



## Week Four – Olympic Trials: Olympic Crowns

### CONNECT

- After completing a difficult task, what are the ways you like to reward yourself?

### WORD

#### **2 Timothy 4:7-8 (NIV)**

*7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. 8 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 His appearing.*

### THOUGHT

Becoming a Christian is for the most part easy. We acknowledge to God that we are sinners and receive by faith and grace the gift of eternal life through Christ's sacrifice on the cross. We cannot work for salvation nor do anything to earn it. God gives this freely to us as we recognize the need for Christ and trust in Him. But then comes the hard part, fighting the good fight, hanging in there as a Christian in a world that is hostile towards God and His people. As the world dangles everything it has to offer in front of our faces, the real test of our faith is, can we endure? Can we finish the course? Have we kept our faith? Paul shares in 2 Timothy 4, that this is possible. This fight is a marathon, not a 100-yard dash and the reward at the end is a crown of righteousness, given to us by God.

Olympic Story: Tracee Talavera was the first Latina to make the U.S Women's Gymnastics Team. The Mexican-American athlete participated in the Los Angeles Olympics in 1984, that year Team USA took home the silver medal.

## DISCUSSION

1. Do you share Paul's hope for the future? How does it motivate you now?

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2. Should we as believers be motivated by the thought of heavenly rewards? How can we keep that motivation pure?

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3. In verse 7, Paul shares that he has fought the good fight, finished his course and has kept the faith. How do Paul's words challenge the life you are living? Can you make these same statements?

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4. When do you most feel like dropping out of the race? What encourages you to keep going at those times?

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5. Are you fighting the good fight of faith, no matter what persecution and suffering you face?

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## PERSONAL APPLICATION

- Spend time this week, looking back on your journey, your part in the good fight, taking notes on the victories and shortcomings, share with a friend these moments and pray through them together for continual faith in the fight

## PRAYER

- This week spend time praying, asking God to give you the endurance to run the race, to fight the good fight, to keep on course and be faithful
- Pray, asking God to show you the areas in your fight that you need his free help. Pray for an action plan to finish the course strong