



"My only aim is to finish the race  
and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me –  
the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace."  
– Acts 20:24

# Finish Line

## Day One

**Daily Theme:** Start Your Engines

**Promise Point:** God is preparing me.

**Memory Verse:** Test everything. Hold fast what is good. – 1 Thessalonians 5:21 (NKJV)

## Day Two

**Daily Theme:** Green Flag

**Promise Point:** God can use anyone.

**Memory Verse:** If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come; the old has gone, the new is here! – 2 Corinthians 5:17

## Day Three

**Daily Theme:** Pit Crew

**Promise Point:** I am not alone.

**Memory Verse:** Neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. – Romans 8:39

## Day Four

**Daily Theme:** Caution

**Promise Point:** God can always help me get back on track.

**Memory Verse:** It is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. – Ephesians 2:8

## Day Five

**Daily Theme:** Moving Billboards

**Promise Point:** I can tell others what God has done for me.

**Memory Verse:** My only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace. – Acts 20:24

## Day Six

**Daily Theme:** Victory Lane

**Promise Point:** I am victorious in Christ.

**Memory Verse:** I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. – Philippians 3:14

# Day Two Take Ten: Green Flag

**What are you most excited about for this week? Is there anything you're a little nervous about?**

We talked yesterday about some of the preparations that go into a stock car race, but today, it's GO TIME! When the green flag drops, the race is on! Drivers start moving for position, using their skills, their experience, and their equipment as they start the journey toward the finish line. **What is one thing you can do today to start this week off strong?**

Very few professional racecar drivers simply woke up one day and decided to drive a \$400,000 car at 200mph for a whole afternoon. For most, being part of a Cup Series race is the result of years of learning, training, practicing, and dreaming.

**What are you good at? What do you enjoy doing? Are they the same thing?**

**What do you dream of becoming? What is something about you that God could use, no matter what job or life situation you end up in?**

This week we'll see how Paul started off as an enemy of Christians (*really - it's a wild story!*) who became one of the most famous missionaries of all time. Later in his life, Paul wrote letters to the believers, teaching more about what God was doing and helping them see what God wanted them to do. Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11.

Look at verse 4 again - **Where do these kinds of gifts come from?**

**Who is someone in your life that seems to have the gift of wisdom? How do you know?**

**Who is someone in your life that seems to have the gift of faith? How do you know?**

Take a moment to pray for the Spirit to reveal the gifts He has given you!

Promise Point: God can use anyone.

Memory Verse: If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come; the old has gone, the new is here! – 2 Corinthians 5:17

# Day Two Object Lesson: Green Flag

## Supplies

- Transformer toy (*preferably one that turns into a car*)
- glass of milk
  - o *Fun fact: it has been a tradition for winners of the Indy500 race to drink milk in Victory Lane since 1956!*
- chocolate syrup or Nesquik powder
- spoon

## Set Up

- Put the transformer in robot mode
- Put the spoon in the milk
- Make sure Volunteer #1 knows how to transform the toy

## Activity: Transformation

- Ask for 2 volunteers. (*Remind campers of Promise Point: God can use anyone*)
  - o Give one person the toy and give the milk to the other.
- Have Volunteer #1 transform the toy from robot mode to car mode.
- Add chocolate to the milk and have Volunteer #2 stir until the milk turns noticeably brown
  - o *Optional: taste or have the volunteer taste the milk before and after the chocolate is added*
- Have Volunteer #1 transform the toy back into robot mode
- Ask Volunteer #2 to turn the chocolate milk back to regular milk

## Application

- Toy: Things of this world (including our good intentions) may change us for a moment, but those changes may not stick, can be reversed
- Milk: When we are in Christ, we are a new creation
  - o Actually different than before
  - o Irreversible!
  - o 2 Corinthians 5:17

Promise Point: God can use anyone.

Memory Verse: If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come; the old has gone, the new is here! – 2 Corinthians 5:17

# Day Two Small Group: Green Flag

## Promise Point

- ~ God can use anyone.

## Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 5:17

- ~ If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come; the old has gone, the new is here!
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## INTRODUCTION

- ~ Recap yesterday
  - Promise Point: God is preparing me.
  - Memory Verse: 1 Thessalonians 5:21
- ~ Theme Intro: Green Flag
  - Lots of flags in racing (*12 in NASCAR*)
    - Most famous: black and white checked – race is over
    - Green and white checked – stage (*section*) of race is over
    - White – one lap left
    - Black – penalty, disqualification
    - Red – stop
    - Yellow – caution (*more Day Four!*)
      - Flags are used to communicate to drivers – **do you have any silly or serious code words or gestures that you use with friends or family?**
  - Today: Green flag – GO! Starts racing action (or restarts after a caution)
    - Qualifying races, practice laps, inspections, pre-race ceremonies, pace laps are done – it's (literally) GO TIME!
    - **When have you been excited to get the signal for something to start? How did you feel when it was time to go?**

