

A Race for the Prize

"I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

PHILIPPIANS 3:14

Have you ever participated in a sporting event or race and competed for a prize? How much time and effort did you put into training? Have you ever heard anyone say, "I could do that!" while watching the athletes perform? Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, will host this year's summer Olympics, and more than 10,000 athletes from over 200 countries are expected to participate.

The Olympic games began as early as 776 B.C. when they were held in Athens, Greece. At that time there was only one event, a running race won by a cook named Coroebus. Today the Olympics feature about 300 events from 28 different sports.

Swimmer Michael Phelps has been called the greatest athlete who has ever lived. Phelps has won 22 Olympic medals—18 gold, two silver, and two bronze—more than any other Olympic athlete. But he didn't earn these without effort and hours of training. Athletes train for years and even push through days when they don't feel like training because their eyes are

fixed on a goal—the prize. To compete at the highest level is serious business!

In the Bible, Paul compares the Christian life with a race. In an Olympic event many competitors run, but only one receives the prize. Paul encourages us all to run to win. Just like athletes, we are to take our training seriously by being faithful in all things and staying away from whatever might distract us from winning the prize (1 Corinthians 9:24; Hebrews 12:1).

In our spiritual training we have the best Coach, One who has already run the race and won! He encourages us to press toward the goal (Philippians 3:14) and our goal is to spend eternity with Him, our Best Friend, Jesus. Don't give up!

It is important that we train daily by reading His Word, praying for His strength, and keeping our eyes focused on Him. Jesus endured and wore a crown of thorns so we could wear a crown of gold in heaven. Are you willing to carry the torch for Jesus and encourage others along the way? 🐾



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Summer Olympics Word Search

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- ATHENS
- ATHLETE
- BRAZIL
- BRONZE
- COMPETE
- CROWN
- GOAL
- GOLD
- GREECE
- OLYMPICS
- PRIZE
- RACE
- RUN
- SILVER
- SUMMER
- TORCH
- TRAIN
- WINNER

Olympic Fun Facts:

1. The last solid gold medal was awarded in the 1912 Olympics in Stockholm, Sweden.
2. Modern Olympic gold medals are required to contain a minimum of 6 grams of gold, and the rest is made from at least 92.5% sterling silver.
3. The custom to award Olympians with medals began in 1904.



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