



Christian Olympics



5th - 6th Grade
Student Workbook

The apostle Paul likened the Christian life to running in a race. And indeed there are many similarities. In this lesson, we will examine the parallels between an athlete and a Christian and answer the question, why should I run? We will also discuss how to prepare, how to run, what happens if I fall down, and what happens if I win.



Did you know?

Every game has individuals who:

- Set the rules
- Compete in the game
- Judge the competition
- Give the prize

In the Christian race, who does each of these things?

Christian Olympics

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Get Ready! Get Set!

Are you ready to win the race? Are you sure? In order to succeed, we must first and foremost realize we are in a race and prepare for it. Preparation requires that we learn what the rules are, practice to win, and be ready for the start by qualifying to run in the race.

Preparing for the Christian race is no different. Why do you think this might be so? What will happen if we do not properly prepare to run the race?

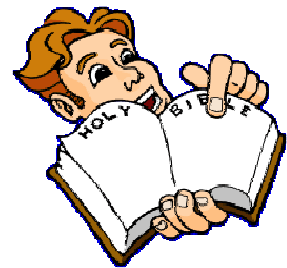
Know the Rules

It is important to understand the rules of any game you plan to play.

What might happen if you do not understand the rules?
(2 Timothy 2:5) _____

God has rules for us to follow. What is God's rulebook for the Christian life? (2 Timothy 3:15-17)

How can we learn God's rules? (Romans 10:17, 2 Timothy 2:15, Psalm 119:9-16)



Practice to Win

If you want to be good at something, you must practice. Marathon runners practice running for several hours each day, trying to improve their time at every practice. They practice to grow strong and be able to endure to the end of the race. Archers practice shooting so they can hit the bull's eye. Pianists perform finger strengthening exercises. A good student will look for their weak points and practice those things over and over again to improve.



Should we also practice? (Hebrews 10:36) _____

What are we to be strong in? (Ephesians 6:10) _____

What will happen if we do not practice enough? (1 Corinthians 9:26-27)



Name some things Christians should practice in order to improve as a Christian.

Qualify to Run!



Races have qualifying events. A qualifying event is an activity used to prove an athlete is capable and that he meets the requirements. Athletes must qualify to be eligible to run the race.

Similarly, we need to qualify to run in the Christian race. Write what each scripture says we need to do to qualify to run in the race.

