

Purpose

To look at the Christian life using the Bible and ideas based on the upcoming Olympics in London 2012.

Ice Breaker

Say your name, favourite film or TV programme and where you'd most like to go on holiday

Questions

Which major sporting stars can you name along with the brand names they are identified with? Make sure you keep this up to date, as names and personalities change / depend on which nation you're from. Below are the highest paid athletes and their main sponsors (as of April 2019).

Roger Federer - Uniqlo

LeBron James - Nike

Lionel Messi - Adidas

Cristiano Ronaldo - Nike

Steph Curry - UnderArmour

Tiger Woods - Nike

The Themes

- Training
- Competing
- Winning
- Developing Yourself

Game

2 teams have to quick draw examples of different Olympic sports, then to guess sport. Have to stand on the spot to act out the sport (no speaking allowed).

- Hockey, Quick walking, Basketball
- Cycling, Table tennis, Javelin
- Boxing, Hurdles, Pole vault
- Backstroke, Long jump, Bobsleigh

Bible verses to look at and read out

1. 'I don't care about my own life. The most important thing is that I complete my mission, the work that the Lord Jesus gave me – to tell people the Good News about God's grace.' (Acts 20.24)

2. 'You know that in a race all the runners run but only one gets the prize. So run to win! All those who compete in the games use self-control so they can win a crown. That crown is an earthly thing that only lasts a short time, but our crown will never be destroyed. So I do not run without a goal. I fight like a boxer who is hitting something – not just the air. I treat my body hard and make it my slave so that I myself will not be rejected after I have preached to others.' (1 Cor 9.24-27)

3. 'You were running a good race. Who stopped you from following the true way?' (Galatians 5.7)

4. I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.' (2 Timothy 4.7)

SONG

For this I used 'Mr Chris T. Ian' on the 'Take Two' album by Ill Harmonics, US Christian rappers (on Uprok Records, distributed by Alliance in the UK). It talks about Christian hypocrisy, church, living the life for Christ and more - <https://youtu.be/rBf1Qxnv1rY>

Training – 1 Corinthians 9.24-27

The Christian life is not easy – it is like a race.

Question – what kinds of things do athletes do to prepare? (Diet, exercise, practice, watch film of themselves and others, use computers, isotonic drinks)

Question – what do we need to do that's similar as Christians? (Watch what we eat, what we say, our thoughts, our lifestyle, our actions, our spiritual and physical health)

Competing – Acts 20.24

Jesus says in the Bible in John 15.19 we have to be live in the world but not be part of it. He says that people in the world will oppose Christians and we see that – over 250,000 Christians were killed last year because of their faith. But we have to be strong. How? Well, see the training above and go see Ephesians 6. Our Christian life is like constantly competing in races.

Winning – Galatians 5.7 and 2 Timothy 4.7

Athletes run to win (mostly). If they didn't run to win, taking part would

be pointless. Top athletes think of winning, see themselves winning, have the desire to put winning above all other things. What about you? Paul didn't even care about his own life!!

Developing Yourself

Athletes do amazing amounts of training and preparation as we've seen. However, the Bible says this in 1 Timothy 4:7-9: (NIV)

"Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be Godly. 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. This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance."

So we know that physical training is of some value. So this is important - we are to look after the Temple of the Holy Spirit (our bodies).

But this also includes our minds and especially the spiritual side of our character. In fact, the Bible says we should train ourselves to be Godly. So we learn that being Godly doesn't always come easily or naturally. It needs work, effort, time, determination and perseverance.

The Bible also talks about training yourself. You see, you don't get fed by your parents physically all your life, under normal circumstances. You have to learn to feed yourself to survive. The same is true spiritually. You have a responsibility for your spiritual development - this means reading the Bible, praying, hanging out with positive Christians, not doing things to undermine your faith, reading books and watching DVDs that build you up etc.

Finally, we learn that Godliness has value for **all** things - holding promise for the present life and the eternal life to come. Godliness will build up a wealth in this lifetime and in the next. It has a value in all things. So it will benefit you in every way (though it may not be always obvious). One example would be honesty and integrity meaning you don't get into trouble from corruption. **What else do you think this means?**

Check out 2 Timothy 3.16 from The Amplified Bible which will guide you [and help](#):

"Every Scripture is God-breathed (given by His inspiration) and profitable for instruction, for reproof and conviction of sin, for correction of error and discipline in obedience, [and] for training in righteousness (in holy living, in conformity to God's will in thought, purpose, and action).."

So we know that the Scripture (God's written word) will **train** you in righteousness - this means holy living, knowing and doing God's will in thought, action and purpose. Wow!

PRAYER TIME

Lord, please help us put into practice what we've learned. Lord I pray that you would show me when I'm going off track and help me to run the race for you. Lord I want to hear and know your voice and obey you, so that I will always stand for you all my life. I want to know your Word and live out what it says at all times. Amen