

Running Partners Internally Alive Track
Loving One Another Authentically In the World
A 6 Week Lenten Study on the challenge of Christian Community

Welcome to the Internally Alive track! This is a track that will place just as much emphasis on the other activities as it does on the biblical study. Pick a book soon because you will want to have lots of material to interact with as you think through these issues. The most highly recommended activity is to engage in some sort of normal-life experience with your running partner. If it sounds uncomfortable, that's because it very well could be! You will then be able to talk about what kind of authenticity can happen when we really start to open our lives to one another. As you start this study, begin looking for examples of authentic living everywhere – inside and outside of the church community. And as you consider the biblical passages that challenge us to love one another, keep in mind that this is what the church is called to do. Think of ways that you can encourage the body of Christ to live fully and authentically in love!

The recommended books for this track are:

The Irresistible Revolution: Living as an Ordinary Radical

By: Shane Claiborne

http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0310266300/ref=ord_cart_shr/102-9348870-6087309?%5Fencoding=UTF8&m=ATVPDKIKX0DER&v=glance

Sex God: Exploring the Endless Connections Between Sexuality and Spirituality

By: Rob Bell

http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0310263468/ref=ord_cart_shr/102-9348870-6087309?%5Fencoding=UTF8&m=ATVPDKIKX0DER&v=glance

Reaching Out: The Three Movements of Spiritual Life

By: Henri Nouwen

http://www.amazon.com/Reaching-Out-Henri-Nouwen/dp/0385236824/sr=1-2/qid=1171928925/ref=pd_bbs_2/102-9348870-6087309?ie=UTF8&s=books

The recommended movies for this track are:

Remember the Titans (2000)

Amistad (1997)

Tender Mercies (1983)

- Reflection: What challenges do the characters face as they struggle to live authentic lives? What choices do they make intentionally that are not welcomed by the larger world? What is the cost of authenticity? Is it worth it?

The recommended activities for the track are:

- Watch *Survivor* (CBS) and talk about the dynamics that create community on this show. What breaks down the community? What strengthens groups and what tears them apart?
- Plan a time with your running partner to do a VERY NORMAL activity together (cleaning each person's house, doing dishes, grocery shopping, gardening, cooking). How is it uncomfortable inviting someone into this space? What is the result? What is the difference between sitting and talking together and actually getting INTO each other's lives?
- Examine your life to see whether or not there is a relationship that has not been authentic as you learn through this study. Commit to making it authentic. What changes will you make? How will you act differently in other relationships?

First Run

Following Jesus Lead

Warm up

Once you have found each other at your pre-arranged place take 15 minutes each to give each other a little background. You can do this by giving each other:

- ❖ three or four “mile stone” markers in your life—places/events/decisions that have played a significant part in your story, or
- ❖ a handful of things you think would be helpful for someone to know you, or
- ❖ a significant person, place and event in your life for each five year period, or
- ❖ any other way you come up with that tells something of your story.

Then: why did you choose to have a running partner? What are you concerned about? Looking forward to?

Run

Quiet yourself, invite God's presence into your reading, Ask for God's Spirit to teach you. Listen and read the text either out loud or silently: John 13:1-20

It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

2The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. 3Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; 4so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. 5After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

6He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

7Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

8"No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

9"Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

10Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." 11For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

12When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. 13"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. 14Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. 15I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. 16I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them. 18"I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill the scripture: 'He who shares my bread has lifted up his heel against me.'

19 "I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am He. 20 I tell you the truth, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me."

If you are doing the study together do not feel like you have to “get through it all.”

1. Jesus makes the decision to wash the disciples feet when he knows that “the Father had given all things into his hands.” If truly all things were in the hands of Jesus, why might he make the decision to wash the disciples’ feet? Why do you think he chooses this as one of his last acts with the disciples?
2. Peter initially rejects the washing of the feet. What might be uncomfortable about it? Why are we reluctant to allow ourselves into these kinds of situations? What is something that you are reluctant to allow others to see or to help you with?
3. Jesus tells us that we “also ought to wash one another’s feet.” What is challenging about this command? Do you think it’s easier to receive the washing from Jesus or to wash one another’s feet?
4. Jesus very clearly puts himself and us in the role as servants. What are the obstacles to this role in our daily lives? Why is it so hard to live as servants to one another – not just because of our own reluctance, but because of our social and cultural obstacles as well?
5. Consider verse 20. In light of these verses, a very unlikely person may come into our lives as the person that God has sent. After all, the disciples did not expect Jesus to wash their feet, and Jesus says that his followers will also be unexpected servants. How could we open our eyes and prepare ourselves to see a messenger coming as a servant? How can we prepare ourselves to act as the unexpected servants?

