



New Vision
The Art of Winning
1 Corinthians 9:24-25
August 1st and 4th

MAIN POINT

Our purpose in life is to know God and love Him above all else and this is how we find the ways to truly win in our lives!

INTRODUCTION

Think about the greatest sports moments that you have ever experienced. The best moments that we enjoy are when our team wins. Whether it is the miracle of the 1980 Olympics for USA Hockey, the time that your favorite team won on a last second hail-mary in the end-zone, or the time that your favorite player hit the basket at the end of the game.

Share with your group a “great sports moment” that you remember.

When it comes to being a Christ-follower, we are called to understand what it looks like to win in our lives and God has shown us in His Word.

The Great Commission tells us in Matthew 28:19-20 to “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.”

As we see in these verses, the art of winning in the Christian life is learning to obey the Lord. For our discussion today, we will discuss how so I walk through victory in my life and what it means for me to obey the Lord.

UNDERSTANDING

| Have a volunteer read 1 Corinthians 9:24-25.

“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.”

If you were a player in a game, what could be some distractions. What things distract you from living your life with purpose?

Running to get the prize is to pursue the Lord and His plan for our lives. What measures can we take to ensure that we are living with a gospel-centered purpose?

Paul clearly saw his “highest and best use” as knowing God and helping others do the same. Paul kept himself focused on the task of knowing God and making God known by disciplining himself. Just as athletes must faithfully and consistently train themselves in order to succeed in their sport, so too must Christians discipline themselves to pursue Christ.

In the sermon, there are three parts of the game that are discussed that can help us win in the game of life in following Jesus:

1. Special Teams

Special Teams in sports are often the most overlooked area in the game, however, especially in football, they are a key part of the strategy of a great team. In the Christian life, it is important for us to remember the supernatural power of the gospel in our lives that can transform us from defeated to winners.

Read the following passages and answer the questions.

Romans 8:11, “And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of His Spirit who lives in you.”

The resurrection of Jesus Christ was a promised miracle and defeated death once and for all. *What does it mean for you to know that trusting in Jesus’ resurrection gives you victory? What does it look like in your life to live in the resurrection power of Jesus everyday?*

Ephesians 3:20, “Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us...”

God’s power through the Holy Spirit works in our lives far beyond what we think or imagine. Therefore, instead of living defeated, we have the Spirit of Christ in our lives that gives us victory.

What are some areas of your life that you are seeking God to work through right now? What does it look like in your life to surrender these to the Lord instead of trying to fix them on your own?

2 Corinthians 10:3-4, “For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have power to demolish strongholds.”

Paul further emphasizes how it’s not with our flesh that the struggles we face are conquered. It is only through the power of God and the weapons he provides.

What are some weapons that God has at your disposal that you have been reluctant to use or overlooked in the past?

What is a stronghold you are facing that you believe is too big? Why are you holding onto it or allowing it to hold onto you? How can it build our faith in the Lord when he promises to demolish strongholds?

2. Defense

In a recent Super Bowl, the Seattle Seahawks were on the verge of scoring against the New England Patriots. As Russell Wilson threw what he believed to be the game-winning touchdown to the end-zone, a New England Patriot defender intercepted the pass securing the win for the Patriots.

The game was won by how the team played defense. When we look at our lives, we recognize that there are some things that we become exposed to and yet we are called to guard our hearts and minds. There are steps that we can take to help us develop a strong defense, even when we feel the pressure is right in front of us to give in.

Read the Scripture and answer the questions.

Romans 13:14, “Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.”

Paul viewed salvation similar to taking off an old, dirty garment and putting on a new coat in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). What happens when we put on the new garment is that if we aren't careful, we can be convinced to try and look for the old garment. Following Jesus is not a matter of do's and don'ts, but it is about being sensitive to those things that can hinder our spiritual growth.

What does it mean to you that you are made new in Jesus Christ?

How does understanding who we are in Jesus help us to remain defensive?

Is there an area of your life that looks like your old life before Christ that you are allowing to come back in?

Is there something hindering your spiritual growth? Is there someone that you can share this with to help you be accountable in your defenses?

3. Offense

There are certain players in sports that are called weapons on offense. They are the “go-to” players when a big play is needed to help the team to score. The same is true in our lives in that the Lord has given us His “go-to” weapon to help us push forward in gaining the victory: The Bible!

Read the Scripture and answer the questions.

Colossians 2:6-7, “So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”

When we live for the Lord, we are not living out our own prerogative or plan. Rather, we are called to live for Jesus every day! We learn how to live for Him by engaging Him in reading the Bible and spending time in prayer and reflection. The blessing comes that when we are “rooted” in His Word, we will receive strength to overcome the enemy.

To begin this fall semester, what is a way that you can grow in being rooted in His Word? Share with the group a time that you were strengthened in your faith. What does it look like in your life to be “overflowing in thankfulness”? How can this look in areas of our lives that need to see Jesus (work, school, neighbors, etc)?

APPLICATION

What are some practical ways this week that we might discipline ourselves to pursue Christ?

What is one defense you can put up in your life to guard against the enemy attacks?

What is a way that you can engage with the Lord more this week in His Word or in prayer?

Spend time in prayer as a group for this semester that the Lord would show you how to grow individually and collectively!