

Pursuing the Championship Trophy

1. NFL athletes rigorously pursue for eight months a super bowl title
2. Thousands of bikers travel rugged terrain to seek the crown for the Tour De France.
3. And NBA athletes spend eight months in pursuit of world championship title.
4. But every believer and recipient of Calvary's blood and grace is in hot pursuit of the intimate fresh encounter of the transforming presence of God. They pursue a crown that is incorruptible and fades not away.
5. God likes to be pursued by His people for intimate relationships.
6. Professional sports athletes train ferociously for months putting their bodies through unimaginable training to win the victors crown. 1 Cor. 9:24-27 says, 'Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So, run your race that you may lay hold of the prize and make it yours. [25] Now every athlete who goes into training conducts himself temperately and restricts himself in all things. They do it to win a wreath that will soon wither, but we do it to receive a crown of eternal blessedness that cannot wither. [26] Therefore I do not run uncertainly (without definite aim). I do not box like one beating the air and striking without an adversary. [27] But like a boxer I buffet my body handle it roughly, discipline it by hardships and subdue it, for fear that after proclaiming to others the Gospel and things pertaining to it, I myself should become unfit not stand the test, be unapproved and rejected as a counterfeit.'

1 Thessalonians 2:19 AMPC

[19] For what is our hope or happiness or our victor's wreath of exultant triumph when we stand in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? Is it not you?

Philippians 4:1 AMPC

[1] THEREFORE, MY brethren, whom I love and yearn to see, my delight and crown (wreath of victory), thus stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.

2 Timothy 4:8 AMPC

[8] As to what remains henceforth there is laid up for me the victor's crown of righteousness for being right with God and doing right, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me and recompense me on that great day--and not to me only, but also to all those who have loved and yearned for and welcomed His appearing (His return).

- The woman in Song of Solomon chapter five pursued him even after getting beat up and obtained her prize. Her lover was her exceeding great reward. But at first her biggest battle was fighting her comfort zone. She did not want to stretch herself and get up to answer the door.
- God reveals more of Himself, His ways, His character and His love towards us when we pursue Him equal to what professional athletes do.
- He then can trust us with intimate revelation about Himself and others. Psalms 25:14 says 'He shares His secrets to them that fear Him.'
- God desires we pursue Him this way because He doesn't want His love becoming common.

What are the benefits and value for this pursuit of this crown of intimacy?

1. We experience supernatural strength, fortitude, and peace in the testing of our battles. The Bible says Moses' eyes were not dim nor his stature abated. He spent more time in God's presence more than anyone and died at 120 years old.
2. God's voice becomes clearer because we brought the voices of our carnality under an athlete's submission. God shares intimate word revelation with us that we normally never receive. You learn His voice in a personal way to you.
3. He gives us increased spiritual stamina for discipline and long suffering for lost souls, new converts, and unlovable saints. Isaiah 41:10. I will harden you through difficulties. No athlete sees the immediate results until its overtime and everybody is tired and exhausted.
4. Spiritual athleticism in this context means recommitting to a daily undisturbed set time of meeting with God everyday regardless of the demands on your schedule.
5. It means committing to a structured fast schedule.
6. It means committing to quiet time to digest and engraftment the word into your character.
7. It means practicing waiting on God for major decisions for your life through prayer until clear answers are revealed. And learning to enjoy God while you are waiting. Submission with joy.

Tangible impressions

1. An anointing on Sunday's service that will match and overtake the strongholds coming in this building. For healing and deliverance.
2. An increased spirit of unity for vision and servant hood.
3. We disrupted and shook some territory forces here tonight. Especially the spirit of witchcraft.
4. God is going to give increased favor on the finances of His people who are sacrificial giving.
5. We busted up the spirit of depression on some relationships.
6. God has increased the burden for souls and discipleship in the church.
7. God released some mantles tonight.
8. God wants an outpouring of repentance at the altar call of our mid-winter camp.

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