

Pint Size Parables

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The Race to Run

Read: 1 Corinthians 9:24

In the midst of an amazing chapter about Paul's outreach, he includes this very graphic image of a runner who wishes to win a race. He has written about the right of an evangelist to be paid for his work, and how he himself does not work for money (v. 13-17). He also writes about how he has made himself a slave to other men, that he might win more for the Lord (v. 19). Never compromising his witness, Paul used his history as a Jewish leader to persuade those who were Jewish, and then the same man preached to the Gentiles (v. 20-21).

What we see here is a man who is totally sold-out for the gospel. He is giving his life to the spreading of the Word. When we think of ways to train for athletic events, we think of eating right, getting proper exercise and a good night's sleep. The best athletes do not compromise in their self-control. In the same way, we are to run the race of faith with self-control and focus, like an athlete in intense training.

Questions

- 1) What does the race in the story refer to?
- 2) Captain Cutthroat and the Agent were distracted by vanity and self-love. The General by his over planning and Larry by his own musings. What distractions keep you from running your race? Your friends? Over-commitment? Fear?
- 3) Did you notice that not all of the runners make it to the prize? How can we be disqualified?
- 4) Runners not only do certain things to train, but also avoid certain behaviors in order to be successful in their training. What do we need to do in order to get ourselves in shape for running the race for faith?
- 5) Can you just stay where you are and win a race?
- 6) What is the difference between the eternal crown and the earthly one? What are these crowns?