

## SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Message Series: RUN: Find Your Stride

Message Title: Hit Your Stride

Speaker: Pastor Kevin Queen

Date: June 25, 2017

### **Icebreaker:**

Share a time in your life when you “hit the wall” and either wanted to give up or did. What helped you get back in the race?

### **Message Overview:**

Using the analogy of running a marathon, Pastor KQ encouraged us to learn ways to keep going when life gets tough. We need to train instead of just trying. We have to let go of past regrets, guilt and shame, as we receive the forgiveness that Christ paid for on the Cross. We are all in different places with life’s struggles, but scripture tells us ways to find our stride.

*We have a **cheering** section.* A marathon is different than a sprint. We can’t see the finish line and we are 99% alone. This can mess with our minds and sabotage the race. But we are not alone. Jesus is with us and all of Heaven is cheering us on. We may feel alone, but we are never alone. Our cheering section and others around us encourage us. Encouragement actually changes our brain chemistry. We need it every day, and we can never get too much. And when we encourage others, we reap the benefits from that as well.

So, what do we need to do to stay in the race? *Let go of what is **holding** you back.* There are two components to letting go taken from Hebrews 12:1:

- 1) Everything that hinders.
  - 2) Sin that entangles.
- Things that hinder us may not be bad, but they hinder because they shift our focus onto other things. It may be an outgrown relationship, seeking approval from others, fear, doubt, inadequacy, entertainment, or even social media. But we add strength to our walk by subtracting the things that hinder.
  - Sin can creep in slowly, which then chokes and robs growth and abundant life. We can be deceived that our sin is not hurting anyone. Sin starts small and can grow into an addiction. It’s like cancer: when it’s the hardest to detect it’s the easiest to deal with. Jesus loves sinners. He untangles, forgives and frees us. He wants to help, but we have to ask.

Hebrews 12:2 tells us, “Fix your eyes on Jesus.” This means to focus on Him, concentrate on Him and put our affections on Him. We have to continually reset our focus onto Him. Make your car a chapel, listen to worship music while on the treadmill, read scripture, memorize verses, attend worship at church. We are not doing sin management, this is a relationship. You are not alone.

**Discussion:**

(Leaders: The questions that follow are designed to stir reflection and discussion on this week’s primary Message points. Please read through them prior to your meeting, so you can be prepared to prayerfully pace your group well. And remember, as leader, your goal is to promote increased *biblical* awareness, as well as individual *self* awareness – a combination that with the help of the Holy Spirit, results in revelation and...transformation!)

- Read aloud I Corinthians 9:24-25 and discuss the difference between training and trying. What are some examples of times your training helped you when a difficulty came along?
- Read aloud Philippians 3:12-14 and discuss the differences in letting go of regrets, guilt and shame while acknowledging that some hurts and lacks from the past need to be brought to the forefront and healed. (Shoving hurts and lacks under the rug does not help. Beating up on oneself for regrets and guilt does not either.)
- What are some good things that you are holding onto that hinder your growth with Jesus? What steps do you need to take to let go of these?
- What are some ways that you fix your eyes on Jesus during the week? What are some things you can start doing to help you remember that He is always with you and that you are never alone?
- Think of at least two people that you can encourage this week. Send an email, a card, or give them a verbal appreciation. Write down their names and purpose to follow through.
- What will it look like to confess a sin that is entangling you? Who is someone with whom you can talk about it? What steps will you need to take to get free?

**Wrap-Up/Close:**

Not only is Jesus with you, but we (gesture around room) are here for each other too. What do you need that could help you find your stride and stay in the race when things get tough? How can we cheer you on/pray for you?

**Throughout the Week: (Optional)**

Memorize Hebrews 12:1-2