



Fit 4 Gold: 2. Being Equipped

Full Plan



Theme: *It takes more than gold to become a winning athlete:*

You need the right: Coach: the Holy Spirit; Kit: Spiritual armour; Food: the Bible; Team mates: 'Church' groups; Exercise: Living it out; Recovery: Prayer & worship

Note: It would impossible to cover all of this thoroughly in one session. Focus on what your group needs the most. It could be done as a short series.

Aims *select according to your focus*

- To show we've got the best possible help available.
- To show the importance of the right coach, lifestyle and back-up support
- To show the importance of regularly taking to God things that have hurt us or where we have hurt others so that we can continue to 'walk in the Spirit'
- To show the importance of reading the Bible and thinking healthy thoughts
- Teamwork: It would be hard to go it alone, especially when life is tough.
- To show the importance of the right lifestyle
- To give some practical help on how to draw strength from God

Theme verse: Hebrews 12:1-3

... So let us run the race that is before us and never give up. We should remove from our lives anything that would get in the way and the sin that so easily holds us back. Let us look only to Jesus ... NCV

Bible links

James 4:8 Come near to God, and God will come near to you. Clean sin out of your lives...

Pentecost: Acts 1: 8; Acts 2:1-16, 37-47 Holy Spirit's grand arrival

1 Samuel 16:13 David anointed with the Holy Spirit

Games themes: dressing in the right gear, eating the right food; getting fit

Food link: Honey based food; Club biscuits; and/or play a food based game

DVD clip: Doug Horley – Harry & Larry's Get to know God DVD, sketch 6

Song ideas

I'm gonna jump up and down: Okey Dokey

Okey Dokey: Okey Dokey

Talk Talk: Lovely Jubbly

Shout it out, from Take Back the Beat: Tribe

Sports links: Ellie Simmonds; Debbie Flood; Dai Greene; Kelly Holmes;

Overall Application: this will depend on your main aim.

God provides plenty of resources but we need to tap into them.

Have we off loaded our baggage; put on the right kit and started eating some good food?

Is there anything we need to do to get better equipped for our spiritual journey?

Joining the Team

So what does/would being on the team involve? Imagine arriving at your new team's HQ for your 1st day. What do you think will happen?

One piece of good news is that you're not on your own any more. You've got the best possible help available.

Joining God's team doesn't mean you have to be amazing or really good at something (see back-up notes for extra here). It does involve some important changes though and connecting up with everyone and everything that can support you.

Sports links:

- ◆ Ellie Simmonds moved to Swansea to train with top coach Billy Pye at the Wales National Pool. In 2009 not just Ellie, but also Billy was presented with an MBE for services to sport.
- ◆ Rower Debbie Flood also moved from Yorkshire to Henley-on-Thames in Oxfordshire in order to train with a top coach at a top centre.
- ◆ Hurdler Dai Greene made some important lifestyle changes so that he could reach the top.
- ◆ Kelly Holmes had to deal with some 'heavy gear/unwanted baggage' during her journey towards gold. See profile in Sports Links

Being Equipped: The Right Kit

DVD clip option: Treasure Planet where the Doctor has trouble with his 'new' space suit.

Comic sketch: Dress up a leader in the wrong outfit for a sport like running. E.g. have him arrive dressed like the Stig from Top Gear. Discuss or comment on how easy/difficult it would be to do the task.

Or show the photos from the PowerPoint. Pete's a keen runner. He's also a motor bike enthusiast. He sometimes arrives at his running club for training on his bike. How would he get on doing his circuit training etc dressed like this!

Dressing up games

Aim: This leads into talking about wearing the right kit as a sports person or a Christian.

1. In teams, dress a team member using household items / scraps e.g. newspaper, loo roll, old sheet or pillowcase etc.

2. Need a good assortment of

- footwear
- hats/helmets
- sports equipment
- types of sports and other clothing
- motor bike gear is useful for this
- dice optional

They can either all play using the dice to decide which pile of clothes etc they select from or play in teams dressing up one person per group.

