



PART 3

AN APPROVED WORKMAN: LEADERSHIP HELD TO A BIBLICAL STANDARD

Chapter Ten

HOW NOT TO BE DISQUALIFIED

And thus Paul highlighted for us another critical, indispensable, and supremely important quality every leader must maintain: *A leader is disciplined.*

LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLE #23 **A LEADER IS DISCIPLINED**

Paul often portrayed life as an athletic competition like the running of a race ([Acts 20:24](#); [Galatians 2:2](#); [Galatians 5:7](#); [Philippians 2:16](#); [Philippians 3:13–14](#); [2 Timothy 2:5](#)).

[Acts 20:24 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁴“But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, **so that I may finish my course and the ministry** which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.”

[Galatians 2:2 \(NASB\)](#)

²“It was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but *I did so* in private to those who were of reputation, **for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain.**”

[Galatians 5:7 \(NASB\)](#)

⁷“**You were running well**; who hindered you from obeying the truth?”

[Philippians 2:16 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁶“Holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because **I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.**”



Philippians 3:13-14 (NASB)

¹³“Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead,

¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

2 Timothy 2:5 (NASB)

⁵“Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules.”

He was determined to win the race. He did not want to stumble or collapse before reaching the finish line. In 1 Corinthians 9:24–27, he wrote these words, which give wonderful insight into the heart of a true leader:

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (NASB)

²⁴“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but *only* one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.

²⁵Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then *do it* to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.

²⁶Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air;

²⁷but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified [*adokimos*].”

The Greek word translated “disqualified” in [verse 27](#) is *adokimos*. It speaks of being rejected, eliminated by a rule violation, disapproved.

It’s the same word translated “reprobate” in the [King James Version](#) of [Romans 1:28](#) (“God gave them over to a reprobate mind”).

Romans 1:28 (KJV)

²⁸“And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.”

Romans 1:28 (NASB)

²⁸“And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper.”

Paul was describing the sort of **shameful, disgraceful, personal elimination** that occurs when an athlete is found to have deliberately cheated or otherwise violated the rules of the race.

Obviously, Paul had no fear that his enemies might disqualify him by their attacks on his apostolic credentials. He weathered all such attacks with supreme confidence and conviction, as we have already observed. But here he was talking about an entirely different kind of disqualification. He was saying he did not want to render *himself* ineligible. He did not want to crash and burn morally and be spiritually disqualified.

CH-110 LEADERSHIP 1

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Lecture # 61



This is a grave danger for all in leadership. The leader's confidence in his own calling must be matched and balanced by a holy dread of personal spiritual failure. Leaders are exposed to unique and singular temptations. Because of the critical role they play, they face extraordinary attacks from the powers of darkness. Pride has been a peculiar snare for many; a lack of purity and self-control has caused others to founder. Moral and personal default has been the downfall of many in leadership. It all stems from a lack of discipline.