



GETTING INVOLVED GUIDE

TURN YOUR PASSION INTO YOUR MISSION

We Believe That God Gives Us Opportunities To Run With Other People So We Can Be A Part Of The Most Important Work In The Universe As His Ambassadors.

Passion. Purpose. People.



Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. – 2 Corinthians 5:20

1 SECTION

INTRODUCTION

A few years ago after I crossed the finish line of a 50-mile ultra marathon, I went into the men's dressing room and took a shower. The entire time I was in the shower, I heard this other finisher groaning in anguish.

Upon exiting the shower, still wrapped in my towel, I saw him, completely naked, sitting on a toilet in front of me. He looked up at me and said, *"I can't get up. Can you help me up?"*

My first thought was, *"Seriously, bro? You're naked. You stink like poop. You're dirty and gross. Did I mention, dude, you're naked. Nah, I'm gonna take a pass. I just got out of the shower and I'm nice and clean. Sorry, you're on your own."*

But before I knew what was happening, I walked over and reached out my hand. And I started helping him up.

Why? Because there was a time when I was that guy. I was a stench in God's nostrils with my sin. I was dirty and gross. I was vulnerable and unable to do anything to help myself up or to clean myself up. And God, holy and perfect and clean in every way, heard my groans and cries. Out of His great love and mercy, He reached down and pulled me up.

He took my stinking, filthy sin and washed me clean through His Son, Jesus. That day I confessed with my mouth that Jesus is Lord and believed in my heart that God raised Him from the dead – on that day I was saved and changed.

2 Corinthians Chapter 5 tells me that I am a new creation in Christ, that the old has passed away and the new has come. Verses 18-20 say this,

"All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us."

We – you and I who have been reconciled to God through Christ have been given the message and ministry of reconciliation. We are new creations now serving as ambassadors for Christ.

God transforms our lives and sends us back to be agents of transformation in the lives of other people.

In the race of life, there are still people out there – unbelievers and believers alike, whose lives are in the toilet so to speak, who need the Good News of who Jesus is and what Jesus has done for them.

The mission of Runner Church is to use running as a platform for God to - mile after mile - make His appeal through us. Here's how you can join us...

SECTION

2

HELP US HELP OTHER RUNNERS

There are a variety of ways you can help us in our mission to help other runners know and follow Jesus as we carry out the Great Commandments and Great Commission through running. Some of these are for those local to Omaha, Nebraska where we are headquartered, while others can be implemented by runners around the world.

NOTE:

If you would like to learn more about how you can personally turn your passion into your mission as an ambassador for Christ to other runners, see Section 3 later in this short guide.

IDEA

1

DISPLAY OUR LOGO.

Whether you are racing, participating in a group run, or getting miles in by yourself, wearing our gear is a great way to let others know about our ministry. Place a sticker on your vehicle too! The more people know about what we are doing, the more opportunities we have to do what we are doing. Contact us at RunnerChurch.com to get started.

IDEA

2

GIVE AWAY CDS AND BRACELETS.

One of the best ways to directly make a difference in the lives of other runners is to pass on copies of our "Runner Stories" CD comprised of six runner-themed, Gospel-centric, inspirational Bible messages. You can preview all six messages at RunnerChurch.com. We also have silicone bracelets you can distribute. Contact us to get a supply of both.

IDEA

3

SHARE US ON SOCIAL MEDIA.

Like our Facebook® page, share our posts, point others toward our event listings, mention our site at your blog and in your newsletter or other communications, and ask others to do the same. Point people to RunnerChurch.com for archived messages, training, videos, and other resources.

HELP US HELP OTHER RUNNERS

IDEA

4

INVITE PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED.

If you are local to Omaha, come to our Sunday morning gatherings and/or Sunday evening studies and bring someone with you. Can't make it Sundays? Join us for a group run throughout the week and bring a friend. Tell others about us and introduce us to them. We will do everything we can to love them like Jesus.

IDEA

5

CONNECT US WITH INFLUENCERS.

Do you know people of influence – pastors at churches, directors of organizations, club presidents or other similar leaders? Put us in contact (or tell them about us) with anyone who has a platform where we can speak, serve, setup a booth, advertise, or be interviewed to share our mission or give an inspirational talk.

IDEA

6

SERVE AT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES.