Romans 10:17 _____

Hebrews 11:6 _____

Luke 13:3 _____

Romans 10:9-10 _____

Acts 22:16 _____

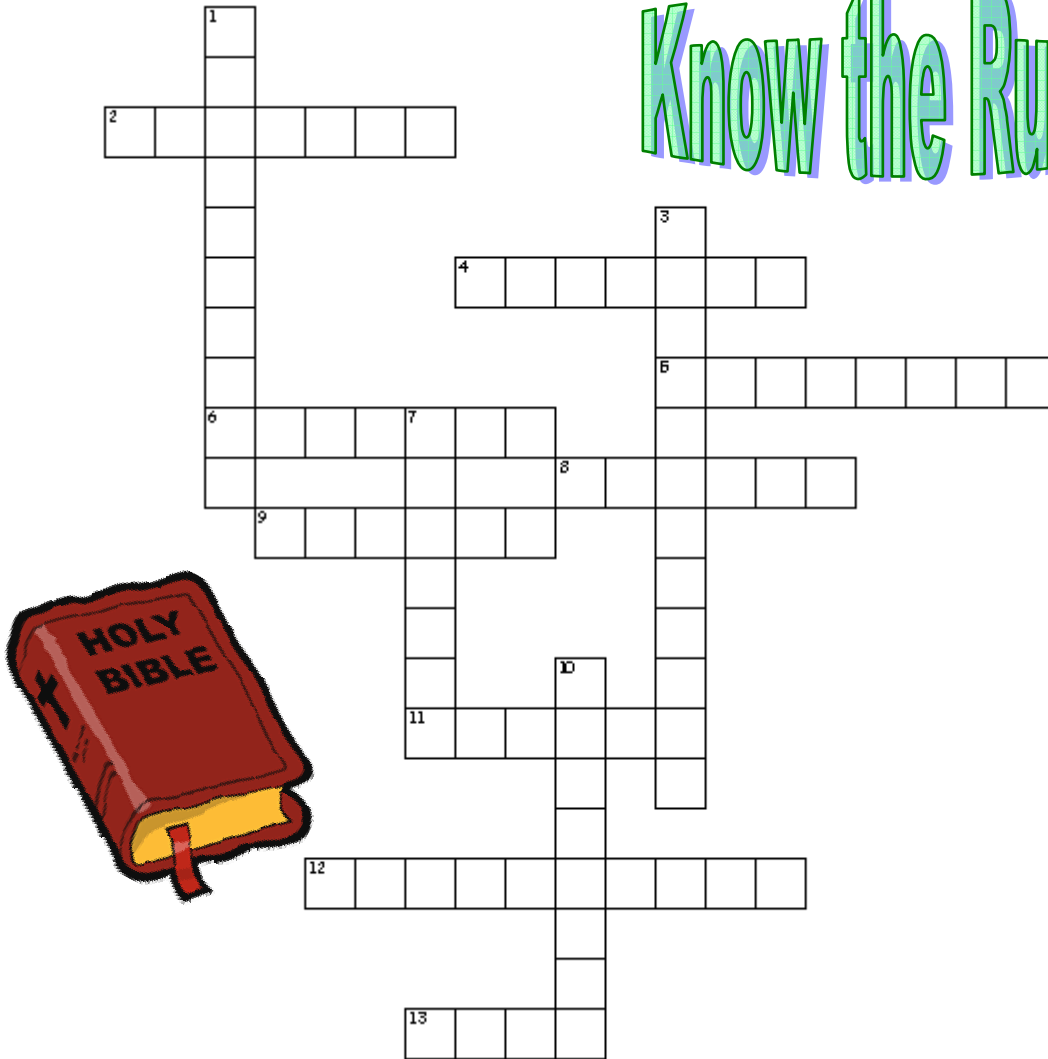
Think!

In order to prepare to run a race, the runner must put on his running shoes and line up at the starting line, awaiting the "go" command. We are told to put something on as well. What are we to put on and how do we put this on? (Hint: Galatians 3:27)





Know the Rules!



Across

- 2. We make melody in our hearts to God by doing this. Eph 5:19
- 4. What we are to preach. 2 Timothy 4:2
- 5. Whoever hates his brother is this. 1 John 3:15
- 6. We are to take care of these. James 1:27
- 8. We are to feed these. Matthew 25:31-46
- 9. We are also to take care of these. James 1:27
- 11. All men everywhere are commanded to do this. Acts 17:30
- 12. Paul was told to do this to wash away his sins. Acts 22:16
- 13. We are to obey those who ____ over us. Hebrews 13:17