We had about 12 and they all wanted to dress up. We played by saying that if you roll

- 5 or 6 you put on something from the clothes bag;
- 1 or 2 you put on head or footwear;
- 4 you put on equipment
- 3 nothing.

We had 2 dice going round the group to keep the game moving.

When done, have fun discussing what each of them is equipped to do.

Then tell them to swap clothes with each other to try to get an outfit.

Which of you is best equipped for?

- Skiing
- Cycling
- Rowing
- Swimming
- Riding a motor bike
- Fencing
- Running long distance
- Space walk

Prayer space / small group themes:

Are we carrying anything that's too heavy for us? Is there any rubbish in our lives that we need to put in the bin?

Wearing the right kit

Prayer exercise to take off old heavy kit

Need

A reasonable size cross, roughly made (we used some left over floor boarding)

Black paper & pencils

Blu tack, drawing pins or staple gun

Lots of us carry around stuff that is heavy and weighs us down. Being a Christian isn't just about asking God to forgive you when you mess up, it's also about hurts, fears, anything that weighs us down and stops us living life as God intended. We need to throw out our rubbish each week or even daily before it start to smell or go mouldy.

On the black paper, invite them to write down

- Wrong you have done
- Hurts
- Fears
- Things you believe that are not helpful e.g. the lie that you are not worth much

Use soft lighting for this if possible. If you do this together in group time, you can read out to them a few relevant verses as they write. This may help them to think of things to write.

Point out that the idea of using pencil on black paper is so that no one else can read it, it's between them and God.

Possible verses – see Bible Verse document for full details

Hebrews 12:1-3; Colossians 3:8; Ephesians 4:30-32; Isaiah 53:4-5

Pin, staple or stick the black paper to the cross

We found that using a staple gun was effective. I led by example and then asked who was going to be brave enough to use the staple gun. Risk assessment needed here.

Alternatively screw the paper up and throw it into a central place like a box or a bin liner.

Pray – for themselves or each other.

Jesus is our spiritual super-dustman who paid a high price for the ‘privilege’ of being able to take away our mess and get rid of any yucky clothes. Let him do that regularly.

Being Equipped: Meet your new Coach – the Holy Spirit:

- He is God’s presence with us here on earth
- He speaks to us – coaches and guides us
- He helps us understand the Bible

Now you are ready to meet your new Coach. He has a lot of experience in getting people on the right track and enabling them to become someone amazing. He’s taken on some tough and challenging cases over the years and he never gives up on anyone who is willing to cooperate. He doesn’t have a name, just a title but he’s part of an all-powerful Triad. Treat him with respect and you’ll always be ok.

Bible link

Pentecost: Acts 1: 8; Acts 2:1-16, 37-47 Holy Spirit’s grand arrival

Some will not be familiar with the word ‘Pentecost’.

When Jesus’ followers were filled with the Holy Spirit at the festival of Pentecost, it wasn’t a ‘one-off’ thing. They had to keep going back to spend time with God and to be refilled with the Holy Spirit. Although they lost all their fear at first, it did creep back in especially after James was executed for being a Christian. They needed to ask God to take it away and give them new strength.

Give some personal examples here of how the Holy Spirit has helped you. Maybe ask them if they have any similar stories to share.

Give them opportunity to ask God to fill/refill them with his Holy Spirit. Offer to pray with them if appropriate.

Extra

Kit - Put on the new kit

Ephesians 6:10-18 – armour of God (more on this in theme 3 if required)

Colossians 3:12-15 So you should always clothe yourselves with mercy, kindness, humility...

Ok, sounds good but how do you do this? Start by asking your coach for help; also eat the right food and ask team mates for help.