Come join us as we serve other runners by manning aid stations, cleaning up the trails, distributing bottled water, and completing other service projects. Be a part of what we are doing to give back to the running community. Wear a Runner Church shirt! To join the Volunteer Team and get twice monthly emails with opportunities to serve with us, send us an email to jimmy@RunnerChurch.com.

IDEA

7

HOST A GATHERING OR STUDY.

Pastor Jimmy is available locally to come share a 10-15 minute “Runner Story” and Bible message. Invite your runner friends to listen and then participate in a group run afterwards. Or you can gather runners in your home for a Bible study that he will lead for you. No minimum attendees. Contact us for details.

Thank You

Thank you for helping us to get the word out about our ministry. If you have any other platforms for helping us help others, please reach out to let us know. Your support is much appreciated.

Of course, the most important thing of all that you can do to benefit Runner Church is to pray for us! Please add us to your regular prayer list and ask our gracious God to continue making His appeal through us as we serve as ambassadors to other runners.

3 SECTION

TURN YOUR PASSION INTO YOUR MISSION

We believe that God gives us opportunities to run with other people so we can share the Good News with those runners so they might experience the immeasurable riches of a life that is anchored to Jesus.

This involves the “*who, when, where, what, why, and how*” of turning your passion for running into your mission as an ambassador for Christ.

So, let’s walk through those in a quick question and answer sequence...

QUESTION

1

WHO IS RUNNING WITH YOU THAT NEEDS TO HEAR GOOD NEWS?

Every. Single. Runner. Every single runner you know needs to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ. We ALL need to be told and reminded of who Jesus is and the abundant life that He has for us, for whatever specific situation and season of life we are in. Your first step is to make a list of runners that you can run with, and begin praying for those on your list.

QUESTION

2

WHEN AND WHERE DO YOU RUN WITH OTHERS?

There are intersections where our feet and our lives cross paths with other runners. Turning your passion into your mission means showing up at the right time and the right place. The roads, trails, tracks, and treadmills are more than places for you to get some miles in; they are your place in the ministry field. Make a list of times and places you can run with other people.

QUESTION

3

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO MODEL THE CHRISTIAN FAITH THROUGH RUNNING?

Learn this: you can’t do everything, but you can do something! In the simplest of terms, other runners need to see you treasure Jesus so much that they want to treasure Him too. Illustrate with your actions and communicate with your words that life with Jesus is far better than life without Him. God has divinely appointed and strategically positioned you precisely where you are precisely at this season of life precisely with the runners around you to represent Jesus to them. Love God. Love others. On the run.

TURN YOUR PASSION INTO YOUR MISSION

QUESTION 4

HOW CAN YOU TALK ABOUT THE GOSPEL WITH OTHER RUNNERS?

Conversations with other runners before, during, and after runs are a cornerstone of the sport. Use these opportunities to speak life to those who are running with you. What they need most isn't good advice, but rather Good News! Use your conversations to point them to Jesus so they can find in Him what nothing else in this world can deliver. Your words are not your words. They are Jesus' words spoken through you. You are an ambassador speaking on His behalf, sharing the message of reconciliation, telling others to come find life in Jesus.

QUESTION 5

WHY ARE YOU LACING UP YOUR SHOES TO RUN?

Ultimately, your mission is to make disciples. You are to help them take the next step – whether that is the first step or the ten-thousandth step – in their journey of experiencing the real life of joy, hope, peace, acceptance, guidance, and love that is found in knowing and following Jesus. We will never spread the Good News through addition (our own efforts) but rather through multiplication (the efforts of many) by encouraging and equipping other runners to join us in the mission. As an ambassador for Christ, you are to help unbelievers become ambassadors too and help believers become better ambassadors!

NOTE

The question is: what might this look like in a real life example? In the next section you'll see what we are doing in our own running community.

SECTION

4

WHAT WE ARE DOING IN OUR COMMUNITY

In carrying out the Great Commandments and the Great Commission, what specifically takes place? Every activity involved in turning our passion into our mission falls into one of the following three categories...

CATEGORY

1

GOING.

We go where the runners are and simply love them like Jesus. Whether this is meeting up for a run with a friend or participating in a Taco Tuesday group run, we go have fun with our runner friends and try to show them the heart of our loving God. We model Jesus' servant attitude by volunteering at events, hosting aid stations, supporting causes, and helping out our runner friends on and away from the course. When we are around other runners we try to answer one simple question: how would Jesus act if He were in his favorite pair of Hokas running with us? And we aim for that. All along the way, we pray for people, inject the Good News of Jesus into the conversation when appropriate, and invite people to join us for a...

