

Finishing The Course

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 2 Tim 4:7 (KJV)

From February 8 to 24, 2002, Salt Lake City will have hosted the XIX Olympic Winter Games. With 78 events and nearly 2,400 athletes, it will be the largest Winter Games ever.



In 1922, the International Olympic Committee voted to stage “International Sports Week 1924” in Chamonix, France. This event was a complete success and was retroactively named the First Olympic Winter Games. In the first Winter Games, there were 16 NOCs (Nations), 258 athletes (13 women, 245 men), and 16 events. The first event to be decided in Chamonix was the men’s 500m speed skating. The first gold medal went to Charles Jewtraw of the United States. A. Clas Thunberg of Finland earned medals in all five speed skating events: three gold, one silver and one bronze. Norway’s Thorleif Haug dominated Nordic skiing, winning both cross-country races and the Nordic combined. The Canadian ice hockey team won all five of their matches, outscoring their opponents 110 to 3.

The Modern (Summer) Olympics have been held every four years since 1896. The last summer games were held in Sydney, Australia in 2000. In those games there were 199 NOCs (Nations), 10,651 athletes (4,069 women, 6,582 men), and 300 events.

Birth of the Modern Olympic Movement



Although the ancient Games were staged in Olympia, Greece, from 776 BC through 393 AD, it took 1503 years for the Olympics to return. The first modern Olympics were held in Athens, Greece, in 1896. The man responsible for its rebirth was a Frenchman named Baron Pierre de Coubertin.

When he announced in Paris, on a winter's evening in 1892, the forthcoming re-establishment of the Olympic Games, Pierre de Coubertin was applauded, but nobody at the time imagined the scale of the project entailed by reviving the ancient Olympic Games, appointing a committee in charge of organizing them and creating an international movement. The IOC was created on 23 June 1894; the 1st Olympic Games of the modern era opened in Athens on 6 April 1896; and the Olympic Movement has not stopped growing ever since.

Olympism is a state of mind based on equality of sports which are international and democratic. It is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind.

The goal of the Olympic Movement is to contribute to building a peaceful and better world by educating youth through sport practiced without discrimination or any kind, in a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play.

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The Olympic Movement is defined also by the numerous activities in which it engages, such as:

- Promoting sport and competitions through the intermediary of national and international sports institutions worldwide.
- Cooperation with public and private organizations to place sport at the service of mankind.
- Assistance to develop "Sport for All".
- Advancement of women in sport at all levels and in all structures, with a view to achieving equality between men and women.
- Opposition to all forms of commercial exploitation of sport and athletes.
- The fight against doping.
- Promoting sports ethics and fair play.
- Raising awareness of environmental problems.
- Financial and educational support for developing countries through the IOC institution "Olympic Solidarity".

"All sports for all people. This is surely a phrase that people will consider foolishly utopian. That prospect troubles me not at all. I have pondered and studied it at length, and know that it is correct and possible", wrote Pierre de Coubertin in 1919. The future proved him right.

The Olympic Movement encompasses organizations, athletes and other persons who agree to be guided by the Olympic Charter

The Olympic Charter – The Founding Text of the Olympic Movement

The Olympic Charter is the codification of the Fundamental Principles, Rules and By-laws adopted by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). It governs the organization and running of the Olympic Movement and sets the conditions for the celebration of the Olympic Games.



Here are the Fundamental Principles set forth in the Charter:

1. Modern Olympism was conceived by Pierre de Coubertin, on whose initiative the International Athletic Congress of Paris was held in June 1894. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) constituted itself on 23rd June 1894. In August 1994, the XII Congress, Centennial Olympic Congress, which was entitled "Congress of Unity", was held in Paris.
2. Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy found in effort, the educational value of good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles.

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3. The goal of Olympism is to place everywhere sport at the service of the harmonious development of man, with a view to encouraging the establishment of a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity. To this effect, the Olympic Movement engages, alone or in cooperation with other organizations and within the limits of its means, in actions to promote peace.
4. The Olympic Movement, led by the IOC, stems from modern Olympism.
5. Under the supreme Authority of the IOC, the Olympic Movement encompasses organizations, athletes and other persons who agree to be guided by the Olympic Charter. The criterion for belonging to the Olympic Movement is recognition by the IOC. The organization and management of sport must be controlled by the independent sport organizations recognized as such.
6. The goal of the Olympic Movement is to contribute to building a peaceful and better world by educating youth through sport practiced without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play.
7. The activity of the Olympic movement, symbolized by five interlaced rings, is universal and permanent. It covers the five continents. It reaches its peak with the bringing together of athletes of the world at the great sports festival, the Olympic Games.
8. The practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practicing sport in accordance with his or her needs.
9. The Olympic Charter is the codification of the Fundamental Principles, Rules and Byelaws adopted by the IOC. It governs the organization and operation of the Olympic Movement and stipulates the conditions for the celebration of the Olympic Games.

