God.” Why do you think we say this?

Friday: Psalm 34:1-8, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Revelation 19:5-9

Another key spiritual practice is celebration—meeting life with gratitude, praise and deep inner joy. Revelation, contrary to its bleak, scary image, pictured God’s final reunion with God’s people as a joyous wedding banquet! This shifts what we might have learned about what it means to run the Christian race—always being somber, sternly focused and grimly determined (see Colossians 2:18-23) Do you think we must always be somber and lacking fun to be Christians?

MOVING FORWARD

Athletes need to train in order to run faster, jump higher and become stronger. As followers of Jesus we must train ourselves spiritually. John Wesley said we must attend to the ordinances of God (worship, communion, studying scripture, prayer and meeting with other Christians.) This week, find time to be alone to pray and meditate, focusing on your relationship with God and upon the direction of your life.

*Answers to the sermon notes: IA) Greece, B) Corinth, C)1896. IIA) control, B) harm.
IIA) ordinances, B) diminishes. IIIA) impact, B) legacy.*