

## **Bible Verses relevant to Fit 4 Gold and Sports Competitions in general**

<http://www.biblegateway.com> is helpful for quick reference and comparing translations.

We have compared the New Living Translation; the New Century Version aka the Youth Bible; the New International Readers Version and the Message (as well as keeping an eye on the NIV). We have chosen the translation that appears to be most appropriate for tweenagers. The Children's New International Bible is also good but is not featured on Bible Gateway.

### **There are far more verses here than you will need within your group because**

- leaders need to grow themselves
- you could adapt for older or all-age groups
- every group is different
- if you are including a creative prayer space, you may need more verses to stick up on walls than you actually use within group time

### **Key Bible references**

Philippians 3:13-14 I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us. NLT

Hebrews 12:1-3 ... So let us run the race that is before us and never give up. We should remove from our lives anything that would get in the way and the sin that so easily holds us back. Let us look only to Jesus ... NCV

2 Timothy 4:7-8

I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. Now there is a crown waiting for me. It is given to those who are right with God. The Lord, who judges fairly, will give it to me on the day he returns. He will not give it only to me. He will also give it to all those who are longing for him to return. NIRV

## 1. Being Chosen / qualifying for the team

**Theme: You are worth more than gold**

**Theme verse:** Ephesians 1:4-5

Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family... NLT

1 Corinthians 1:26-27 ... when God chose you. Not many of you were considered wise by human standards. Not many of you were powerful. Not many of you belonged to important families. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. He chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.

1 Peter 1:18-19

The blood of Christ set you free from an empty way of life. That way of life was handed down to you by your own people long ago. You know that you were not bought with things that can pass away, like silver or gold. Instead, you were bought by the priceless blood of Christ. He is a perfect lamb. He doesn't have any flaws at all. NIRV

John 15:16 You didn't choose me. I chose you. NLT

1 John 4: We love because God first loved us. NCV

Deuteronomy 30:19 I'm offering you the choice of life or death. You can choose either blessings or curses. But I want you to choose life. To choose life is to love the LORD your God, obey him, and stay close to him. He is your life. NIRV & NCV

Joshua 24:15 Choose for yourselves today whom you will serve. NCV

Acts 13:22 -'I have found David, a man after my own heart. He will do everything I want him to do.'

Matthew 7:21: "Not everyone who calls out to me ...

## 2. Being Equipped

**Theme: It takes more than gold to become a winning athlete**

**Theme verse:** Hebrews 12:1-3 ... So let us run the race that is before us and never give up. We should remove from our lives anything that would get in the way and the sin that so easily holds us back. Let us look only to Jesus ... NCV

### Coach who guides and equips us

1 Samuel 16:13 David anointed with the Holy Spirit

Acts 1: 8; Acts 2:1-16, 37-47– Holy Spirit arrives at **Pentecost**

2 Corinthians 3:5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves ... but our sufficiency is from God NKJV

Galatians 5:16 ...let the Holy Spirit guide your lives

2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-control

Luke 9:23-27 Then Jesus told them what they could expect for themselves: "Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You're not in the driver's seat—I am. Don't run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I'll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to finding yourself, your true self. What good would it do to get everything you want and lose you, the real you? Message

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ, because he gives me strength. NCV

### Kit - Take off the old kit:

Hebrews 12:1-3 We should remove from our lives anything that would get in the way and the sin that so easily holds us back. NCV

James 4:8 Come near to God, and God will come near to you. You sinners, clean sin out of your lives. You who are trying to follow God and the world at the same time, make your thinking pure. NCV

Colossians 3:<sup>8</sup> But now also put these things out of your life: anger, bad temper, doing or saying things to hurt others, and using evil words when you talk. Do not lie to each other. You have left your old sinful life and the things you did before. NCV

Ephesians 4:30-32 And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, he has identified you as his own, guaranteeing that you will be saved.

Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behaviour. Instead, be kind to each other, tender hearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you. NLT

Message 30-32 Don't grieve God. Don't break his heart. His Holy Spirit, moving and breathing in you, is the most intimate part of your life, making you fit for himself. Don't take such a gift for granted.

Make a clean break with all cutting, backbiting, profane talk. Be gentle with one another, sensitive. Forgive one another as quickly and thoroughly as God in Christ forgave you.

Isaiah 53:4-5 But he took our suffering on him and felt our pain for us. We saw his suffering

and thought God was punishing him. But he was wounded for the wrong we did; he was crushed for the evil we did. The punishment, which made us well, was given to him, and we are healed because of his wounds. NCV

### **Kit - Put on the new kit**

Romans 13:14 Instead, clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. NLT

Colossians 3:12-15 God has chosen you and made you his holy people. He loves you. So you should always clothe yourselves with mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Bear with each other, and forgive each other. If someone does wrong to you, forgive that person because the Lord forgave you. Even more than all this, clothe yourself in love. Love is what holds you all together in perfect unity. Let the peace that Christ gives control your thinking, because you were all called together in one body to have peace. Always be thankful. Also see Street Bible version in theme 2

Proverbs 3:3 Never let kindness and truth leave you; Wear them around your neck. Bind them around your neck; Write them on the tablet of your heart.

Ephesians 6:10-18 the armour of God

That is why you need to put on God's full armour. Then on the day of evil you will be able to stand strong. And when you have finished the whole fight, you will still be standing. So stand strong, with the belt of truth tied around your waist and the protection of right living on your chest. On your feet wear the Good News of peace to help you stand strong. And also use the shield of faith with which you can stop all the burning arrows of the Evil One. Accept God's salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray in the Spirit at all times with all kinds of prayers, asking for everything you need. To do this you must always be ready and never give up. Always pray for all God's people. NCV

The Message: And that about wraps it up. God is strong, and he wants you strong. So take everything the Master has set out for you, well-made weapons of the best materials. And put them to use so you will be able to stand up to everything the Devil throws your way. This is no afternoon athletic contest that we'll walk away from and forget about in a couple of hours. This is for keeps, a life-or-death fight to the finish against the Devil and all his angels. Be prepared. You're up against far more than you can handle on your own. Take all the help you can get, every weapon God has issued, so that when it's all over but the shouting you'll still be on your feet. Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and salvation are more than words. Learn how to apply them. You'll need them throughout your life. God's Word is an indispensable weapon. In the same way, prayer is essential in this ongoing warfare. Pray hard and long. Pray for your brothers and sisters. Keep your eyes open. Keep each other's spirits up so that no one falls behind or drops out.

### **Food & drink**

John 6:35 Then Jesus declared, I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. NIV

Proverbs 4:20-22 My son, pay attention to what I say. Listen closely to my words. Don't let them out of your sight. Keep them in your heart. They are life to those who find them. They are health to your whole body. NIRV

Psalm 19:7 &10 NCV The teachings of the Lord are perfect; they give new strength. They are worth more than gold, even the purest gold. They are sweeter than honey, even the finest honey.

Psalm 119:72 NLT Your instructions are more valuable to me than millions in gold and silver.

### **Team mates**

Ephesians 4:16 As each part ... helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love. NLT

Hebrews 10:25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another— and all the more as you see the Day approaching. NIV

Message: 22-25 So let's do it—full of belief, confident that we're presentable inside and out.

Let's keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going. He always keeps his word.

Let's see how inventive we can be in encouraging love and helping out, not avoiding worshiping together as some do but spurring each other on, especially as we see the big Day approaching.

2 Timothy 2:23 Don't have anything to do with arguing. It is dumb and foolish. You know it only leads to fights. NIRV (the context here is really about theological arguments but kids of this age often fall out and this can really disrupt youth groups at times.)