Down

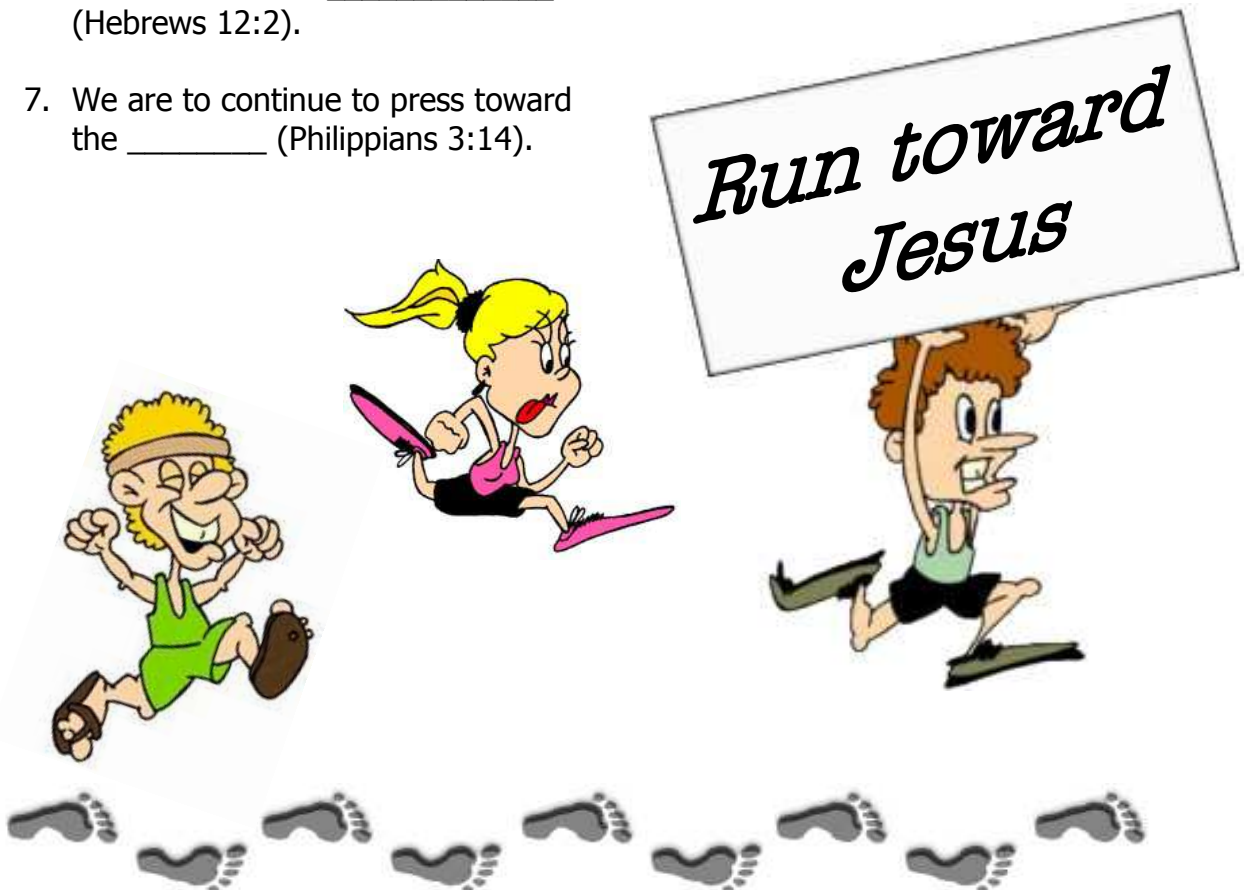
- 1. This is made unto salvation. Romans 10:10
- 3. Those who love Jesus will keep these. John 14:15-23
- 7. Love one ____ fervently with a pure heart. 1 Peter 1:22
- 10. We should ____ on things that are noble, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. Philippians 4:8



Run to Win

The Bibles give us some good guidance on how to run to win. Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, Hebrews 12:1-2, and Philippians 3:14 and fill in the blanks.

1. We are to run in a way to _____ (1 Corinthians 9:24).
2. We are not to run with _____. (1 Corinthians 9:26)
3. We should discipline our _____ and bring them into subjection (1 Corinthians 9:27).
4. We shouldn't carry a lot of _____ (Hebrews 12:1).
5. We are to run with _____ (Hebrews 12:1).
6. We are to look to _____ (Hebrews 12:2).
7. We are to continue to press toward the _____ (Philippians 3:14).





Good Attitude, Bad Attitude

Does it Matter?



Attitude is a set of beliefs and feelings that make someone act a certain way. Does your attitude make any difference in whether or not you succeed? Ask the twelve spies sent to Canaan if attitude matters (Numbers 13-14). Ten of the twelve had a bad attitude. They didn't think Israel could win. Only Joshua and Caleb believed that Israel could win with God's help. Who received the reward and who did not?

Here are some simple rules to get our attitudes straight so we can win the race:

- ❖ **No Complaining!** No matter how much God did for them, the children of Israel complained constantly (Numbers 14). Complaining caused them to lose sight of the Promised Land and desire to go back to Egypt, where they had been slaves.
- ❖ **No Blaming Others!** Adam blamed Eve when he chose to disobey God. Eve in turn blamed the serpent. (Genesis 3) Did "passing the buck" work?
- ❖ **No Shortcuts!** Jehoiakim tried to take a shortcut around God's rules by cutting out the part he didn't want to follow and then burning it in the fire (Jeremiah 36). Was he successful?
- ❖ **No Pouting!** Jonah wanted to be the judge over Nineveh. When he disagreed with God's call, he pouted over Nineveh's repentance (Jonah 4).
- ❖ **No Excuses!** Moses made many excuses to avoid starting the task God had given to him to do (Exodus 3). Did it work?

