

**Quick Backdrop**

Think about the last time you started something but didn't finish. What made you start? When we're excited about starting something new, it's easy at first. But as we know, new things get old and it becomes harder to keep up the momentum. Faith is a lot like this. It's a journey. There will be days when your journey feels like you are pushing a huge rock up a hill and other days when that same rock is rolling down hill on its own—and giving you a fun ride with it. With the ups and downs and twists and turns of life it is very important to keep your momentum going in your relationship with God. If you are not keeping your momentum going, then you are losing momentum.

**1 Digging In (God, Show Me!)**

Read the passage below. To best interact with it you may want to print it or paste it into an e-doc. As you read through this passage underline anything that gives you insight into spiritual momentum.

**1 Corinthians 9:24-25 (NIV)**

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 lasts forever.

**2 Taking It Inward (God, Teach Me!)**

Paul, who wrote the passage above, accomplished a lot for Jesus in his day. He travelled all over the world sharing the good news. Sometimes he was welcomed into communities with excitement and anticipation. Other times he was beaten, flogged, stoned and even thrown into jail! Not so welcomed. With all this chaos Paul had to keep perspective. Momentum was critical.

Paul's secret to momentum was also found in the lives of athletes. Look again at 1 Corinthians 9:24-25. Can you find Paul's secret? \_\_\_\_\_

Here's what we found: strict training. Strict training is what keeps you steady on difficult days. Strict training will be what keeps you steady on easy days.

Fold or Cut

Think about the training an athlete goes through to maintain momentum in his or her sport. With that in mind, answer the follow questions.

**What makes someone start training?**

**How do you think they push through the hard days?**

**Do you think they do it alone?**

Now think about your faith and answer the following questions.

**What does strict training look like for your faith?**

**What are some of the things that get in the way of your training?**

**Do you feel stronger when other people are training with you?**

**3 Seal the Deal (God, Change Me!)**

God's goal is forward motion. Paul uses the example of a runner because no runner runs slowly and nonchalantly towards the finish line stopping to pick flowers or buy an ice cream. Finishing a race requires steady, intense concentration. Allowing distractions will prolong finishing. Keeping momentum requires work, it requires personal motivation and it requires other people.

What is one thing concerning your faith journey, that you started, but has lost momentum? Write it in the space below.

Here are a few suggestions as you think about your strict training.

- Set goals that are attainable. (For example: It's a huge jump to set a goal to read your Bible an hour a day if you currently never read your Bible.)
- Write your goals down.
- Find someone to train with you.
- Put a reminder in your phone or on your calendar.
- Make it fun.
- Talk about it.
- Most importantly remember tomorrow is a new day. If you miss a day, just start over the next day.