

7. The opening ceremony consisted of all participants taking an oath that they had completed the ten-month training period and that they would not violate any of the rules of the games or resort to unfair tricks.
8. Paul spent a lot of time in Corinth and was obviously aware of these games, especially the Ísthmian games held near Corinth.
9. John, as well as Peter, Paul, and the writer of Hebrews, use these games as a metaphor for the Christian way of life.
10. The training and discipline one must go through in order to prepare for the games is seen as an example of the sacrifice required to advance in the “Power Plan of God.”
11. This idea is applied to the individual who must withstand the pressures of standing fast for truth. The following texts highlight their references to the importance of being a winner believer. First, by Paul:

Philippians 1:27 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel

v. 28 without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God.

v. 29 For it has been granted you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for him,

Philippians 1:30 since you are going through the same struggle [ἀγών (*agón*)]⁴ you saw I had, and now hear that I still have. (NIV)

12. This confidence and courage is seen in several other passages:

Galatians 5:7 You were running a good race. Who cut in on you to keep you from obeying the truth? (NIV)

⁴ “ἀγών. Strife, contention, contest for victory or mastery such as was used in the Greek games of running, boxing, wrestling, etc. Paul applies the word to the evangelical contest against the enemies of man’s salvation. A struggle, contest, contention (Philippians 1:29, 30). (Spiros Zodhiates, gen. ed. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993), 78.



1 Thessalonians 2:2 We had previously suffered and been treated outrageously in Philippi, as you know, but with the help of our God we dared to tell you His gospel in the face of strong opposition [ἀγών (*agōn*)]. (NIV)

Hebrews 10:32 Remember the former days when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, (NASB)

13. We are motivated and encouraged to continue to persevere against all opposition and temptation.

1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith [ἀγωνίζω τὸν καλὸν ἀγῶνα τῆς πίστεως (*agōnizō tón kalón agóna tés pístōs*): To strive in a contest in order to gain the prize, straining every nerve in order to attain the object.] Take hold of eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. (NASB)

Hebrews 5:14 Solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves [γυμνάζω (*gumnázō*): “to train naked, as the Greek athletes. In this context it means to train in godliness to empower the soul.] to distinguish good from evil. (NIV)

Acts 20:24 “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. (NASB)

14. The word for “course” is **δρόμος (*drómos*)** and refers to the footrace in the national games.
15. The implication is that Paul looked on life as a footrace in which he was in competition to win souls for Christ.
16. Paul uses the footrace as an example of the Christian advancing in the Power Plan of God toward the goal of spiritual maturity.

Philippians 3:12 Not that I have already attained all this, or have already been made mature, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me [**the advance to spiritual maturity and resultant imputation of escrow blessings**].

v. 13 Fellow believers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of these things. But one thing is certain: forgetting what is behind and stretching forward to what is ahead,

Philippians 3:14 I press forward toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (EXT)

- a. The rules are that you must train in the gymnasium [Bible class] and you must compete in the stadium [the devil's world].
 - b. The gymnasium represents the training and discipline of learning the game plan in the academic environment of the local church.
 - c. The stadium represents God's perfect plan for the believer inside the divine dynasphere.
 - d. God has decreed every circumstance, or contest, the believer will face in time and He expects that person to apply doctrine to the challenges presented.
 - e. The only approved environment for both the inculcation of doctrine and its application to life and circumstances is the divine dynasphere.
 - f. To live life outside this system is to play outside the rules of engagement and therefore losing your chance for the imputation of divine blessings in both time and eternity.
17. Paul points out that when you run you must run according to the rules:

2 Timothy 2:5 If anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the rules. (NASB)

- a. The rules are that you must train in the gymnasium and you must compete in the stadium.
- b. The gymnasium represents the training and discipline of learning the game plan in the academic environment of the local church.
- c. The stadium represents God's perfect plan for the believer inside the divine dynasphere.
- d. God has decreed every circumstance, or contest, the believer will face in time and He expects the believer to apply doctrine to the challenges presented.
- e. The only approved environment for both the inculcation of doctrine and its application to life is the divine dynasphere.
- f. To attend Bible class or to live life outside the system is to play outside the rules and therefore losing your chance for the prize: escrow blessing in time and in eternity.



18. John clearly outlines the boundaries of the Christian's playing field for the games to be played in the Angelic Conflict.

2 John 9 Everyone who goes on ahead [to be out of bounds] and does not remain [on the field of play] in the teaching of Christ does not have God. The one who remains in this teaching [keeps on having fellowship inside the divine dynasphere] has both the Father and the Son. (NET)

19. The entire process of preparing for the games, its competition, and the prospect of victory is summarized by Paul in:

1 Corinthians 9:24 Do you not know that all the runners in a stadium compete, but only one receives the prize? So run to win.

v. 25 Each competitor must exercise self-control in everything. They do it to receive a perishable crown,⁵ but we an imperishable one.

1 Corinthians 9:26 So I do not run uncertainly or box like one who hits only air.

v. 27 Instead I subdue my body and make it my slave, so that after preaching to others I myself will not be disqualified. (NET)

20. There were definite rewards for winning a race.

21. The pastor is rewarded for leading his congregation to spiritual maturity:

Philippians 2:14 Do everything without grumbling or disputing;

v. 15 so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,

v. 16 holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ [**the Rapture of the Church**] I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain. (NASB)

1 Peter 5:4 When the Chief Shepherd appears, you [**pastors**] will receive the Crown of Glory that will never fade away. (NIV)

⁵ See: The Olympic Games on p. 15 above.