## RACING

- ~ Most racetracks are between 0.5 and 1.5 miles long (for one lap). Racetracks of more than two miles are called "super speedways."
- ~ The famous Daytona 500 ("The Super Bowl of Racing") is held on a 2.5 mile super speedway. Drivers go 200 laps totaling 500 miles.
  - **How would you prepare for a 500-mile road trip?**

- In the Daytona 500, average speeds are around 200mph, so even with stops and slowdowns, the whole thing only takes about three and a half hours.
  - o STILL, 3.5 hours doing left turns, strapped into a hot, uncomfortable car? No snacks, bathroom breaks, stretch-your-legs walks, sightseeing, air conditioners, fun playlists – all the things that make driving 500 miles bearable.
    - **So...why do they do it?**
    - **What do other people think is difficult that you really enjoy doing?**
    - **What seems hard that you want to try?**
- One of the coolest things about the Green Flag moment is that ANYTHING can happen. Any one of the cars that start a race can finish in first place.
  - o *Personal Story, Option A – tell about a time (serious or funny) that you were 100% sure what was going to happen but things turned out totally different than you expected.*
- Some drivers definitely have advantages when the green flag drops – better starting position because of their qualifying times, better car/engine because of more sponsorship money, or simply more experience.
  - o **Who is someone you look up to in an activity you'd like to be better at?**
  - o **Is there anyone that looks up to YOU in the same activity?**
- Experience helps, but everyone is a rookie at some point!
  - o **When have you tried something new and been completely terrible?**
  - o **When have you tried something new and been surprisingly great?**
    - Even rookies can win!
      - *Personal Story, Option B – tell about a time when someone unexpected, younger, less knowledgeable, or more inexperienced taught you something about God/faith/the Bible (Promise Point: God can use anyone!)*
- Even seasoned professionals can have losing streaks.
  - o Dale Earnhardt, one of NASCAR's greatest drivers, drove the famous Daytona 500 race 19 times before winning on his 20<sup>th</sup> try!
  - o Michael Waltrip, who won the 2001 Daytona 500, hadn't won ANY races at all in 462 attempts before that day!
    - **Have you ever been frustrated because it didn't seem like you were making any progress? What did you learn during that time?**

- ~ From short, flat dirt tracks to famous, banked superspeedways, drivers learn and get better with every race they go through.
  - One of the biggest areas of growth for racecar drivers is being able to take calculated risks. At 200mph, just inches from 42 other cars, you can't just sort of make a move – you have to be ALL IN.
    - **Who do you admire for their willingness to take risks?**
    - **Why is full commitment important in racing?**
    - **Why is full commitment important in friendships?**
    - **Why is full commitment important in faith?**

## DISCUSSION

- ~ One of the most iconic moments in professional stock car racing is the infamous ["Pass in the Grass"](#) that happened at the 1987 All Star Race. It had been an intense race, particularly between Bill Elliot and Dale Earnhardt. Toward the end, Elliot tapped Earnhardt's car from behind, sending him into the grass in the infield (*middle of the track*). This would've taken most drivers out, but Earnhardt held on somehow and got back on the track, eventually winning the race.
  - **What are some things (at home or school) that bump you off track?**
  - **Is there some in your life who helps you stay out of the grass?**
  - **Who do you know that is somehow able to hang on to faith when everything seems to go wrong?**
- ~ More recently, during the 2022 race at Martinsville Speedway in Virginia, driver Ross Chastain made history with the ["Hail Melon"](#) – a ridiculous move straight out of a video game (*and that was immediately banned from the sport!*). During the last lap, Chastain knew it was his final chance to get into the championship, so instead of moving to the inside to pass, he accelerated into the top wall of the track, sling-shotting himself around his competitors all the way into fifth place and qualifying position.
  - **Do you know anyone with a "win or crash" outlook?**
  - **Are you willing to take risks to get the things you want?**
- ~ As we get to know Paul this week, we'll see how he was fully committed for the sake of the Gospel, taking risks so others could learn about Jesus.
  - Read or have a volunteer read Acts 20:24 (*our theme verse for the week!*)
    - **What's the difference between Paul's "full send" attitude and a racecar driver taking risks?**

- Many rookie drivers have been lucky enough to learn from a more experienced teammate or even a track rival.
  - o As he grew in his faith and relationship with Jesus, Paul sent letters to his ministry partners and to churches he had started in various cities giving advice on many things.
    - *Including Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1-2 Thessalonians, 1-2 Timothy, Titus, & Philemon (and debatably Hebrews) – pinch the pages in your Bible to show campers what a significant chunk of the New Testament these letters make up!*
- Read or have a volunteer read 1 Corinthians 9:24.
  - o Like we just talked about! Paul's advice: Go for it! Be all in!
- Read or have a volunteer read 1 Corinthians 10:31 and Colossians 3:17
  - o **What does it look like to eat or drink for God?**
  - o **What does it look like to go to school, play video games, practice basketball, etc. for God?**
- In the stock car world (and lots of other motorsports!), there are plenty of hostile, aggressive, and "every-man-for-himself" attitudes, at least on the track. Professional drivers are famous for saying things like:
  - o "They don't pay me to make friends."
  - o "He crashed me, so I crashed him back!"
  - o "If you ain't first, you're last."
  - o "Rubbin's racin'!" (*intentionally rubbing on other cars/wheels*)
  - o "If you ain't cheatin', you ain't tryin'."
    - **How would attitudes like this affect our real-life relationships?**
    - *Personal Story, Option C – tell about when your selfish ambition hurt a friend, family member, or teammate.*
- LOTS of Paul's advice was focused on how we should treat each other.
  - o Read or have a volunteer read Colossians 3:12-14
  - o Read or have a volunteer read Philippians 2:3-4.

