



**1 Corinthians 9:19-23**

**19** For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. **20** To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. **21** To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. **22** To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. **23** I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.

*What has Paul used his freedom to do?*

*In our own lives, how can we seek to better identify with those God may be calling us to serve?*

*How can we balance out a good desire to identify with a group for the sake of the gospel with the dangers of identifying with worldly and sinful ways that are associated with some groups?*

**Philippians 2:1-11**

**1** So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, **2** complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. **3** Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. **4** Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. **5** Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, **6** who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, **7** but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. **8** And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. **9** Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, **10** so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

*In what way did Jesus Christ become weak so that he might win the weak?*

*Go back and read 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5. How is weakness a part of Paul's message and ministry?*



### **1 Corinthians 9:24-27**

**24** Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. **25** Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. **26** So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. **27** But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

*Every two years Corinth held athletic competitions and Paul's audience likely had its share of sports enthusiasts. In his sports illustrations, what is Paul trying to say?*

*What happens to athletes that do not exhibit neither self-control nor discipline? Can you think of any examples?*

*Being a "disciple" is a life with certain "disciplines." What disciplines and practices are part of your Christian life? What disciplines do you wish were a part of your life?*

*It is key to remember that these disciplines are not aimless (or pointless). Like an athlete, we discipline ourselves with a goal. What goal is God setting before us? What happens when we forget the goal and only focus on the discipline?*



### **Hebrews 12:1-2**

**1** Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **2** looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

*If we only focus on the disciplines or practices of Christianity and not the goal, we forget the reason for our actions and they seem like an empty set of rules. Where should our focus be, and why? As we run this race, where can we find encouragement?*

*How can you apply these Scriptures to your life?*