The Road to Defeat

Bode Miller was the perfect candidate for the packaged American Hero. He was good-looking, very athletic, had won 2 silver medals in a prior Olympics, and was loved by the media. He ran with the hype and the credit card ads to the 2006 Olympics.

Miller was a symbol of American lone rangers, the guy who did it his way and reached for the gold. Except he didn't reach. He turned up hollow and empty and unwilling to sacrifice. He was more interested in having a good time than in winning his races. He skied off the course, and right off the news story-line, having received no medals at the 2006 winter Olympics.

JUST DO IT!



An Important Hidden Message

M E L T C B E A P N W I N N E
 P I D E W A R D O I O N T C H
 O R K U A E L O U A S E S O M
 S E O A T R L E T L T S O L O
 S E Q M I I S V B P W P J H M
 M G L S I O T I E M Y I V H B
 Q C X V G S H T R O X E T U E
 T R N V Y M E E A C N S R K X
 H U E I B R Q D J C I N N T C
 S P C P R E W A R D N K A H U
 O L C T E B G U T E E R A A S
 H H C T R N K U P D V G N N E
 F P E B V O T Q Y N E B A O Y
 J O S H U A H Z G O H T C J P
 C H N R B C N S E T B S W L Y

Circle the following words. Then copy the first 25 unused letters to the blanks below to reveal an important hidden message.



- | | | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| ATTITUDE | EGYPT | JOSHUA | REPENT |
| BURN | EXCUSE | MOSES | REWARD |
| CALEB | ISRAEL | NINEVEH | SHORTCUT |
| CANAAN | JEHOIAKIM | POUT | SPIES |
| COMPLAIN | JONAH | PROMISED | TWELVE |

_ _ _ _ _ . _ _ _ _ _
 _ _ _ _ _ !



FINISH WHAT YOU START

Some people never get around to starting important tasks. These people are called "procrastinators". Then there are people who start lots of tasks and never finish any of them. These people never accomplish anything because they are not fully committed to any one goal. In 2 Timothy 4:9-10, Paul speaks of Demas as one who didn't complete his task. Demas gave up. He didn't finish, and he left Paul in a lurch. Paul says that Demas loved the present world. Demas didn't follow Paul's instructions on how to run to win. His allegiance was split and ultimately the things of the world were of more importance to him than were heavenly things. What did Jesus say about those who have split allegiance? (Matt. 6:24-34, Luke 16:13)

Paul speaks clearly about finishing our spiritual race in 2 Timothy 4:7:

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing."

We are warned in 2 John 2:8 to be watchful so we don't lose what we have worked for and as a result, not receive our full reward. We are warned again by Paul in Galatians 5:7 about being hindered in our run.

Almost, But Lost

Distance runner Mary Decker Slaney ruled U.S. track and field in the early 1980s. Despite her myriad accomplishments, Decker is best remembered for failing to finish a race, during what should have been the shining moment of her career.

At the 1984 Olympic Games, Slaney, who held seven records, was considered a shoe-in to medal in the 3,000 meters. At midpoint of the race, Decker began jostling for position with Zola Budd, South Africa's barefoot wonder. Budd ended up accidentally tripping Decker, who crashed to her hands and knees. Once she had rolled to the infield of the track, Decker writhed in pain in a near fetal position and, with the only energy she could muster, limped off to the showers.

Don't be a "Demas"