Membership to the Olympic Movement

The Olympic Movement groups together all those who agree to be guided by the Olympic Charter and who recognize the authority of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), namely: the International Federations (IF) of sports on the programme of the Olympic Games; the National Olympic Committees (NOCs), the Organizing Committees of the Olympic Games (OCOGs), athletes, judges and referees, associations and clubs, as well as all the organizations and institutions recognized by the IOC.

The IOC Organization

The International Olympic Committee was founded on 23 June 1894 by the French educator Baron Pierre de Coubertin who was inspired to revive the Olympic Games of Greek antiquity.

The IOC is an international non-governmental non-profit organization and the creator of the Olympic Movement. The IOC exists to serve as an umbrella organization of the Olympic Movement. It owns all rights to the Olympic symbols, flag, motto, anthem and Olympic Games. Its primary responsibility is to supervise the organization of the summer and winter Olympic Games.

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The Olympic Truce Symbol



The “Olympic Truce” is symbolized by the “dove of peace” with the traditional Olympic flame in the background. In a world that is plagued by wars and animosity, the peace-dove symbol represents one of the IOC's ideals to build a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal. The Olympic flame has brought warm friendship to all the people of the world through sharing and global togetherness. In the symbol, the flame is made up of colorful effervescent elements - reminiscent of festivities experienced in the celebration of the human spirit. These elements represent people of all races coming together for the observance of the Truce.

The Olympic Rings



According to most accounts, the rings were adopted by Baron Pierre de Coubertin (founder of the modern Olympic Movement) in 1913 after he saw a similar design on an artifact from ancient Greece. The five rings represent the five major regions of the world: Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania. Every national flag in the world includes at least one of the five colors, which are (from left to right) blue, yellow, black, green, and red. It is important to emphasize that Pierre de Coubertin never said nor wrote that the colors of the rings were linked with the different continents

The colors of the interlinked Olympic rings were chosen by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) , to represent the union of the 5 continents , Australia , Africa , America , Asia and Europe and further signify the meeting of the worlds athletes at the Olympic Games.

The Olympic Flag made its debut at the 1920 Olympic Games in Antwerp, Belgium. At the end of each Olympic Games, the mayor of that host-city presents the flag to the mayor of the next host-city. It then rests at the town hall of the next host-city for four years until the Opening Ceremony of their Olympic Games

The plain white background of the Olympic flag is symbolic of peace throughout the games. The five colors of the rings from left to right are blue, black and red across the top with yellow and green along the bottom, these colors may be found on most flags of the world and officially hold no other particular significance, although some believe each color represents a particular continent

Blue =Europe, Yellow =Asia, Black =Africa, Green =Australia, Red =America

The Olympic rings are the official trademark of the I.O.C.

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The Olympic Creed

The Olympic creed was first stated in 1896 by the founder of the modern Olympic games, Baron Pierre de Coubertin , the words of the creed are as follows;

"The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well."

The Olympic Motto

The Olympic motto "Citius, Altius, Fortius" is Latin literally meaning "Faster, Higher, Braver," However the universally accepted meaning is "Swifter, Higher, Stronger."

The Olympic Oath

One athlete from the games host country takes an oath at the Opening Ceremony on behalf of all the competing athletes. The Olympic oath is a gesture of sportsmanship that was first given at the 1920 Olympic Games. The words of the Olympic oath are;

"In the name of all competitors, I promise that we shall take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, in the true spirit of sportsmanship, for the glory of sport and the honor of our teams."

A similar oath is also taken by a coach or team official at each Games.

The Olympic Flame and Torch

The Olympic flame is one of the most visible symbols of the modern games, it is a tradition from ancient Greece. During the ancient Games, in Olympia, a sacred flame ignited by the sun burned continually on the altar of the goddess, Hera. The modern Olympic flame was first seen in the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics where it burned constantly throughout the games



The Olympic flame symbolizes purity, the endeavor for perfection and the struggle for victory; it also represents peace and friendship.

The tradition of the Modern Olympic Torch began in 1936 at the Berlin Games, to represent a link between the ancient and modern Olympics, and has since remained as an Olympic custom.

The torch is lit as it was in ancient times by the sun at Olympia, Greece and then passed from runner to runner in a relay to the host city. There it is used to light a flame in a cauldron at the Olympic Stadium during the Opening Ceremony. The flame burns continuously throughout the Games and is extinguished at the Closing Ceremony.

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The Victory Ceremony



At the Ancient Games, winners were presented with a simple olive tree branch which was cut with a gold-handled knife from a wild olive tree. The Greeks believed that the vitality of the sacred tree was transmitted to the recipient through the branch.

At the Modern Games, Olympic medals are presented to the winning athletes who stand on a dais at the completion of their event. A GOLD medal is presented for first place, SILVER for second and BRONZE for third. The host city is responsible for designing the medals within the guidelines set by the IOC.

The national anthem of the winner is played as each medallist's national flag is raised.

Olympic FAQ - Early Athletes: Amateurs or Pros?

One of the things argued about the Modern Olympic Games is the question of amateurism (and professionalism) of athletes.