CATEGORY

2

GATHERING.

A few times each month (weather permitting) we meet at a popular running locale for a FAITH AND FUN GROUP RUN. Prior to the start of the group run, Pastor Jimmy (or a guest speaker) shares a 10-15 minute message. These messages begin with a runner story illustration, then dive into a relevant Biblical truth, and culminate in the presentation of the Gospel. These gatherings are posted as events on Facebook in advance and we average about twenty people who attend. Pastor Jimmy has been invited to share one of these messages at pre-race gatherings to popular events in Omaha, NE with as many as 100 people attending.

Additionally, we host cookouts, game nights, Christmas parties, running documentary screenings, and a variety of other events for runners in our home. With each of these there is usually a very short gospel-centered devotional that is shared with those who attend.

The point of these gatherings is threefold: to proclaim the Good News of Jesus, to let people get to know what we are all about, and to invite them to dig deeper into the message through a small group study.

CATEGORY

3

GROUPING.

The ultimate goal is for people to join us in a Sunday night Bible study in our home where we can talk more about how God desires to change our lives for our infinite good and His glory. We host a long-term discipleship program on Sunday nights where we talk about real life issues, how the Good News of Jesus

WHAT WE ARE DOING IN OUR COMMUNITY

provides a solution to those issues, and encourage each other to live in line with the truth of the Gospel for our joy and His praise. In these studies we show the beauty of God's design for all things, the brokenness that occurs when we abandon His design, and how restoration is possible as we believe the Good News of Jesus more fully in more areas of our lives.

***What we ultimately want to see happen is this:
As runners grow in their faith, they too GO, GATHER and GROUP to multiply.***

As such, our resources are made available for any runner (including you) to take and use in your own community to turn your passion into your mission.

- Use our Gospel-centric, runner-themed discipleship lessons to start a group or work with someone one-on-one to experience the kind of joy-filled life change that only Jesus can bring.
- Give away our Runner Stories CD to runners in your own community (and at race locales as you travel) to share six Gospel-centric, runner-themed messages. Each are between 10-15 minutes in length.
- Share our short, inspirational videos (with actual running footage and a succinct Gospel-thought) with other runners to point them towards Jesus in just 1-3 minutes.
- Get trained yourself by reading through our training materials to learn more about the “*who, when, where, what, why, and how*” of turning your passion for running into your mission as an ambassador for Christ.
- Reach out to us with questions about serving as an ambassador for Christ in the running community. We are happy to help in any way that we can.

The important thing is this: start loving God and loving people through running.

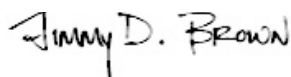
Running can be so much more than just running. It can be a means of grace that God uses as a part of His purpose for the good of people and the glory of His Name.

Let's never lose sight of the end game: to make much of the King of Kings, Jesus Christ.

Ultimately, we desire to bring honor and glory to our God and see His image-bearers span the globe into every nation, tribe, people and tongue to the praise of the King of all creation. We invite you to join us.

Just think about it: when you turn your passion into your mission, you get to run some miles as part of the greatest work in the universe as God's ambassador of love to other runners. So, go run. Go make disciples.

God bless,



Pastor, *Runner Church*™

NOTE

Not all resources are currently available at RunnerChurch.com. Please check back as we update the site with new information and resources on a regular basis. If you have any questions about locating a specific resource, please contact us via the site.

GIVE AWAY THE RUNNER STORIES CD

Perhaps the easiest way you can get a Gospel-centered message into the hands (or ears!) of fellow runners is to give away our *Runner Stories* CDs. Each CD contains six messages of about 10-15 minutes each. These include...

- Help For Your Toughest Race
- Motivations For The Long Run
- Do You Have What It Takes?
- A Well-Marked Course
- Running Happy, Running Grumpy
- Run. Recover. Repeat.

You may listen to these messages as streaming audio online at RunnerChurch.com (or you can download them as .mp3 files to load to your favorite device).

If you would like to get physical copies of the CD to distribute, please contact Pastor Jimmy at jimmy@RunnerChurch.com and we will ship them to you at no cost to yourself.

