

## How to Be More Motivated than an Olympic Champion

The Isthmian Games of the Greek Peninsula were the forerunner of our modern Olympic games.

**The umpire of these games presided from a raised platform called the "judgment seat."** From there he watched the events, and from there he ultimately rewarded the winners.

I Corinthians 9:24-26 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the \_\_\_\_\_? Run in such a way that you will get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games puts himself under \_\_\_\_\_. They do it to get a crown that will not last. We do it to get a crown that will last forever.



Blanks: prize; strict training

How motivated are the champions who win an **Olympic gold medal, the World Series, a Super Bowl ring, or a Stanley Cup?**

Think of the intense effort that goes into it...not just during preseason training. **Their lives are built around this quest.**

Isthmian games—laurel crown, **free from taxation**, tuition, incredible welcome home

**What do our Olympic gold medalists receive?**

Honor, fame, open doors to all kinds of opportunity, endorsements, riches, increased ability to influence others...

**Becoming an Olympic champion changes the way people view you.**

How motivated are the actual champions who win an **Olympic gold medal, the World Series, a Super Bowl ring, or a Stanley Cup?**

Think of the intense effort that goes into it...not just during preseason training. **Their lives are built around this quest.**

**It affects:    how they eat,  
                  how they sleep,  
                  what they think about,  
                  who they hang out with,  
                  who they listen to, etc.**

“Surround yourself with people most like the person you want to become. Stay away from anyone who can or will bring you down.” –Tom Hopkins

They are **thirsty for knowledge**, for any piece of information that might make them faster or stronger or more skilled.

**Some Olympic hopefuls move across the country** so they can train under a great coach who knows what it takes and with other athletes of Olympic caliber who share the same dedication.

Many athletes have Olympic-caliber talent, but they lack the other attributes of a champion: vision, discipline, determination, focus, perseverance, confidence, and hope.

To make it, to become a champion at that level, you must really be on a quest.

### **Now what about the spiritual realm?**

How many Christians do you know who seek to please God **with as much diligence and intensity as an Olympic athlete seeking a gold medal?**

To acquire motivation exceeding that of an Olympic athlete, a Christian must simply \_\_\_\_\_ about what is at stake.

blank: believe the truth

**What would happen to Christianity if Christians came to believe that one reward from God is worth more than an Olympic gold medal--by a million fold?**

**What would happen to Christianity** if Christians were more motivated than any athlete on earth?

**Then we would be on a quest, wouldn't we?**

- A quest to fulfill our calling—God put us on this earth for a purpose.

- A quest to make our lives count for God's Kingdom, to make them as valuable as possible.
- A quest to delight the heart of God.

**Many Christians treat God's rewards as if they don't matter.** They rarely if ever even think about reward. It doesn't affect the way they live their lives.

**If we never think about reward or if we hold the false notion that all will get the same reward in heaven, we will lack motivation God intended us to have.**

**The church has been lacking incredible motivation God intended her to have because she has neglected an incredible truth God intended her to have.**

**What would happen to Christianity** if Christians came to believe that one reward from God is worth more than an Olympic gold medal by a million fold?

**What would the church be like if she were properly motivated...if Christians were more motivated to win the prize than any athlete on the face of the earth?**

**Many Christians treat God's rewards as if they don't matter.** They rarely if ever even think about reward. It doesn't affect they way they live their lives.

**Eternal reward MATTERS.** It must deeply grieve God's heart when Christians treat it lightly. If God calls something "TREASURE" and tells us to seek it, is it not disrespectful to God (and unbelievably foolish) of us to think it's no big deal?



**One reward from God is worth more than anything on the face of the earth.**

At best...it will last only as long as your life on earth. **(which is but a vapor)**

**With an Olympic gold medal, a Stanley Cup, a Super Bowl ring, their glory fades**

In contrast the Bible says **God's rewards have glory that never fades.**

## **And we're not talking about the praise of man here!**

**What could be better than having God be genuinely pleased with your life?**

**What could be better than living a significant life, a life God uses to bless many others--forever?**

**What could be better than meeting people in heaven who inform you that God used you to bring them there?**

**One reward from God is worth more than anything on the face of the earth.**

**If we never think about reward or if we hold the false notion that all will get the same reward in heaven, we will lack motivation God intended us to have.**

Those who are rich in heavenly treasure will not be sifting gold coins through their fingers as they giggle uncontrollably.