1 Corinthians 12:12-31, especially verse 27 Together you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of that body. NCV

### **Exercise/ training**

1 Corinthians 9: 24-27 All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize.

So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified. NLT

The Message: 24-27 You've all been to the stadium and seen the athletes' race.

Everyone runs; one wins. Run to win. All good athletes train hard. They do it for a gold medal that tarnishes and fades. You're after one that's gold eternally.

I don't know about you, but I'm running hard for the finish line. I'm giving it everything I've got. No sloppy living for me! I'm staying alert and in top condition. I'm not going to get caught napping, telling everyone else all about it and then missing out myself.

Philippians 4:8-9 Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honourable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. <sup>9</sup> Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you. NLT

Message <sup>8-9</sup>Summing it all up, friends, I'd say you'll do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse.

### **Recovery / top up + 'Faster, Higher, Stronger'**

Isaiah 40:29-31 Even young people become worn out and get tired. Even the best of them trip and fall. But those who trust in the Lord will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. NIRV *also see The Message*

### 3. Being Challenged

#### Theme: Going 4 Gold – Proving it's Real

**Theme verse:** Zechariah 4:6-7: 'You will not succeed by your own strength or by your own power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord All-Powerful. NCV

Or

Hebrews 11:1 Faith means being sure of the things we hope for and knowing that something is real even if we do not see it. NCV

- David & Goliath: 1 Samuel 17
- Jehoshaphat: 2 Chronicles 20:1-30 see back up notes for this.

Psalm 18:31-36 ...<sup>32</sup> God arms me with strength, ...<sup>34</sup> He trains my hands for battle; he strengthens my arm to draw a bronze bow.

Philippians 4:13 I can do everything by the power of Christ. He gives me strength. NIRV

2 Corinthians 12:9 But he said to me, "My grace is all you need. My power is strongest when you are weak." NIRV

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 The Message

Because of the extravagance of those revelations, and so I wouldn't get a big head, I was given the gift of a handicap to keep me in constant touch with my limitations. Satan's angel did his best to get me down; what he in fact did was push me to my knees. No danger then of walking around high and mighty! At first I didn't think of it as a gift, and begged God to remove it. Three times I did that, and then he told me,

My grace is enough; it's all you need.

My strength comes into its own in your weakness.

Once I heard that, I was glad to let it happen. I quit focusing on the handicap and began appreciating the gift. It was a case of Christ's strength moving in on my weakness. Now I take limitations in stride, and with good cheer, these limitations that cut me down to size—abuse, accidents, opposition, bad breaks. I just let Christ take over! And so the weaker I get, the stronger I become.

#### 4. Experiencing Setbacks

##### Theme: Losing Sight of the Gold/Goal

**Theme verse:** 1 Peter 1:6-7

Your troubles have come in order to prove that your faith is real. It is worth more than gold. Gold can pass away even though fire has made it pure. NIRV

##### Joseph

Psalm 105:19 Until the time came to fulfil his dreams, the Lord tested Joseph's character NLT

##### Paul's hardships

2 Corinthians 11:23b – 33 – outlines everything that has happened to him – prison; beatings; 39 lashes x 5; rods x 3; stoned; nearly stoned; 3 shipwrecks; lack of sleep, food & drink

2 Corinthians 6:4-10 lists - being beaten; prison; facing angry mobs; sleepless nights; hunger; slandered; heartache; having nothing

2 Corinthians 1:8-10 ... in Asia. We had great burdens there that were beyond our own strength. We even gave up hope of living. Truly, in our own hearts we believed we would die. But this happened so we would not trust in ourselves but in God, who raises people from the dead. God saved us from these great dangers of death, and he will continue to save us. We have put our hope in him, and he will save us again. NCV

##### Paul's thoughts about hardships

Paul went through some really difficult times so he really knows from experience what he's talking about here

2 Corinthians 1:4 He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. NLT

2 Corinthians 4:8-9 We have troubles all around us, but we are not defeated. We do not know what to do, but we do not give up the hope of living.<sup>9</sup> We are persecuted, but God does not leave us. We are hurt sometimes, but we are not destroyed. NCV

2 Corinthians 4:17-18 For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever. NLT

Romans 5:3-4

We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. NLT

Also Romans 8: especially 18-19 & 28

**General**

Isaiah 43:2

When you go through deep waters, I will be with you.

