

1 CORINTHIANS:

God's Glorious Church in Real Life

Sermon Title: *“Resolved to be Christ’s Ambassador”*

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Pastor Chris Fritz / Sunday, April 25, 2021

INTRODUCTION

Paul loved...

- Fellow Believers (1 Corinthians 8:13)
- The Gospel (1 Corinthians 9:22-23)
- Unbelievers (1 Corinthians 9:19)

Paul was willing to break...

- The Natural Sound Barrier
- The Spiritual Sound Barrier
- The Gospel Sound Barrier

“...we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.” (2 Corinthians 5:20-21)

I. RESOLVED TO BE CHRIST’S AMBASSADOR

1) Verses 24-25: Resolve to run with unfading passion for unfading joy!

Note: In verse 25, Paul describes someone who exercises total self-mastery, total self-control. The “agonizomenos” exercise self-control “IN ALL THINGS” (verse 25).

“They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.” (1 Corinthians 9:25b)

“...the crown of righteousness...” (2 Timothy 4:7-8)

“...the crown of life...” (James 1:12)

“...the crown of life...” (Revelation 2:10-11)

2) Verse 26: As a “runner”, resolve to run with your eyes fixed on the eternal finish line!

“But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 3:13b-14)

3) Verses 26-27: As a “boxer”, resolve to never waste your resources but decisively discipline yourself.

Note: The phrase in verse 27, “*I discipline my body*”, could literally be translated as: “I give my body a black eye.” or “I pummel my body and make it a slave.”

Note: The same Christian who is CONFIDENT in God’s sovereign grace should be, at the same time, CONSCIOUS of his/her battle against sin and need for prayerful self-examination!

“Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? - unless indeed you fail to meet the test!” (2 Cor. 13:5)

Questions for Further Study, Reflection, and Application...

1. Where do you see people in our culture living for “perishable wreaths”? Where are you tempted to live for a “perishable wreath”? What does Jesus offer us that is “imperishable”?
2. Where are you tempted to “run aimlessly”, to “beat the air”? How can you seek help and accountability in these areas?
3. Why does Paul focus on self-discipline and self-control in verse 27? Why are these so important?
4. Why is it important for us to prayerfully examine ourselves and our lives?