You need the right:

Aims of whole theme:

- To give an overall idea of the Christian life
- To give ourselves a spiritual check-up
- To show the importance of the right coach, lifestyle and back-up support

Aims of each area

- *To show we've got the best possible help available.*
- *To show the importance of regularly coming clean and taking to God stuff that has hurt us or where we have hurt others so that we can continue to 'walk in the Spirit'*
- To show the importance of reading the Bible and thinking healthy thoughts
- It would be hard to go it alone, especially when life is tough.
- To show the importance of the right lifestyle
- To give some practical help on how to draw strength from God

Theme verse: Hebrews 12:1-3

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Games themes: dressing in the right gear, eating the right food; getting fit

Food link: Honey based food; Club biscuits; and/or play a food based game

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I'm gonna jump up and down: Okey Dokey

Okey Dokey: Okey Dokey

Talk Talk: Lovely Jubbly

Shout it out, from Take Back the Beat: Tribe

Sports links: Dai Greene; Keri-Anne Payne; Kelly Holmes; Ellie Simmonds; Debbie Flood

Overall Application: this will depend on your main aim.

God provides plenty of resources but we need to tap into them.

Have we off loaded our baggage; put on the right kit and started eating some good food?

Do we do this regularly or just occasionally?

Is there anything we need to do to get better equipped for our spiritual journey?

Being Equipped: Food & drink / Bible

Aim: the importance of reading the Bible and thinking healthy thoughts

Bible links

Psalm 19:7 &10 The teachings of the Lord give new strength...are worth more than gold, sweeter than honey

Philippians 4:8-9 you'll do best by filling your minds on the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse.

Good food /bad food / Healthy v. junk food

Choose a game or have a discussion based around the theme of good and bad food.

For example have 2 plates of food made up – one good and one bad. Ask - if you had to eat just one of these choices for a whole month, which would you choose?

For an extended version of this, lay one table with healthy food and another table with junk food. Invite the young people to choose something to eat. Discuss which looks more appealing and which is better for you.

Perhaps do some mix and match food so that you have food that looks good that tastes horrible such as sweets with mustard or chilli in them and food that looks horrible but tastes good such as custard with blue food colouring. Recipes in games document

Do the same with different types of reading material.

Sports links

What sort of food do you think athletes need to eat?

Do you reckon they eat what they want, when they want?

Do you think they take food seriously?

Tom Daley says he doesn't have a special diet but what do you think his mum might say?

Kelly Holmes says: "When you compete in a sport seriously you have to be careful with your diet and use food to help with your recovery and to give you energy. Drinking water is important but having a balanced diet gives you everything you need to be healthy and strong."

Nick Willis 1500m runner (NZ) "I can't read the Bible just as a piece of information. It has life-giving qualities to it."

Application

- If you wanted to get fit and healthy would there be anything you would have to give up or cut down on?
- So what make a good diet for a Christian?
- Is there anything we need to give up or cut down?
- Share ideas on how to read the Bible in a way that helps you.
- How can we get a balanced diet and lifestyle?

Being Equipped: Team mates

Aim: It would be hard to go it alone, especially when life is tough.

Bible links

Hebrews 10:25 let us encourage one another, especially as we see the big Day approaching.

David and Jonathan

Paul and Barnabus

Mary and Joseph

Team Games

In teams of about 6, pass round a ball, beanbag or a bat using feet or elbows but no hands.

Stepping stones game: Mark out an area of grass or floor to represent a river. Put them into small teams and give them some 'stepping stones' in the form of floor tiles or pieces of card etc. If there are 6 in the team, give them 5 tiles; if there are 5 in the team give them 4 tiles etc. They have to find a way to get themselves over the river. If they are good at this, make it harder by taking away a tile or by blindfolding one of them.

Three-legged race: in two's, tie their ankles together so that they have to work in unison to get from A to B. If they are good at this, try it with 3 people! Be prepared for a few bruises!