► *In this account, we learn that Jesus first calls us into community by modeling it himself. He does not ask us to do anything that he hasn’t done himself. Yet the action that he takes is radical and unexpected. Do you think that this kind of radical love is welcomed in our world today? Or do you think that people simply don’t have time for it or don’t have the eyes to see it?*

Push/Challenge

Washing of feet was a common practice—what was not common was washing anyone else’s feet other than your own. Not even servants were expected to do it as the open sewers, livestock and garbage that filled the streets made feet filthy. Yet Jesus serves in this way.

- This week ask God to give you eyes to see ways—common little but perhaps unexpected ways—you can “wash the feet” of some one each day this week.
- What are one or two ways you can be praying for one another? If time and place allows pray together.

Cool Down

Decide when and where you want to meet next (you may want to set up the next five times now, too).

Decide whether you want to do the next study in advance and come talk about it or do it together. Make plans to get one of the recommended books (you do not need to choose the same one).

Second Run

Having the Mind of Christ

Warm up

Where did you go as a kid to be alone?

What is something that caught your attention or imagination in the book you selected for this track?

If you did not have enough time last time for both of your stories take time this week.

Run

*Quiet yourself, invite God's presence into your reading, Ask for God's Spirit to teach you. Listen and read the text either out loud or silently: **Philippians 2:1-18***

If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, 2then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. 3Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

5Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

6Who, being in very nature God,

did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,

7but made himself nothing,

taking the very nature of a servant,

being made in human likeness.

8And being found in appearance as a man,

he humbled himself

and became obedient to death—

even death on a cross!

9Therefore God exalted him to the highest place

and gave him the name that is above every name,

10that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

Shining as Stars

12Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

14Do everything without complaining or arguing, 15so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe 16as you hold out the word of life—in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing. 17But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. 18 So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

If you chose to do this study on your own beforehand what are some thing you discovered or stood out to you? **If you are doing the study together do not feel like you have to “get through it all.”**

1. List the charges that Paul gives in verses 1-5 (example: be of the same mind). As you list those charges, consider what kind of community might come from a group of people living this way. Have you ever been in a situation where those around you were trying to live this way? What was it like, or what might it be like?
2. Paul is not asking anything of the Philippians that has not first been modeled in Christ. How does the model of Jesus, as it is listed in verses 6-11, spur on the kind of community that Paul was talking about in 1-5?
3. Paul commands us to “work out our salvation” for it is “God who is at work in us.” Consider the tension posed by this verse. How might this tension exist in our own lives and in the kind of Christian community that Paul is talking about? Paul says that God “enables” us to will and to work. How does this give hope?
4. How might living this way enable us to “shine like stars in the world?” Does this ring true in your own life? Do you feel like authentic and loving actions really stand out, or do they just get covered up by normal life? Does it feel impossible to “shine like a star”? What, do you think, blocks the light?
5. It is interesting that Paul is not speaking to the individual here, but to the group of people called the church. Do you think living this way becomes more realistic when it happens in a community of other people? What is the difference between living this way with others and trying to live this way alone?

► *In this passage, Paul gives us a powerful account of the life of Jesus. He challenges us to join him in living this way. How realistic is this in our everyday lives? What do we need in order to really be able to live this way? Think about things that you specifically might need in order to really embody the life of Jesus.*

Push/Challenge

- Jesus the light of the world chose to live within you when you said “yes” to his being Lord of your life. Therefore, remind yourself at every meal this week that you are a star that shines in a world that often sees little hope.
- What are two ways can you be praying for each other?
- Continue to find foot washing opportunities.

Cool Down

Decide whether you want to do the next study in advance and come talk about it or do it together.

Third Run

Bearing with One Another in Love

Warm up

What's been on your front burner this week (where does your mind and heart tend to track to)?
Check in on your prayer concerns from last week.

What is something that caught your attention or imagination in the book you selected for this track?

Run

Quiet yourself, invite God's presence into your reading, Ask for God's Spirit to teach you.
Listen and read the text either out loud or silently: **Ephesians 4**

1As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 2Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. 4There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called— 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

7But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. 8This is why it says:

"When he ascended on high,

he led captives in his train

and gave gifts to men." 9(What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? 10He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) 11It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. 15Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. 16From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Living as Children of Light

17 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. 18They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. 19Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.