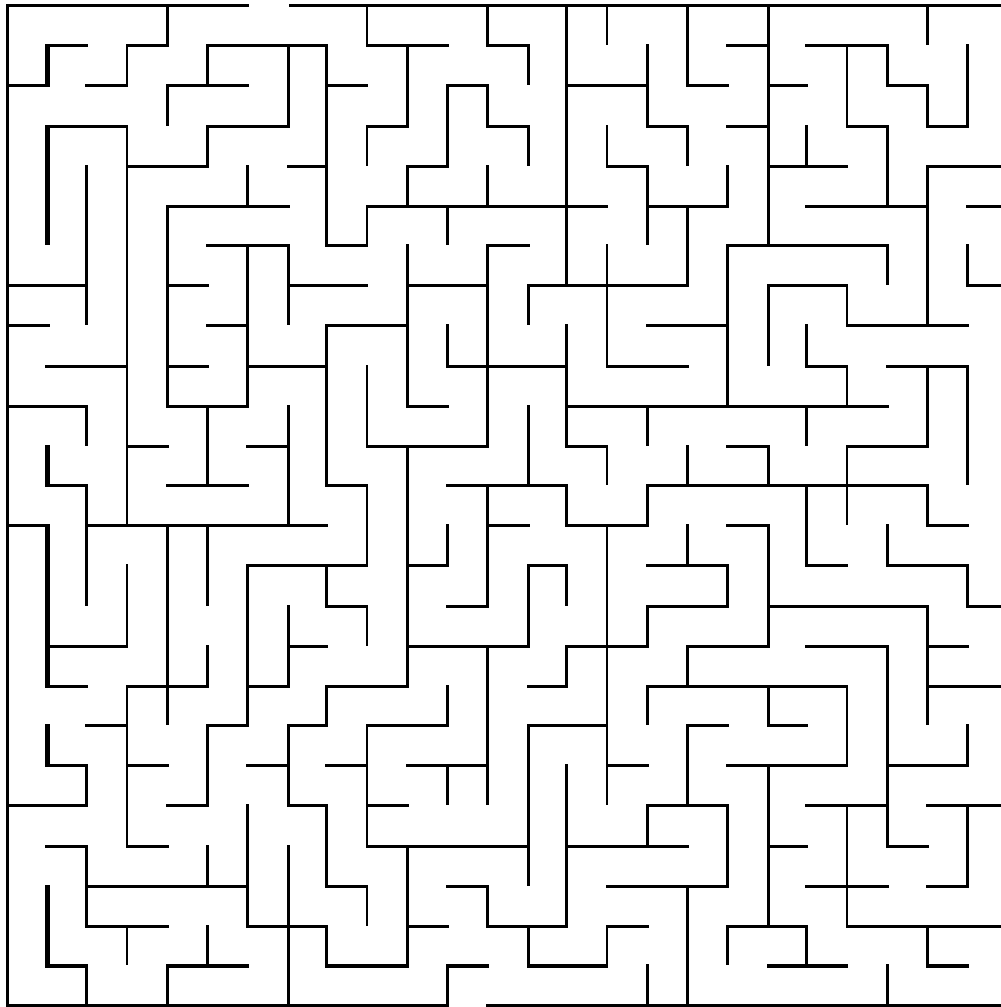




Overcome Satan's obstacles. Be a **Hurdle Jumper**



Help Joey get to his prize.



**You ran well.
Who hindered you from
obeying the truth? Galatians 5:7**



Improbable Success

Tom Dempsey was born with no right hand and a right club foot (he had no toes!) He wore a modified shoe with a flattened and enlarged toe area, giving somewhat the appearance of a hammer. Despite this handicap, Tom Dempsey became the kicker for five different NFL teams. He is most widely known for his NFL record 63 yard field goal, kicked in the final 5 seconds to give the New Orleans Saints a 19-17 win over the Detroit Lions in 1970. This record still stands as of 2006, although it was tied by Jason Elam of the Denver Broncos in 1998.



RECEIVE YOUR PRIZE

In Olympic and other races, there is only one first place winner. This can be demoralizing for those who work hard but do not win. The Christian race is very different: each person competes against himself and is rewarded by God based on his own works.

Who does God reward? (Hebrews 11:6) _____

What is our reward? (1 Corinthians 9:25) _____

How long must we run to receive our reward?
(Revelation 2:10)



What must we do to prevent someone from stealing our reward? (Revelation 3:11)

How and when are rewards given out? (Revelation 22:12, Matthew 16:27)



Receiving Our Reward

Jesus instructs us on some of the ways we must run to receive our reward. Read Luke 6:23, Matthew 5:11-12, Luke 6:35, and Matthew 6:1-18. Answer with true or false and correct each false statement.

- T or F If men persecute you and falsely accuse you for Jesus' sake, you will have a great reward in heaven.
- T or F If you love your enemies and give them loans to repay, you will have a great reward.
- T or F The early Christians did charitable deeds to be seen of men and received a great reward in heaven.
- T or F God openly rewards those who do good deeds in secret.
- T or F We are to pray on the corners of the streets..
- T or F We are to hide our fasting so only God can see it.

