



The journey to a growing spiritual life

FAN OR FOLLOWER

1. Admirer or Lover
2. Decision or Commitment
3. Know about or Knowing
4. Trying or Training
5. Playing Around or Playing to Win

1 Corinthians 9:24-26 (NLT)

Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing.

WINNING ON PURPOSE

1. Keep the end in mind
2. Remember to Train

THE JOURNEY TO GROWING A SPIRITUAL LIFE

1. When you think of the fan and the follower, which of the five ideas in the outline resonated most with you? (Admirer/Lover, Decision/Commitment, Know about/Know, Trying/Training, Playing around/Playing to win). Why?
2. In 1Corinthians 9:24-26, Paul compares the Christian life to competitive games and states we must "... run to win!" What are a few things you can do to have a "run to win" attitude in your life with Christ?
3. Why do you think it is important to "keep the end in mind"?
4. From the weekend's message, what part of Pastor Carolyn's marathon story connected with you most?
5. Athletes train – it is not optional. Training is always clear (you know what to do), measurable (you know when you are done) and goal oriented (it is connected to what you want to accomplish). Think of three to five things that followers of Jesus could improve in their lives by creating and following a spiritual training plan.
6. Training can be hard. In 1Cor 9:27, Paul writes that he blackens his eye to prepare for the match. Paul is metaphorically referring to the well-known adage: "no pain, no gain". What are some areas of training that could cause us some 'pain'?
7. One reason people do not progress is because they want to do heroic feats of godliness at the beginning. In sport, this kind of thinking ends with an injury. Why are people tempted to do the 'heroic' acts? Can you think of a time when you set big goals, failed, got discouraged, and gave up? Share.
8. Often athletes train together or with a partner. This creates encouragement and accountability (and also guards against the 'heroic' spurts of righteousness). What are some ways you could partner with another person to train as a spiritual athlete?
9. In the message, you heard the story of Hank – the man who never changed.
 - a. Why do you think we are not surprised when people remain the same?
 - b. How does this adversely affect our own spiritual growth?
10. If you were to listen in on your own funeral service and hear what people were saying about you, what do you want people to be saying about your faith in Jesus Christ? What training will you do this week to ensure your walk with Christ in the coming months is what you want it to be.