Sports links

- ◆ The relay races depend on a team working in very close co-operation with one another, especially when passing the baton.
- ◆ Triathlon champions Alistair and Jonathan Brownlee compete against each other but they also support and encourage one another both in training and in races. In 2011, Alistair was world champion and younger brother Jonathan was runner up.
- ◆ When Christine Ohuruogu was disqualified for a false start, her team-mate Lee McConnell said: "We'll rally round, pick her up and get her ready for the relay team. We've all gone out of championships in ways we didn't want to do but she's strong and we will do what we can to help her."
- ◆ "Even if Tom wasn't performing up to his usual standard, his father would be really supportive. He was very much part of Tom's team and Tom wouldn't be where he is today without him." Coach Andy Banks

Activity and application

Make friendship bracelets and/or eat 'Club' biscuits and discuss how we can help each other as Christians.

Being Equipped: Exercise/ training

Aim: To show the importance of the right lifestyle

Bible links: 1 Corinthians 9: 24-27 All athletes are disciplined in their training.

Games:

High energy warm up stuff.

Maybe Wii - Just Dance: Eye of the Tiger; Cotton Eye Joe

Sports links:

Athletes put in hours and hours of training, often getting up really early in the morning to use training facilities before they get busy. 'Consistency is key' says Triathlon world champion Alistair Brownlee.

- ◆ Debbie Flood is a rower and trains:
 - 6 hours a day, in 3 sessions
 - Only 3 weeks a year holiday after the summer.
 - In all weathers – sun, rain, wind, hail ...
- ◆ Keri Anne Payne for tips on training
- ◆ Ellie Simmonds get up at 5.30am to train before school
- ◆ Dai Greene the 400m hurdles world champion uses 'the unforgiving hill of Claverton Down' saying that running up an icy hill in the middle of winter is harder than any race and helps with both physical and mental preparation.
- ◆ Dai has had to follow a strict lifestyle in order to control his epilepsy without the use of drugs that hamper his performance. He cannot afford to go out partying late into the night, getting drunk, losing sleep and so on as this could bring on an epileptic fit.

Athletics turned Dai's life around. What about us?

- Are we leading a double life, being a Christian on Sundays but following the crowd in school?
- Do we need to turn anything around?
- What, why, how?

Being Equipped: Recovery / top up / chilling with God

Aim: To give some practical help on how to draw strength from God

Bible links: Isaiah 40:28-31 He gives strength to those who are tired.

1 Kings 19: Elijah on Mount Sinai. After being involved in a great spiritual battle, Elijah was exhausted.

Sports link: Kelly Holmes had to consider how to recover as fast as possible after each race when she entered for both the 800 and the 1500m events at the Athens Olympics. See below

Activity: Following something energetic such as suggested under 'exercise' above, let them lie in a resting position while you read some Bible verses to a background of soft music or play a song. 'Chill out' with God. This age group are not always good at just chilling in general but they can find it helpful if they can stop feeling self-conscious. We need to find ways of helping them to connect with God for themselves. This is where a prayer space can help because they can choose the amount of time they spend there and they can also choose an activity if they need something to focus on. This also links with theme 5 where Moses and David enjoy the reward of being in God's presence.

With some groups you might be able to play 'sleeping lions' where they have to lie completely still and are 'out' if they move at all. Other groups would find this too young.

If you have enough outdoor space and fine weather, send them out for a few minutes on their own with a rug or towel for a prayer mat, a Bible, and a scribble pad. Challenge them to come back with a message from God. Pop-up tents or home-made dens could work well here.

In the same way that the tide goes in and out, we need times of giving out and times of receiving new strength.

How did Kelly manage to cope with both middle distance races at the 2004 Olympics?

"Taking on both races was going to be physically and psychologically very demanding so I sat down with the medical team and worked out the best way of recovering," Holmes said.

"Each morning I would get my protein drink ready, my carbohydrate drink ready and my rehydration drink ready and put them in the fridge. Then I would get my food ready which the doctor would give me when he saw me after the race.

