



CHAPTER FIFTEEN
THE ETERNAL CROWN

In **1 Corinthians 9: 24-25**, Paul writes,

“Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever”.

This passage serves as a powerful reminder for us as Christians that our ultimate goal is to run the race of life in such a way that we will receive the eternal crown that God has promised to those who perseveres until the end. Just as athletes undergo strict training to compete for a temporary crown, we must be willing to endure the trials and challenges of life in order to receive the everlasting reward that awaits us in heaven.

The idea of running as a metaphor for the Christian life is a recurring theme throughout the Bible. In **Hebrews 12: 1-2**, we are encouraged to:

“Run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith”.

Just as runners stay focused on the finish line in order to reach their goal, we must keep our eyes fixed on Jesus as we navigate the ups and downs of life.

Brothers and Sisters, as Christians, we are called to run with perseverance and endurance, knowing that the eternal crown that awaits us is far more valuable than any earthly reward. Friends! Just as athletes must train diligently and stay committed to their goal in order to win the prize, we must be willing to make sacrifices and remain steadfast in our faith in order to receive the crown of eternal life.

In the book “The Art of Running”, we are able to draw the parallels between running and the Christian life in a profound and insightful way. Beloved, just as runners must train their bodies and minds in order to compete at the high level, we must train our hearts and minds in order to live a life that is pleasing to God.

One of the key lessons that can be gleaned from both scripture and “The Art of Running” is the importance of pressing on towards the prize, despite the obstacles and challenges that may come our way. In *Philippians 3:13-14* Paul writes,

“Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus”.

This passage serves as a powerful reminder that we must not become discouraged by past failures or setbacks, but rather continue to press on towards the eternal crown that God has promised to those who love Him.

Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, the ultimate example of endurance and perseverance, as we continue to run the race of life. Brethren, let us train ourselves in righteousness, seeking to live a life that is pleasing to God in all that we do. And let us never lose sight of the eternal crown that awaits us, knowing that the trials of this present life are temporary, while the rewards of heaven are eternal.

May we be encouraged by the reminder that our ultimate goal is to receive the eternal crown that God has promised to those who faithfully run the race of life. Just as athletes go through rigorous training to compete for a temporary crown, we must be willing to endure the challenges and hardships of life in order to receive the everlasting reward that awaits us in heaven.

Great friends, let us remember that the Christian life is a race that requires perseverance, endurance, and dedication. Runners must stay focused on the finish line in order to reach their goal; we must keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who is the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. Let us trust in God's promises and continue to press on towards the prize of eternal life, as we navigate through the ups and downs of life.

Thus, may we be inspired by the examples of discipline, perseverance, and dedication in both running and the Christian life. Dear friends, let us learn from the lessons of scripture and apply them to our own lives, as we strive to live a life that is pleasing to God. And may we always remember that the trials of the present life are temporary, but the rewards of heaven are eternal.

Then, as we run the race of life, let us do so with faith, determination, and a steadfast commitment to following Christ. Let us run in such a way as to receive the crown that will last forever, knowing that our efforts and sacrifices are not in vain. And may we be motivated by the hope of the eternal crown that awaits us, as we continue to press on towards the goal of heavenward in Christ Jesus.