



Leader Guide



Series: Get Your Steak On

Lesson Title: No Easy Walk Date: 11/16/11

Resource: LIVE Curriculum I Corinthians: An Inward Look

Leaders: Read through the entire sheet and pick the best question for **YOUR** group. You most likely will not have enough time to go over everything. **ALWAYS** read Scripture; it is the most powerful part of **ANY** lesson. There is a digging deeper section for more mature groups.

Starter Questions:

Have you ever trained for something? What were the payoffs?

When you hear the word, perseverance, what pictures come to mind?

In your opinion, what is the most difficult thing that God desires of us as Christians?

Read I Corinthians 9:25-27 Can a casual runner become an international marathon champion overnight? Why or why not? Paul uses this metaphor to talk about the way we pursue God. What are the similarities and differences between a runner who runs hard to win, and our pursuit of lives that honor God?

Note: This was written to people who were ALREADY Christians. Paul was not talking about earning your salvation through good works. He is talking about walking in godliness.

In our spiritual lives, how can we sometimes be like the lazy runner who runs but doesn't really care much about winning the prize? Like runners who train for the race, we must prepare for our daily lives, interacting with this world. Instead of stretching and lifting weights, our preparation involves reading God's Word, praying, and seeking God. On race day, the runner runs hard to win! And in our daily lives, we are called to pursue God and a Jesus-centered life, like a runner running to win.

What is the eternal prize that Paul mentions, that does not fade away? Read 2 Timothy 4:7, Matthew 6:19-20 for further explanation. Mention eternal life, treasures stored up in heaven and a crown of righteousness.

Why do most people focus on earthly treasures rather than heavenly ones? Let teens answer. They can touch and feel earthly treasures. They receive immediate gratification from earthly treasures. It takes trust to believe that God will reward us for faithful perseverance. What we treasure gives us perspective on what we value.

When Paul says, “I discipline my body to do what it should,” what do you think he means? Let teens respond. Even though he may not “feel” like walking in godliness, he perseveres, allowing God to master his life.

What would you think if Bob was arrested for embezzling church money? Let teens respond.

What does Paul mean in verse 27, when he says to run in a way so as not to be disqualified? It is sometimes easy to “preach” to others how they should live godly lives. But as we share about how to be godly, we need to continue to look at our own lives and show humility, allowing God to train us as well. Paul is challenging the Corinthians, along with himself, not to be hypocrites.

How can a lack of discipline lead to spiritual weakness? It leaves you open and vulnerability to temptation and sin.

Application:

How do you know if you’re disciplined in your spiritual life—and how do you know if you aren’t disciplined? Let teens answer.

In what current situation is difficult for you to persevere?

Based on your above answer, what are some things that God may want to teach you through your difficult situation? Offer encouragement to your teens as they share.

Read to Group and Pray:

- I want to encourage you to be disciplined in your life to avoid hypocrisy.
- Run to win!
- Be imitators of God
- Run with purpose and focus

Digging Deeper: For older or more mature groups.

Read 1 Corinthians 9:25-27. What kinds of distractions might keep you from running the spiritual race Paul describes in this passage?

What do you think it means to be focused in your spiritual growth? How is this similar to the focus an athlete needs when training and competing? When we train for something on this earth, the glory of competing and winning eventually fades. When we train for a life of devotion, love, and service to God, the reward is eternal. That’s why it’s important to maintain our focus; we must remember why our preparation is so necessary.

Read Luke 9:57-62. These seem like interesting ways to respond to people who wanted to follow you. Was Jesus trying to scare the people off? If not, what was Jesus trying to do or communicate? There is great sacrifice and discipline required to be a follower of Christ. Being a follower of Christ must be the central focus of life. Everything else falls in line behind that. Our relationship with God is the most vital and most intense goal we can pursue. To think about our faith in any other way is to have an incomplete understanding of what it means to enter into a relationship with Christ.

Why do you think Jesus might have answered the first man like he did?

Do we sometimes act like this first man? How are you guilty of having an inaccurate picture of what following Christ really looks like?

Why are the sacrifices we make, as we follow Christ, a worthwhile price to pay for all that we gain? Many times our Christian walk is NO EASY WALK; yet if we are GETTING OUR STEAK ON, we come to know and believe that the eternal rewards of godliness far outweigh earthly treasures. Read 2 Timothy 4:7, Matthew 6:19-20, Hebrews 11:24-26 for further exploration.