"I suddenly thought that the first person I would see after the heats was Sally Gunnell when she interviewed me for the BBC, so I sent her a text asking her to bring me a bag of nuts. She did and so I was munching and drinking, and that was good because the recovery process had started.

"I then went to the warm-down track, had a massage, got on the bus back to the village, had more food and then into the ice bin. I kept to that routine because it felt so right for me to do it and I was recovering quickly which was crucial.

"After the first heat of the 800m, the races were always around the same time so I stuck to the same routine. I left for the track at the same time."

Quotes

Genius is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration." Thomas Edison

"Kriss has lifted himself by sheer effort from being a good club athlete to being an international runner." Mike Whittingham, international hurdler and coach

Nick Willis 1500m runner (NZ) "I can't read the Bible just as a piece of information. It has life-giving qualities to it."

"Champions aren't made in the gyms. Champions are made from something they have deep inside them – a desire, a dream, a vision." Muhammad Ali

"The strongest I will ever be is when I get before you on my knees."

The Tribe – Take Back the Beat

A successful football manager once said: "The job of a football coach is to make men do what they don't want to do, in order to achieve what they've always wanted to be."

"Anything worth doing is going to cost."

"Even if Tom wasn't performing up to his usual standard, his father would be really supportive. He was very much part of Tom's team and Tom wouldn't be where he is today without him." Coach Andy Banks

A big research project set out to find out what it takes to become really, really good at something. Not just good enough to impress your friends and family but to impress the world. Lots of people think it's all about talent. Being naturally good at something as if you're just born good at it. But guess what? The research found that natural talent just gave people a good start. Whatever your talent, what matters most is how much you work at it.

Rise: Jason & Rachel Gardener p36-37, *edited*

You say, "I want to win at Olympia." ...If you do, you will have to obey instructions, eat according to regulations, keep away from desserts, exercise on a fixed schedule at definite hours, in both heat and cold; you must not drink cold water nor can you have a drink of wine whenever you want. You must hand yourself over to your coach exactly as you would to a doctor. Then in the contest itself you must gouge and be gouged, there will be times when you will sprain a wrist, turn your ankle, swallow mouthfuls of sand, and be flogged. And after all that there are times when you lose.

Epictetus, *Discourses* 15.2-5, trans. W.E. Sweet

<http://www.archaeology.org/online/features/olympics/olympia.html>

Back up notes for leaders

The Right Outfit: Rob Lacey: Word on the Street: Colossians 3:12-14

God's picked you out to be pure, passionately loved. Clothes are a big statement, so let's see you sporting an image that reflects the New You:

Compassion suits you,

Kindness goes with the colours of your soul,

Humility sets you off nicely,

Gentleness is so 'you',

Patience is perfect with your complexion.

It all fits so well, Tailor made. Bite your lip when someone crosses a line. Wipe it off the record as your slate's been wiped by the Boss.

But you're still undressed without the finishing touch- love.

Love holds all the stitches together;

Love makes it all look just right;

Love transforms an outfit into a statement.

More Than Enough: Word 4U 2Day - Slightly adapted

'Has anybody got the number of a good catering firm? We've got five thousand rumbling tummies and one sweaty packed lunch between us.'

'Well I suppose we could send them off to buy bread'. 'But we are days away from the nearest supermarket!

Hey, "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but that's not going to go very far.'

'Good point. I suppose the starving crowds could watch us munch away on sardine sarnies. What's that you say, JC? You want us to turn a lunch for one into dinner for 5,000? OK - anyone else got any bright ideas?'

So you haven't got much - but in God's hands you've more than enough. Basketfuls of leftovers in fact. To your eyes you may be seriously lacking a friend or some money or a talent or an ability or a whatever, but take your 'lack of' to Jesus and you'll find your basket brimming with friends, cash, gifts and goodies.

Jesus asked the disciples to follow His orders and hey presto, the miracle of the microwave dinner for thousands.

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