

**July 26 / Sunday**

**Olympic Gold**

Read [1 Corinthians 9:24-27](#)



**27 / Mon – Racing for the goal line** | Read [1 Corinthians 9:24-25](#)

A race is a speed/distance event toward a specific goal. There are many well-known races but the most famous might be the 200-yard foot race that marked the first recorded Olympic game in 776 BC. The victor was crowned with an olive branch wreath and his name was carved in stone. Songs and poems were created in his honor and he was remembered long after his death. In life, what is your ultimate goal line? Why is it important to you?

**28 / Tue – Training** | Read [2 Corinthians 9:26-27](#) / [1 Timothy 4:8-10](#)

Athletes spend hours training for competition. They will modify their diet, strengthen the muscles needed to excel, cultivate the right mindset, and keep focused on the ultimate goal. Here Paul is reminding the reader that physical exercise is good but training in godliness is better because the benefits will impact both this life and the life to come. What are some things you are doing to train yourself in godliness? How do these exercises strengthen you for this race called life?

**29 / Wed – Keep your eyes on the prize** | Read [Philippians 3:3-14](#)

There must be a worthy prize at the end of the race or it will be hard to make the kind of sacrifices needed to win. What was the prize Paul was reaching for? What did he do to stay focused? How might these words apply to you right now? Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to your mind the goal God has for you. It may require changes on your part. Are you willing to move forward with His help?

**30 / Thu – The real deal** | Read [2 Timothy 4:7-8](#) / [Revelation 21:10-21](#) and [22:1-5](#)

The original Olympic winners received a crown made from a freshly-cut olive branch which did not last. Today's first place winners receive a gold medal. Would it disillusion you to know that, since 1912, the Olympic gold medals are actually 95% silver overlaid with gold? Sometimes the prize you win on earth can quickly lose its luster but read what God has waiting for those, like Paul, who have finished the race and kept the faith. Pretty amazing, right?

**31 / Fri – Don't give up!** | Read [Hebrews 12:1-3](#)

Anyone who has ever run a marathon for the first time knows there is a moment when you 'hit the wall' and it seems like you can't go on. Practice and training are important but unless you persevere, you will never make it to the end of the actual race. Think about some of the things that might hold you back or trip you up. Is it negative thoughts or some physical challenge? Is it discouragement when you see how far you still have to go? Perseverance keeps its eye on the goal. And who is the coach that runs alongside (see v. 5)? He has already been through the course so listen to Him.

**01 / Sat – Look around** | Read [Hebrews 12:1](#)

There is an unseen crowd in the stands, cheering you on, urging you not to give up. Some are those who have passed on before you and know how hard it can get. Can you name a few? Is there one who was a role model you wanted to emulate? Someone who loved and prayed for you? No matter how lonely the race can seem at times, don't give up! You belong to a community of believers, past and present. And don't forget those running beside you. Remind them they too are not alone.