1 Thessalonians 2:19 For who is our hope or joy or crown to boast of before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not of course you?

v. 20 For you are our glory and joy! (NET)

22. The believer who finishes the race will receive the crown:

James 1:12 Happy is the advanced believer who continues to endure testing for the purpose of approval, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised in eternity past for those who have personal love for Him. (EXT)

2 Timothy 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

v. 8 Now there is in store for me a 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 for his appearing. (NIV)

27. These crowns constitute the prize won for the believer who reaches spiritual maturity. These crowns are a part of the believer's escrow blessings in time and eternity.

28. John evaluates the rewards for eternity in Revelation, chapters 2 and 3. The believer who advances to spiritual maturity in time is classified by John in two chapters as: **Τῷ νικῶντι (tōi nikōnti): "To the winner"** and **Ὁ νικῶν (Ho nikōn): The one winning.**

Revelation 2:

v. 7b 'Τῷ νικῶντι (Tōi nikōnti): To the winner, I will grant the privilege to eat from the Tree of Life which is in the Paradise of God.'

v. 10c 'Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.'

v. 17 'Τῷ νικῶντι (Tōi nikōnti): To the winner, I will give blessing from the hidden manna and I will give him a white stone; furthermore, on the stone he has a new name written; no one knows it except the one who receives it.'

v. 26 'Ὁ νικῶν (Ho nikōn): the one winning: even he who keeps my assignments until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations;

v. 28 ... and I will give him the morning star.'

Revelation 3:

v. 5 'Ο νικῶν (*Ho nikōn*): The one winning shall be clothed in the **white toga picta** [the embroidered robe of the winner] and I will never blot his name out of the Book of Life, in fact, I will **acknowledge his new title of royalty** in the presence of My Father and before His angels.'

v. 12 'Ο νικῶν (*Ho nikōn*): The one winning, I will make for him (1) a **stēla** in the temple of My God, furthermore, he will never vanish from history. Also I will blazon on him (2) **the title of My God**, (3) **also the New Jerusalem** which shall descend from heaven from the source of God, and (4) also blazoned with **My new Name**.

Revelation 3:21 'Ο νικῶν (*Ho nikōn*): The one **winning**, I will give the reward of **sitting with Me on My throne**.

IV. Conclusion

1. From today's analysis it is concluded that the mental attitude of the successful soldier and the mental attitude of the successful athlete can be compared to the mental attitude of the successful believer.
2. It requires a type of asceticism that eliminates all distractions which might in any way prevent the advance to victory.
3. To date, 1,232,074 great and famous men and some women have given their lives in the preservation of our national freedom, plus another 1,578,534 wounded.
4. With their blood and lives they have made it possible for us to carry the colors of doctrine into the twenty-first century.
5. However, as important as their contributions have been to our nation, the battles they fought are not as relentless as the ones waged daily in the Angelic Conflict.
6. This unseen battle is far more devastating and carries much more impact historically than the visible clash of arms on history's various battlefields.
7. We constitute the true patriots who must seize the prizes in the Invisible War.

8. We must train and discipline our souls to the point of exhaustion in order to be qualified to pursue the spiritual accolades we have just noted above by John and among others.
9. Invisible historical impact is sure and effective since it is the Pivot which constitutes the unseen cause that has preserved priest and client nations.
10. The Pivot of mature believers constitutes the lone criterion consulted by our Lord in His control of the ebb and flow of human history.
11. Over 1.2 million people have given their lives for this client nation. The positive-volition believers who have spiritually preserved the American effort has shrunk to such a degree that its freedom is in dire jeopardy.
12. Our military is presently being destroyed. Its branches will soon be unable to protect our shores.
13. Over 1.2 million people have given their lives for this client nation. The positive-volition believers who have spiritually preserved the American effort has shrunk to such a degree that its freedom is in dire jeopardy.
14. Our military is presently being destroyed. Its branches will soon be unable to protect our shores.
15. Positive-volition believers, whose duty is to provide the unseen force that is used to maintain order, are likewise abandoning their duties before the Lord.
16. When the visible armed forces and the invisible Pivot are simultaneously shrinking, then those whose intent is to transform this nation into a cosmic hellhole, are primed to fill the void.
17. So yes, tomorrow is Memorial Day, but its celebration has a hollow ring to it. And the primary reason this is true is because believers in this client nation have abandoned their duties in the Invisible War.
18. Tomorrow we will observe Memorial Day. The 1.2 million who gave their lives for our freedom have done their duty and are worthy of honor and gratitude.



19. There have always been Christians who are not all that interested in serious Bible study. But what is really a shame is that this affliction has now infiltrated the souls of those who have also abandoned the exegetical study of Bible doctrine.
20. You, you precious but dwindling few, are the remaining warriors who are willing to hold the fort.
21. In so doing, may we few, we precious few, potentially have the high honor and the esteemed privilege at the Judgment Seat of Christ of having our Lord proclaim, before the entire assembly of the Royal Family of God, “**Τῶ νικῶντι! (tōi nikōnti!): To the winner!** Well done, you good and faithful servants.”

Now Praise We Great and Famous Men
(William G. Tarrant)

Now praise we great and famous men,
The fathers named in story;
And praise the Lord, Who now as then,
Reveals in man His glory.

Praise we the wise and brave and strong,
Who graced their generation,
Who helped the right, and fought the wrong,
And made our folk a nation.

Praise we the glorious names we know,
And they whose names have perished,
Lost, in the haze of long ago,
In silent love be cherished.

In peace, their sacred ashes rest,
Fulfilled their day's endeavor;
They blessed the earth, and they are blessed
Of God and man forever.

(End: Memorial Day 2022: The Mental Attitude of the Winner Believer)