20 You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. 21Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. 22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

25 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. 26"In your anger do not sin" Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27and do not give the devil a foothold. 28He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. 30And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger,

brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

If you are doing the study together do not feel like you have to “get through it all.”

1. Paul begs us to “live a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called.” What is the calling that we have been called to? Think back on the last two studies. As believers, who is the source of our calling? Why do you think it matters whether or not we live a life worthy of this calling?
2. One of the great challenges of this passage is the command to live as a unified group. Do you think that Paul understands the deep challenge of being unified? Why do you think it is so important?
3. Paul speaks about some spiritual gifts here, but what is the purpose of those gifts? The nature of the gifts is individual, but these individual gifts are for the purpose of the larger body. Do you think that this gives worth and satisfaction to the individual, or might we get lost in the larger body? Or might we find greater worth in the larger body?
4. The metaphor that Paul is using here is one of growth. Based on this passage, what are things that encourage the growth of the body? What are the things that discourage it?
5. Consider verses 17-32. Here Paul gives specifics about growing up as a body. Name one or two specifics that are difficult to maintain in your own life. How can others help you with this? Remember, this is not meant to be done alone. What might change in your life if you were to implement these changes?

► *In this chapter we learn how important it is for the Body of Christ to function together in unity. However, we also learn how hard it is. We are encouraged to bear with one another. Have you been in a situation where it was almost impossible to function together? Have you been in a situation where people were working well together? What is the difference? What individual changes need to take place for the group to function as a healthy body?*

Push/Challenge

Being one in Christ has less to do with gritting our teeth and being nice to one another than it does with recognizing we are all broken. What unites us is not our effort but our common need for forgiveness, God’s pouring out of that forgiveness and His giving us the Holy Spirit to unite each of us in Him. Go through this week:

1. Recalling each morning you are loved and forgiven, and
2. Viewing other believers (especially those who rub you wrong) as people in need of and recipients of God’s forgiveness and grace.

Cool Down

Make plans to watch one of the movies recommended for the track.

Decide whether you want to do the next study in advance and come talk about it or do it together.

Consider finding a way to help out with Easter at Union.

Fourth Run

Become Slaves to One Another

Warm Up

What's is something that has been an encouragement to you in the last couple of weeks? Or, What is something you are thankful for that has occurred recently?

Check in on your prayer concerns from last week.

What is something that caught your attention or imagination in the book or movie you selected?

Quiet yourself, invite God's presence into your reading, Ask for God's Spirit to teach you. Listen. Galatians 5:13-26

13 You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. 14The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." 15 If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

Life by the Spirit

16 So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. 17For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. 18But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

19 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. 24Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. 25Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. 26Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

As always, if you are doing the study together do not feel like you have to “get through it all.”

1. Here Paul claims that we choose love out of freedom. How might choosing to love one another be one of the most freeing choices that we can make? What is the temptation to choose otherwise? What is the eventual result of either choice?
2. Consider verse 14. How must you feel about yourself in order for this commandment to make sense? The challenge of loving one another can seem to pit our neighbor against ourselves. But this verse shows us that we must first love ourselves in order to know what it means to love our neighbor. Discuss the tension between loving ourselves and loving our neighbor.

3. Examine the fruits of the Spirit (verses 22-23). What kinds of things might be possible if a community was living this way? Does it feel like a freeing way to live, or a constricting way to live? Remember, Paul claims that this way of life is born out of freedom. Do you agree?
4. This passage is challenging us to live by the Spirit rather than by the flesh (e.g. our own wisdom, own effort) or by the law (trying to qualify and make ourselves acceptable by doing everything right). Are there limitations when we live by the Spirit? What is promised when we live by the Spirit? Can we live by the Spirit alone? Or are we meant to do it in community?
5. Consider other communities that you know. What is the effect of a common guideline or common way of life?
▶ *In these verses we learn that the challenge to love comes out of freedom. It is never something that we are coerced into. However, once we choose to love – there are other things we are choosing not to do. Paul paints a realistic picture. He knows there are real choices out there. But he still claims that choosing to love and live by the Spirit is a better way to live.*

What does it mean to live by the Spirit? What are the costs of living by the Spirit? What are the benefits both to the individual and to the community and to the larger world?