When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown.

When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you. NLT

Psalms 18:28 My God brightens the darkness around me. NCV

Isaiah 40:28-31

He gives strength to those who are tired. He gives power to those who are weak. Even young people become worn out and get tired. Even the best of them trip and fall. But those who trust in the Lord will receive new strength. They will fly as high as eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not grow weak. NIRV

Isaiah 40:28-31 The Message

He energizes those who get tired, gives fresh strength to dropouts.

For even young people tire and drop out, young folk in their prime stumble and fall.

But those who wait upon God get fresh strength.

They spread their wings and soar like eagles,

They run and don't get tired, they walk and don't lag behind.

Malachi 3:3 New Life Version

He will sit as one who melts silver and makes it pure. He will make the sons of Levi pure. He will make them pure like gold and silver, so that they may bring the right gifts to the Lord.

Job 23:10 NIRV

But he knows every step I take. When he has put me to the test, I'll come out as pure as gold.

Psalms 73:25-26 Whom have I in heaven but you? I desire you more than anything on earth. My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart;

## 5. Being rewarded

**Theme: The prize is worth way more than gold.**

It is the best possible relationship ever

**Theme verse:** Acts 2:28 / Psalm 16:11 NIRV

You always show me the path that leads to life. You will fill me with joy when I am with you.'

**Moses** - Exodus 33:7-23; 34:29-35 Especially

Exodus 33:11 The LORD spoke to Moses face to face as a man speaks with his friend. NCV

Exodus 34:29 Moses came down from Mount Sinai. He had the two tablets of the covenant in his hands. His face was shining because he had spoken with the Lord. But he didn't realize it. NIRV

**David** said

You always show me the path that leads to life. You will fill me with joy when I am with you.'

Psalm 16:11 NIRV Peter later said the same – Acts 2:28

Psalm 37:4-5 Find your delight in the Lord. Then he will give you everything your heart really wants. NIRV

Psalm 63:1-3 God, you are my God. I search for you... Because your love is better than life

Psalm 21:1-7 Lord, the king is filled with joy because of your strength; he is so happy when you save him! You have given him what his heart longed for.

You welcomed him with rich blessings.

You placed a gold crown on his head.

He asked you for life, and you gave it to him.

You have given him blessings that will last forever.

You have made him glad and joyful because you are with him.

Psalm 61:4 Let me live in your Holy Tent forever.

Let me find safety in the shelter of your wings. NCV

Psalm 30:11 You changed my sorrow into dancing. NCV

**Paul wrote**

1 Corinthians 2:9-10 (also Isaiah 64:4)

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him." NTL

Philippians 3:8 I think that all things are worth nothing compared with the greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. Because of him, I have lost all those things, and now I know they are worthless trash. NCV

Galatians 4:4-7 You can tell for sure that you are now fully adopted as his own children because God sent the Spirit of his Son into our lives crying out, "Papa! Father!" Doesn't that privilege of intimate conversation with God make it plain that you are not a slave, but a child? And if you are a child, you're also an heir, with complete access to the inheritance. Message  
You'll become the sort of person you want to be.

Galatians 5:22-23 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

**Also**

John 10:10 I came to give life—life in all its fullness.

There are things better than gold – such as...

Acts 3:6 But Peter said, "I don't have any silver or gold, but I do have something else I can give you. By the power of Jesus Christ from Nazareth, stand up and walk!" NCV

Proverbs 3:14 Wisdom is worth more than silver; it brings more profit than gold. NCV

Psalm 84

James 4:8 Come near to God, and God will come near to you. NCV