



RUN FOR GOLD

eight sessions on the Christian race

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Lunchtime Group
Resources

RUN FOR GOLD

eight sessions on the Christian race



The Crusader Union is a Bible-based, interdenominational Christian youth organisation, whose vision is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to students in the Independent Schools of Australia, to nurture Christians and to encourage church membership.

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WELCOME

This resource has been specifically written with school groups in mind but can be adapted depending on your needs. It is based on the group running for approximately 30 minutes each meeting.

WHAT'S INSIDE?

- **8** sets of leader's notes for regular meetings. The leader's notes provide an aim, fun activity, guidelines for an interactive talk as well as prayer, memory verse and song ideas.
- **2** colour advertising posters designed to grab the attention of students and help increase awareness of your group. There is space for you to fill in your group name and where you meet. We encourage schools associated with Crusaders to use the 'CRU School Groups' logo when promoting their group so as to link students with the work that God is doing in other schools.

BEFORE YOU START

- Paul says to Timothy near the end of his life "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." (2 Timothy 4:7) This series aims to equip students with an understanding of what it takes to **Run for Gold**. It is important to start the race, but also to finish the Christian marathon. A variety of supplementary media can be accessed from the Web Extras section of the Crusaders' website:

<http://www.crusaders.edu.au/ministry/resourcewebextras>

- Although these studies are geared more towards the already-believing student, each study seeks to use God's word to challenge both Christians and non-Christians about the realities and rewards of the life that's been given to us by Jesus Christ. We encourage you to guide students to marvel at what God has achieved through His Son, not simply in what we have to do as we run the Christian marathon.
- Please note that all pages in this resource can be photocopied but Crusaders requests each school purchase at least one original.
- Whilst this resource is aimed at easing the load for the group leader, it is vital that time is spent adapting it to the specific needs of your group. Time also needs to be spent on working through the Bible passage and talk before the group meets.
- It would be very easy to spend too much time on the fun activity each week. Remember that looking at the Bible and praying together are the most important parts of the meeting and divide time accordingly.
- All suggested songs are linked to the theme of the talk and are used with permission. The intention of including a wide variety of songs from different CDs is to provide you with options if your group enjoys singing - please do not feel it necessary to buy every CD listed. The CDs listed are available in Christian bookstores and many include sheet music.

We pray that this resource will be a great help as you join in God's work of bringing students to Himself and growing them to be like His Son.

*"We proclaim Him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom,
so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.
To this end I labour, struggling with all His energy which so powerfully works in me."
Colossians 1:28-29*

RUN FOR GOLD

| Week | Title | Passage | Key Focus |
|------|--|-----------------------|--|
| 1 | On your marks, get set... GO! | Mark 1:14-18 | Outreach week – starting the Christian race means that we must repent, believe and follow Jesus. |
| 2 | Disciplined Training | 1 Corinthians 9:25 | Reading the Bible and praying regularly are disciplines which help us in the Christian race. |
| 3 | Practice Being Godly! | 1 Timothy 4:7b, 8, 12 | It's important to practice being godly in all areas of our life. |
| 4 | Don't Trip! | Hebrews 12:1 | Don't give in to the devil's temptations. |
| 5 | Keep Going! | Hebrews 12:2-3 | Keep persevering as a Christian, always keeping your eye on Jesus, even when you suffer. |
| 6 | Don't Get Distracted | Matthew 6:31-33 | Don't be distracted by other things! Seek God's kingdom first. |
| 7 | You Don't Run Alone | Jude 24-25 | Don't run solo or trust in yourself – trust God. He is with you, making you more like Jesus every day. |
| 8 | The Ultimate Prize | Philippians 3:14 | Heaven will be worth it – look forward to it! |

AIM

For students to understand that to start the Christian race, we need to repent, believe and follow Jesus.

FOCUS VERSES

Mark 1:14-18 (CEV)

¹⁴After John was arrested, Jesus went to Galilee and told the good news that comes from God. ¹⁵He said, "The time has come! God's kingdom will soon be here. Turn back to God and believe the good news!"

¹⁶As Jesus was walking along the shore of Lake Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew. They were fishermen and were casting their nets into the lake. ¹⁷Jesus said to them, "Come with me! I will teach you how to bring in people instead of fish."

¹⁸Right then the two brothers dropped their nets and went with him.