Push/Challenge

1. Do something restorative/enjoyable for yourself.
2. Love your neighbor.

Cool Down

- What are two ways can you be praying for each other? For Union?
- If you have not done so already make plans to do some every day kind of thing with your running partner.
- Decide on a movie to discuss next time

Fifth Run

Bear with One Another

Warm up

What is one your dreams for the next five years?

What is something that has been difficult since you last met?

Thoughts/feelings about the movie you saw?

Run

Quiet yourself, invite God's presence into your reading, Ask for God's Spirit to teach you.

Listen. Colossians 3:1-17

1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. 7 You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. 8 But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. 9 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. 11 Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. 17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Again, if you are doing the study together do not feel like you have to “get through it all.”

1. Here we learn that “your life is hidden with Christ in God.” Have you ever considered that your life is really not your own? That you are even hidden with Christ now? How might that free you up to live differently day to day?
2. Paul claims that we are clothed with a “new self.” This is what gives us the power to leave the old behind and look toward the new. What are the effects of the old self in a community? Have you seen any examples of this (perhaps in a reality TV show)? What was the cost to the community and to the individual?
3. Consider verse 11. Here we learn that in the renewal, all are invited in. Can you imagine the radical nature of this verse in the 1st century context? These are groups of people who are not “meant” to be together and yet Paul claims that in Christ there

are no longer these divisions. How hard is it to really let go of our normal demographic divisions? What are the obstacles, both personally and culturally?

4. When Paul starts to give this community the challenge of compassion, love, and forgiveness, he starts by saying that we are “holy and beloved.” Why might he start it this way? Does it help to know that we are beloved when we consider the following way of life that he describes?
5. Paul gives us some tools for living in this radical nature. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. How might these guidelines make it easier, in fact, make it possible for us to live in the way that Paul describes? How can we put these things into practice now so that we can start to live this way?

► *Here we learn that our life is not our own, but we are invited into a new reality where Christ is all in all. This reality is not comfortable, nor does it feel normal – but the promise is that through living in this place we will find life.*

Push/Challenge

Think about the two tools that Paul gives. Which one do you tend toward? How can you incorporate these more and more? How will they impact the way that you live and the way that you interact with others? This week?

Cool Down

How can you pray for one another?

Agree on things to pray about for the Union community.

Sixth Run

Ambassadors for Christ

Warm Up

What has been good about these six weeks? What has been challenging?
What's a hope you have for the Union community?

Quiet yourself, invite God's presence into your reading, Ask for God's Spirit to teach you.
Listen. 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

11 Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. 12We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. 13If we are out of our mind, it is for the sake of God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. 14For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

16 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 18All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Again, if you are doing the study together do not feel like you have to “get through it all.”

1. According to Paul, what is it that urges us on? How is this source different than simply wanting to impact the world? While it is extremely admirable to desire and work for change in the world, how might starting with the love of Christ offer a different perspective?
2. Paul claims that we no longer see anyone from a human point of view. What do you think he means by this? How might this different perspective offer us hope as we seek to live in community? What challenges might it present?
3. Have you ever considered that all believers are given the ministry of reconciliation? What is the source and reason for this ministry? How can we embody Christ as we seek to live out this ministry? What are ways that the individual/community/world need this ministry?
4. What are the responsibilities and helpful characteristics of an ambassador?
5. Paul makes the bold claim that we are ambassadors for Christ and that God is making his appeal through us. What is the relationship between this and learning how to live in community? How important is it for these communities to figure out how to impact the world?

6. Reflect on your own life. How has an ambassador for Christ made an impact on your life? What were the consequences? Do you know if that person was being intentional about their decision? How can we be more intentional about being ambassadors for Christ?

► *In this lesson, we encounter the astonishing reality that God is making his appeal through us. Because we are the people who have experienced reconciliation with God, we are also meant to be the ones to share it with the world. How is this daunting? How is it encouraging?*

Spend some time reflecting on some of the key things you've learned so far in this study. How has your view of Christian community changed, if at all? How has your view of the Christian life changed?

Push or Challenge

1. Identify a practice or a discovery from these last six weeks that has been significant for you.
2. Then come up with a way to keep this before you or a part of your life for the next 40 days.
3. Go to the Running Partners blog on the Union web page and share some of your thoughts about your last six weeks of training.

Cool Down

Drawing upon what you have seen in your time together “bless” your running partner. It may be a word of thanks, encouragement, affirmation of a gift or talent you see in them.

Consider asking someone who has not had a running partner to join you on another track.