

## Life Group Leader Guide

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*For the week of January 29th, 2017*

### Quick Review

Nat provided five reasons why we should become physically fit this year. What were they? Is there one that really tugs at your heart?

- Nat's five reasons were: 1) You are free 2) You belong to God 3) You are the body of Christ 4) You have a choice and 5) You are the Holy Spirit's home.

### My Story

- Have you ever achieved a goal that was extremely important to you? What was it? How did it make you feel?
- Does the idea of someone else being in control of the direction your life takes scare you, frustrate you, or give you peace? Why?

### Digging Deeper

1. One of the "whys" Nat mentioned is that we're free—yet, he described a Christian's true freedom as being free to go wherever God's tracks for us lead.
- If you think any of your group members might be unfamiliar with the story of Esther, this would be a great time to give them a little context. If you choose to do this, you could share something along these lines: Esther was a Jewish woman who was chosen to be the Queen of Persia. While she was in that role, a man named Haman—who worked for the king—began plotting to destroy the Jewish people, Esther's people. Since Haman had a little power with the king, he vaguely took his request to him, saying that there was a certain group of people in his kingdom who didn't follow the king's laws (referring to the Jews). He then asked permission to get rid of them. The king didn't ask any questions, but just obliged, and Haman thought he was going to get his way. Until, one of Esther's relatives found out and asked her to plead to the king for the safety of her people. As the story goes on, Esther steps into God's plan for her to bring deliverance to the Jews. As a result, her people are saved.

- Have a group member read Esther 4:1-17. What was the plan God had for the Jews as a people (in this passage in particular)? Where would God's tracks for Esther lead her in relation to that?
  - Have another member read Esther 8:3-7. Did Esther ultimately choose to follow God's tracks for her? What was the result? In what ways was Esther freed by her decision? What might have been the result if she had chosen differently?
2. Read Romans 6:17-23 together and answer the following questions.
- How is being "enslaved to God" a good thing? What specific benefit do we receive? In what ways might slavery in this context be different from our modern-day understanding?
  - The specific benefit in this case is the fruit that results in sanctification.
  - In verses 20 and 21, Paul mentions being a slave to sin. In what ways is his description of this slavery different from how he described slavery to God?
  - Slavery to sin gives you no benefits—it results in death (v. 21). Whereas slavery to God benefits us through sanctification and eternal life (v. 22).
3. Have a group member read James 4:13-17. Answer the following questions a group.
- In verse 14, James mentions that we have no idea what our lives will be like tomorrow. In light of this, how does he recommend we plan? How might doing this change our perspective?
  - In verse 15, James recommends we say: "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that". If you like, you can relate this back to the train track metaphor. If we act as James says we should, we reveal that we trust God's tracks to be correct. If His tracks go there, we will too.

## Taking It Home

4. Does knowing that you're free change your views about getting physically fit this year? If so, how?
5. What actions do you need to take now to stay on God's tracks for your life?