

FEBRUARY 2012

KID ZONE

Go for Gold

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In 2012, the Olympic Games in London will be huge. Throughout the world now athletes are training hard and competing for selection. This year in Kid Zone we'll explore how following Jesus is like a race or sports event. We'll have exciting stories about how the Apostle Paul started and ran the race with Jesus. Each month we'll have some training to work out as an athlete and to "Go for Gold" in the race for Jesus.

ON YOUR MARKS!
GET SET! GO!

At first Saul, later called Paul, hated Jesus and his followers. He did all he could to stop the good news about Jesus spreading. He was sure that Jesus was not alive but dead. He was an angry man. If he heard that anyone in Jerusalem believed in Jesus, he rushed to their home. He dragged them off to prison to be interrogated and beaten.

He tried to argue with a Christian called Stephen and helped to arrest him. He took Stephen to court and accused him of speaking against the Jewish religion and its laws. What Stephen said made Saul and others so mad that they grabbed him, forced him into the street and threw stones at him until he died. Saul looked after the coats of the men who threw the stones to kill Stephen. He wanted Stephen dead.

Before he died, Stephen looked up and saw Jesus in heaven. He prayed: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit and please don't punish these men for killing me." Saul never forgot the way Stephen died, praying to Jesus.

Then Saul heard about Christians in Damascus. He got papers to say he could arrest them and took some men to help him. It took several days to get there. Under the heat of the mid-day sun Saul was furiously marching his men as they got near to Damascus. Suddenly he was blinded by a very bright light from the sky. He fell to the ground.

A voice said, "Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?"

"Who are you?" Saul asked.

"I am Jesus," the voice replied. "Get up and go into the city. You will be told what do."

Saul couldn't see and had to be led by the hand into Damascus. He was very confused. But now he realised that Jesus was not dead but alive. He tried to pray to Jesus.

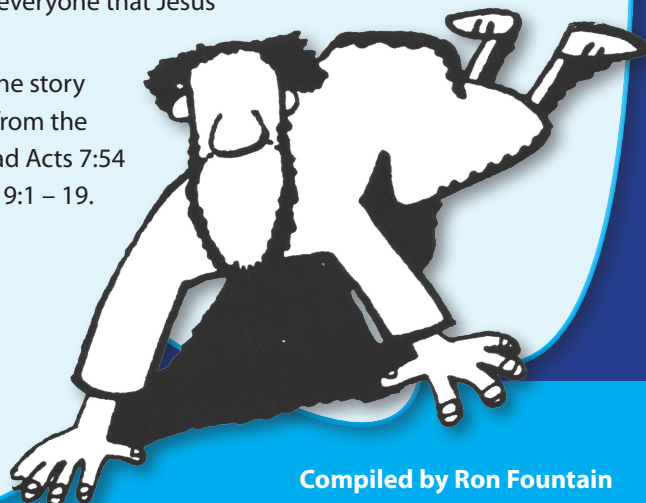
For three days Saul was still blind. He didn't eat or drink anything.

Then a Christian called Ananias was sent to Saul by Jesus. Although he was scared of Saul, he came into the room, put his hand on Saul in a kind way and said in a loving voice, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus has sent me to heal your blindness." At once Saul could see again.

Ananias went on to say, "Jesus wants you to be filled with the Holy Spirit and be baptised. He has chosen you to be his Apostle. You must go and tell Jews and people who are not Jews that Jesus is alive and the Saviour of the whole world. You will suffer a lot but Jesus will be with you."

At once, Ananias baptised Saul and gave him a meal. Saul had started his race as a follower of Jesus. He was full of joy and told everyone that Jesus is alive.

Explore the story yourself from the Bible. Read Acts 7:54 – 8:3 and 9:1 – 19.



Compiled by Ron Fountain

BE AN ATHLETE!

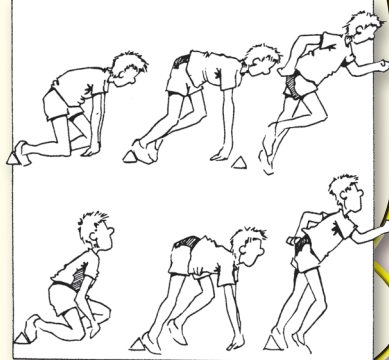
Start an OLYMPIC Scrap Book

How to Start a SPRINT RACE:

COACHING TIPS:

On your marks!

- your head should be down
- elbows should be straight
- don't sit back
- keep shoulders in line with your hands



Get Set!

- hips not too high or low
- look down, not up
- keep back leg bent

Go!

- keep eyes down
- drive forwards, not up
- swing the arm opposite your front leg forward
- take bigger and bigger strides

Draw lines from each coaching tip to the parts of the pictures they refer to. Which athlete is doing it right and which is wrong? Practice starting a race.

Get a big book with blank pages. Cut out or download stories about the Olympics. Stick them into your scrap book.

Draw SAUL's Face

God wanted Saul to start the race with Jesus but Saul wasn't ready. Fill in Saul's face in these pictures.



[1]

Saul is putting people into prison. He is very angry.



[2]

Saul is on the road when he sees Jesus. He is very scared and surprised.



[3]

Saul is telling people that Jesus is alive. He is happy.

FOLLOWING JESUS IS LIKE A RACE

This verse comes from Hebrews 12: 1 – 2. Some of the letters in the words that tell us about the race of following Jesus are in code. Use this code to read the verse.

1 = A; 2 = D; 3 = E; 4 = G; 5 = I;
6 = N; 7 = R; 8 = S; 9 = T.

"Let us **7 5 2** ourselves of everything that **4 3 9 8** in the **W 1 Y**, and of the sin which holds on to us so **9 5 4 H 9 L Y**; and let us **7 U 6** with **2 3 9 3 7 M 5 6 1 9 5 0 6** the **7 I C 3** that lies before us. Let us **K 3 3 P** our **3 Y 3 8 F 5 X 3 2** on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from **B 3 4 5 6 6 5 6 4** to **3 6 2**."

Check your answer by looking up Hebrews 12: 1 – 2 in a Good News Bible.

Here's a challenge! Can you memorise the whole verse?

Talking with the Coach

Jesus is our Coach. When we pray we listen and talk with him. Pray this prayer:

"Lord Jesus, please help me to run the race with you this year. Help me to keep focused on you and not get side-tracked. If I fall, help me to get up again and to keep going. Thank you that you are always with me from the beginning to the end.

Amen."