This was not a concern of the Greeks in the Ancient Olympic Games since ancient athletes regularly received prizes worth substantial amounts of money. In fact, the word athlete is an ancient Greek word that means "one who competes for a prize" and was related to two other Greek words, athlos meaning "contest" and athlon meaning "prize."

(All facts about the Olympics were taken from the following sources: www.olympic.org, www.olympics.com, <http://www.upenn.edu/museum/Olympics/olympicintro.html>)

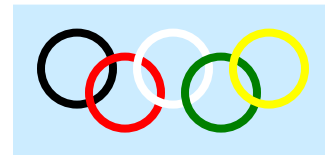
Christian Olympics - Running The Race

The Olympics demonstrate many athletes who have dedicated their lives to being "swifter, stronger, faster". As Christians, do we demonstrate the same qualities in our Christian walk? Do we run the race set before us with the determination we should? Do we rejoice as a strong man prepared to run a race?

As we run the Christian race, what should our motto be? What is the Christian Charter? What about the Christian Olympic Torch? How about the Christian Olympic Rings?

Christian Olympic Rings

The color of the five Christian Olympic Rings are:
Black=Sin, Red=Blood of Christ, White=Forgiveness of Sin, Green=Christian Growth, Gold=Heavenly Calling



Psalms 19:1-6 (KJV)

- 1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.
- 2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

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- 3 There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.
4 Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,
5 Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.
6 His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

1 Corinthians 9:23-24 (KJV)

- 23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.
24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

Hebrews 12:1-4 (KJV)

- 1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,
2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.
3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.
4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

The secular Olympic motto is "Citius, Altius, Fortius" in Latin which is universally accepted as meaning "Swifter, Higher, Stronger." As Christians, we look not within our selves to achieve these goals but we look to Christ Jesus who is the eternal Gold medallist in this event! The Christian Olympic Motto of "Swifter, Higher, Stronger" is only achieved in Christ, Jesus.

Isaiah 40:28-31 (KJV)

- 28 Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.
29 He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.
30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:
31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

Swifter

Proverbs 6:16-19 (KJV)

- 16 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:
17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,
18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be **swift** in running to mischief,
19 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

Romans 3:10-18 (KJV)

- 10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:
11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.
12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.
13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:
14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:
15 Their feet are **swift** to shed blood:
16 Destruction and misery are in their ways:

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- 17 And the way of peace have they not known:
18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.

James 1:19-24 (KJV)

- 19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be **swift** to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:
20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.
21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.
22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.
23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:
24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

Hebrews 4:12 (KJV)

- 12 For the word of God is **quick**, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

2 Timothy 4:1-5 (KJV)

- 1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the **quick** and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;
2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.
3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;
4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.
5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

Proverbs 4:10-15 (KJV)

- 10 Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many.
11 I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths.
12 When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.
13 Take **fast** hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.
14 Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.
15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

Higher

Ps 148:13 (KJV)

- 13 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is **above** the earth and heaven.

Ps 8:1 (KJV)

- 1 O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory **above** the heavens.

Luke 1:30-33 (KJV)

- 30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.
31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.
32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the **Highest**: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

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33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Isa 55:7-11 (KJV)

7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.
9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways **higher** than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.
10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:
11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Heb 7:22-27 (KJV)

22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.
23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:
24 But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.
25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.
26 For such an **high** priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;
27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

Eph 1:15-23 (KJV)

15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,
16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;
17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:
18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,
19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,
20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,
21 **Far above** all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:
22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,
23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Stronger

1 Cor 1:25-31 (KJV)

25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is **stronger** than men.
26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:
27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;
28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:
29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.
30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:
31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

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Ps 33:16-18 (KJV)

- 16 There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much **strength**.
17 An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength.
18 Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;

Jer 9:23-24 (KJV)

- 23 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:
24 But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

Finishing The Course - "Swifter, Higher, Stronger."

2 Timothy 4:7-8 (KJV)

- 7 I have fought a good fight, I have *finished my course*, I have kept the faith:
8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

"So then, The Faith (cometh) out-of hearing, and the hearing through or by The Word of Christ (God)" Romans. 10:17

"The Faith" is that body of truth, God-given (revealed), unto the recipient for Faith-Obedience. At the same time, the believers' response in faith-obedience demonstrates their personal faith and commitment to run the race.

For example: "By faith, Noah being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house..." Heb. 11:7. In other words, the faith given (revealed) of God unto Noah was saving faith unto him and his household. Noah's faith-obedience in building the ark demonstrated his personal faith unto salvation. Today, building an ark in the context of our time saves no one. The circumstances of Noah's time, when put into today's context, demonstrate how we should respond to our calling.

The faith concerning our walk in The Mystery (Eph. 2:10, 4:1-7; Phil. 2:12, 13; Col. 2:6) is how we should commit ourselves to "finish the course" and having done so... we will have "kept the faith". When this is accomplished and we appear with Christ in glory, there will be that gold medal ceremony but instead of a ribbon, a crown of righteousness is awarded.