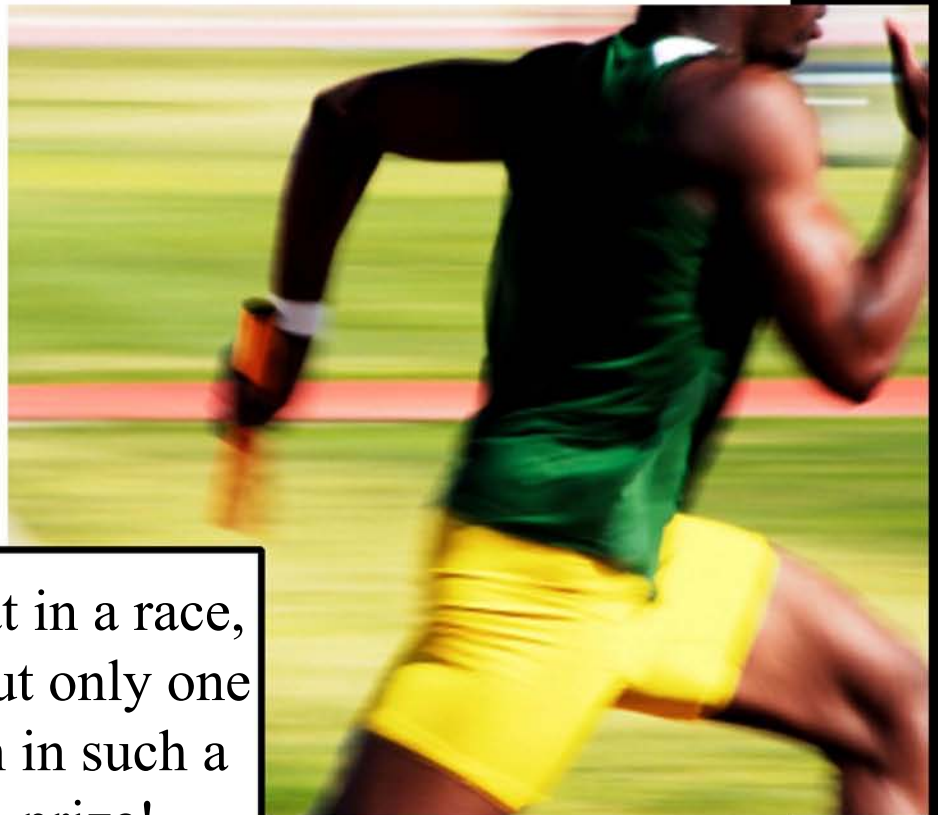


# BEING A CHRISTIAN ATHLETE



Do you not know that in a race,  
all the runners run, but only one  
wins the prize? Run in such a  
way as to win the prize!

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# Concordance Challenge – Being a Christian Athlete

**Objective:** To teach students the basics of using a concordance and to examine the many references to athleticism found in the Bible.

**Materials:** Excerpt from the novel, *Chop, Chop*  
Multiple Choice Questions Sheet  
Concordance  
Bible

**Strategy:** (Students may be divided into teams or partners if desired.)

(1) Have students read the excerpt from the novel, *Chop, Chop*.

(2) Distribute copies of the multiple choice questions sheet, concordances and Bibles.

(3) After students have been given an overview of how to use a concordance, allow them to find each passage, thereby determining the author.

✂ Note: Question 5 is a trick question. This verse is found in Hebrews and its authorship is unknown.

# Being a Christian Athlete

*Read the following excerpt from the novel Chop, Chop:*

In the afternoon we broke up for more sessions in conference rooms. Greg and I had both signed up for one together called “Being a Christian Athlete” which I thought was going to be about being a Christian athlete.

“You’re a real idiot, you know that?” Greg said when I told him that.

“What’s it going to be about then?” I asked.

“You know,” he said, “running with patience the race that is set before us. . . fighting the good fight . . . faithfully running the course?”

“Oh.”

Of course he was right, but it was still really good and mostly guys had signed up for it, so I figured I wasn’t the only one who had misunderstood what it was going to be about.

I had never really understood before how many references there were in the Bible that compared staying faithful to Christ with competing in an athletic event. The session leader told us that winners of races back then were awarded a crown of leaves. Even though they were evergreen they would eventually wither and die.

“But,” he said, “we’re told in Corinthians that the crown we obtain as Christians is incorruptible.”

At the end of the session we were shown pictures of Derek Redmond, a British runner who had competed in the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, Spain.

We saw pictures of him training, competing and winning all of his qualifying heats. Then – with 250 meters out of 400 to go in his semifinal heat – we saw pictures of him falling, then getting up, trying to finish his race.

He had torn his hamstring, but he continued down the track, hopping on one leg, crying, and trying to finish. His father somehow got past security and ran out onto the track, putting his arm around his son and helping him to make it across the finish line.

“You’ve *got* to finish the race,” the session leader told us. “And sometimes you can’t do it alone. That’s why it’s vitally important that you make Christian friends . . . that you have others who will help you when you stumble and fall.”

Greg looked at me and smiled and I smiled back and I really did appreciate that we would be there for each other. But sitting there in that conference room that day in Chicago, I felt so right with God that I honestly could not imagine that there might come a time when I would stumble and fall.

# Concordance Challenge

As indicated in the previous passage, there are a number of references made in the Bible to athleticism, running, and prizes. Each of the following verses deals with athletes, racing, crowns or prizes. Using a concordance and Bible, determine the author of each of each verse.

When using a concordance, search for unusual words in the verse instead of more common words. For example, in Question 3, you will find that the word “Blessed” is used much more often than the word “Crown”. Searching for the word “Crown” will make it easier for you to find the proper verse.

All Scripture is taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version. Using a concordance from a version other than this can prove to be quite challenging. For example, in Question 2, the verse (when taken from the Revised Standard Version) reads: *Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.*

**Luke (Lu), James (Ja), Paul (Pa) or Peter (Pe)**

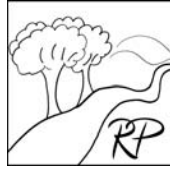
1. \_\_\_\_\_ Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

4. \_\_\_\_\_ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.
5. \_\_\_\_\_...and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly, I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ But I did this privately to those who seemed to be leaders, for fear that I was running or had run my race in vain.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ You were running a good race. Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the truth?
9. \_\_\_\_\_ - in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ Fight the good fight of the faith.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the rules.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day – and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

## Answers

1. Paul 1 Corinthians 9:24
2. Paul 1 Corinthians 9:25
3. James James 1:12
4. Peter 1 Peter 5:4
5. unknown Hebrews 12:01
6. Paul 1 Corinthians 9:26-27
7. Paul Galatians 2:02
8. Paul Galatians 5:07
9. Paul Philippians 2:16
10. Paul 1 Timothy 4:8
11. Paul 1 Timothy 6:12
12. Paul 2 Timothy 2:05
13. Paul 2 Timothy 4:08

Note: Number 5 is a trick question as the author of Hebrews is unknown. Traditionally, this book has been credited to Paul, although few authorities actually believe that it was indeed authored by Paul.



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