- They will be rich in God's pleasure
- They will enjoy the satisfaction of living a significant life: expanding God's Kingdom and bringing Him glory
- They will be able to enter into the joy of their Master
- They will enjoy wonderful intimacy with God
- They will be useful to Him forever
- They will be able to "take hold of the life which is life indeed"

**Is it wrong to seek these things?** Obviously not. On the contrary, Jesus commands it! He tells us to lay up treasures for ourselves in heaven (Matthew 6:20). He urges us to become "rich toward God" (Luke 12:21).

**The alternative to receiving reward is to live a worthless life.** If I receive no reward, that means nothing survived God's test of fire. Everything burned up. I lived a life that brought no glory to Jesus Christ.

## Rewards show the value of a life lived for God.

### Giving Credit Where Credit is Due

In Rev. 4:9-10 the elders cast their crowns at Jesus' feet. They are acknowledging, "Lord, I'm just trying to give credit where credit is due. All the works I did in my own righteousness and strength got burned up. The rewards I received were for those things that You did through me, so these rewards should really go to You!"

This is not a one-time event. They don't lose the crowns that they cast at Jesus' feet. This passage says they cast their crowns, not once, but **whenever** the four living creatures give glory to the One seated on the throne.

Just as no branch can bear fruit apart from the vine, we cannot bear good fruit apart from Him. Therefore, **these rewards bring continual honor to Jesus Christ.**

### What are "treasures in heaven"?

(What causes our works to be gold, silver and precious stones?)

**"If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing."**

--1 Cor. 13: 3

**"Charge the rich in this world not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on uncertain riches, but on God who richly furnishes us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good deeds, liberal and generous, thus laying up for themselves a good foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life which is life indeed."**

--1 Timothy 6:17-19

**"And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more...so that you...may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruits of righteousness which come through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God."**

--Philippians 1:9-11

## Multiplying your Impact

At the Judgment Seat God will reward us not only for our “doings” but also for **“the fruit of our doings”** (Jeremiah 17:10). He will show us what He accomplished through our lives throughout the generations.

**How astounding it will be when Jesus unveils the full repercussions of each act of kindness, of each word of encouragement, of each dollar given to His Kingdom’s work.**

In Philippians 4:17 Paul thanks the Philippians for investing in his ministry, and then he makes a statement with incredible implications: **“Not that I seek the gift; I seek the fruit, which increases to your account.”**

## **The Laws of Sowing and Reaping:**

### **1) You don’t reap at the same time you sow**

**“And let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season you shall reap, if you do not lose heart” (Galatians 6:9).**

**“Sow your seed in the morning and in the evening withhold not your hand, for you do not know which will prosper, this or that, or perhaps both” (Ecclesiastes 11:6).**



### **2) You reap much more than you sow**

### **3) You reap in proportion to the amount you sow**

**“He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully” (2 Corinthians 9:6).**

Isn’t it amazing that God wants to impact His Kingdom *forever* through your life!

## **If only we could realize how much this life matters!**

**1 Cor. 15:58 Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.**

*Only one life, which soon will pass;  
only what's done for Christ will last.*

# What Can One Person Do?

(Story from Tell It Like It Is, a Gospel Light Publication,)

**Available on book table!**

**In 1858 a Sunday school teacher, a Mr. Campbell, led a Boston shoe clerk to give his life to Christ. The clerk, Dwight L. Moody, became an evangelist and in England in 1879 awakened evangelistic zeal in the heart of Fredrick B. Meyer, pastor of a small church.**

**F. B. Meyer, preaching on an American college campus, brought a student to Christ named J. Wilbur Chapman. Chapman engaged in YMCA work and employed a former baseball player, Billy Sunday, to do evangelistic work. Sunday held a revival in Charlotte, NC.**

**A group of local men were so enthusiastic afterwards that they planned another evangelistic campaign, bringing Mordecai Hamm to town to preach. In the revival a young man named Billy Graham heard the gospel and yielded his life to Christ...and the story goes on.**

**Could the Sunday School teacher, Mr. Campbell, dream of what he had started when he was concerned about a young lad in his class?**

**Is it possible a chain reaction that will affect the next hundred years might be started by you?**