

# Winning the Race

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

**Big Idea:** We are all running a race in life, and each year is a new opportunity to reset our hopes for running and finishing the race well. To do this we need to get a vision, practice the disciplines that will support the vision, keep our focus and stay connected to the right “power source.”

**Proverbs 29:18 (KJV)** *Where there is no vision the people perish.*

**1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (NLT)** *Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! <sup>25</sup> 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. <sup>26</sup> So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. <sup>27</sup> I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.*

**Colossians 3:23 (NIV)** *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.*

**Hebrews 4:14-16 (NLT)** *So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe. <sup>15</sup> This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. <sup>16</sup> So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.*

## Start Talking:

What hopes and dreams do you have as look to God for the next year of your life?

## Start Thinking:

**Read Proverbs 29:18.** Why is it so important to get a sense of God's vision for your life?

**Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27.** How does practicing the right disciplines help you stay on track toward winning your race? What are some key disciplines you need for your race?

**Read Colossians 3:23.** What happens if you take your focus off what God wants for your life and become concerned more about what other people think?

**Read Hebrews 4:14-16.** What difference should it make, as you run your race, to know that God is always available to help with grace and mercy when you need it?

## Start Praying and Doing:

Ask God for a fresh sense of His vision for your life. Let the truth of His Word be the anchor for this and believe that He will direct you into His best!

Take some time this week to think about practicing the right disciplines in your life to keep you on track for God's vision. How are you doing with your disciplines? What corrections or adjustments can you make now that will help you “win the race” over the next year and beyond? Start making these changes (or reinforcing what you are already doing well) so you can move forward with confidence in the Lord into this next year.