PREPARE

- ❑ Read through Mark 1, familiarising yourself with the context and content of the focus passage. Pray that students will repent, believe and trust in Jesus if they haven't already.
- ❑ Prepare to play the video clips for students to watch the starts of various races (available from Web Extras page). Also mark out an appropriate 20m race – this will probably need to be done outdoors on a field, in a gym or simply a race around the block at school. Bring along a whistle or something else to signal the start of the race.
- ❑ Print out Part 1 of the running track from the Web Extras page. Clear some space in your meeting room or find a board which you can use to put up these pictures.
- ❑ Bring along a sheet of cardboard or paper to begin a points tally for the rest of the series (available from Web Extras).

INTRODUCE

What kind of big sporting events can you think of? (Olympics, Commonwealth Games, Soccer, Netball or Rugby World Cup, etc) Over the next 8 weeks, we'll be looking at what its like to be in a race! It's a BIG event that's more important and bigger and better than any big sporting event you can think of! We're going to look at being part of the Christian race.

Introduce the points tally board. Each week, you will have the opportunity to add points to the board – by turning up to CRU group as well as gaining extra points for each fun activity. Write the names of students down on the board and add points each week.

FUN ACTIVITY

Where to Start? – Watch the video clips – how did these athletes start their race? Did anyone start well? Not so well?

Reminding the group that a good start is very important, move students outside and have a race, focusing on the start of the race rather than the finish. Prepare students well, making sure that everyone knows how to start in the sprint stance (on your marks, get set, GO!). Compliment the winner of the race and also those who started well, then head back into your room.

A wet weather option could be an indoor relay race, but make sure you emphasise the start in the same way.

TALK

A) Starting the Christian race.

- Sometimes its not just a matter of "On your marks, get set, GO!". We sometimes need to have water in order to swim, or running shorts, or weights, or the ball to start play.
- God's word tells us that living as a Christian, that is, being friends with God, is like being part of a race.
- We don't need balls, or sneakers or goggles to start the Christian race! But what kinds of things **do** we need to start?



B) Jesus teaches his disciples and us what we need to start.

- Read Mark 1:14-18. Jesus says “The time has come!” He means that He has come to fulfil all of God’s promises. Jesus explains three things that need to happen:
 - 1) We need to **turn back to God**. From not being friends with God, we turn back to Him (get everyone to stand up, face one direction and in unison, turn in the opposite direction). Repentance means that we stop living with ourselves as the most important person and start living with God as Number One in everything we do.
 - 2) Jesus says that we need to **believe the good news about Him** – we need to listen to what we hear and believe it is true. (You may want to demonstrate *active belief* - sit down on a chair to show that you believe the chair is going to hold your weight and not break – if you didn’t believe it, you wouldn’t sit down!)
 - 3) And lastly we need to **follow Jesus** – this is how we show we believe the good news about Him. The fishermen who met Jesus decided to turn back to God, believed the good news and left what they were doing to follow Jesus. For us, following Jesus is to follow what He did, to be like Him. It means that we need to learn about Jesus and live His way at home, at school, at church, anywhere we go!

C) Start with and stick at repenting, believing and following.

- In a circle, play the **Finger Catch game** with students – ONE: raise left hand up with index finger extended, TWO: place right hand palm out flat, THREE: point left index finger down touching the right palm of the person next to you. On GO, try to grab the finger in your palm and avoid your own index finger being grabbed.
- After a few rounds of this, use the game to help students remember the 3 things that will help us start the race – **ONE:** turn back to God, **TWO:** believe the good news, **THREE:** follow Jesus.
- Remind students that this is how we start the race, but just as we wouldn’t ever throw away the

football or sneakers in the middle of our race, we still need these things throughout our Christian life. We need to **start with** and **stick at** these 3 things!

SONG IDEA

The focus CD for this series will be Colin Buchanan’s “Practice Being Godly” which is filled with songs linked to our theme for this series. You may wish to choose a few of these songs to be something you learn as a group and perform with actions at an assembly or chapel.

- He Died Upon the Cross (Track 33)
- Luke 9:23 (Track 5)
- John 3:16 (from Scripture Rock) would also be an appropriate song to sing.

PRAY

Have you started the Christian race? Have you turned back to God, believed the good news and chosen to follow Jesus? If you have, you are now friends with God! If you haven’t but would like to, you can do that now or anytime by talking to God, like we’re about to do right now.

Lead students in prayer, thanking God for those who have started to live as a friend of God by turning back to God, believing the good news and following Jesus. Pray that they can run the Christian race always. Pray on behalf of students who may want to start the Christian race, expressing that they want to turn back to God and believe the good news. Pray that they will keep following Jesus as well.

FINISH

Encourage students who prayed to start the Christian race to let you know that they’ve become friends with God! Stick up the first page of the running track and let students know that they will be adding to this track each week.

For other students, ask: now that we’ve started the Christian race, what comes next? (we’ll find out next week)