## REFLECTION

**\*\*TO BE ANSWERED SILENTLY IN BOOKLETS\*\***

- **Would you ever want to experience what it's like inside a racecar at 200mph? Why or why not?**
- **Who is someone that has unexpectedly taught you a lot?**
- **Have you ever had to take a risk for your faith? What happened?**
- **Do you believe God can really use ANYone (including YOU)?**

## WRAP UP

- ~ Promise Point: God can use anyone.
- ~ Today's Memory Verse is also from one of Paul's letters: If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come; the old has gone, the new is here! – 2 Corinthians 5:17
  - No pace laps, no hesitation – just a green flag! In Christ, we're new!
  - *If already been to chapel: God can use anyone - even Paul! He was BAD! This verse isn't just a nice idea – Jesus wiped out Paul's old self and made him new AND then used him anyway so thousands, millions, generations were impacted by his faith and words!*
- ~ Prayer

# Day Two Chapel: Green Flag

## Main Text: Acts 9:1-19

- ~ Saul meets Jesus on the way to persecute Christians
- ~ Ananias is sent to Saul

## Promise Point:

- ~ God can use anyone.

## Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 5:17

- ~ If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come; the old has gone, the new is here!
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## INTRODUCTION

- ~ *Optional Activity: On Your Mark, Get Set, Gorilla*
  - *Have campers line up (shoulder-to-shoulder) toward the back of the gathering area, as if setting up a game of Red Light/Green Light – only run when instructed, freeze otherwise, you’re “out” if you move when not supposed to*
  - *Make it really frustrating and get as many campers out as possible by saying things like “on your mark, get set, GO-rilla,” “on your mark, get set, GO-pher,” “red light, Greenland!”*
    - *Can be totally prepared (yesterday) but eventually have to GO!*
- ~ All the interviews, car inspections, pre-race preparations and adjustments are over, pace laps are done...Green Flag = GOOOOOOO!
  - Now what’s interesting happens on the road!
    - Speaking of...☺

## SCRIPTURE/APPLICATION

- ~ Acts 9:1-9 – Saul goes to Damascus
  - Reminder: Saul = Paul
  - v. 1 – meanwhile (*as the disciples were preaching and the word of Jesus was spreading*), Saul was breathing out murderous threats
    - Wait, what?!
      - Yesterday learned Paul was super Jewish, now we see how extreme

- *Personal Story, Option A: tell about how you were a jerk because you were SO SURE you were right*
  - Acts 7:52-8:3
    - Wait, what?! Most influential missionary in history, the guy who wrote half the New Testament - literally killing/capturing Christians?!
- Acts 9:2 – got letters from high priest
  - who worked at the temple where the veil tore
    - in Jerusalem, where Jesus was (recently! maybe 9 years ago?) crucified
  - was possibly still Caiaphas (who sent Jesus to Pilate to die)
  - contained permission/encouragement from faith leaders to squash “The Way” movement (*not called “Christians” yet*)
- v.3 – Saul nearing Damascus, sees sudden light “from heaven”
  - 133 miles from Jerusalem – almost there, traveled with a mission
  - *Personal Story, Option B: tell about when the Glory of God showed up and changed your plans*
  - *Personal Story, Option C: tell about when you were literally on your way to do something bad but Jesus stepped in and changed your course*
- vv. 4-5 – “Why do you persecute me?”
  - Matthew 25:40, 45
- Acts 9:6 – “go into the city and you’ll be told what you must do”
  - Mission #1 – TRUST ME
    - Pace lap! Get ready!
- v. 7 – Saul’s men didn’t know what happened
  - Acts 22:9
  - People around us and/or this world might not understand when Jesus changes us
  - *Personal Story, Option C2: maybe friends in earlier story didn’t know why you changed your mind?*
- Acts 9:8-9 – Saul blind for 3 days, didn’t eat or drink
  - led into city weak/scared/vulnerable
    - not the way he thought he would enter Damascus!
    - not unlike those he was hunting?

- Acts 9:10-19 – Paul’s green flag
  - vv. 10-12 – Jesus also appears to Ananais
    - also shows up and disrupts the course of his day (life?)
  - v. 11 – Saul is praying while Jesus is talking to Ananais
    - God is outside of time, can fully hear everyone always
    - Reminder: Saul was (already) a man of faith, asking the God he knew “what just happened?!?”
      - *In the dark, wondering, everything you thought you knew turned upside down – ever been there?*
  - v. 12 – God gave Saul a vision of his sight being restored through Ananias
    - what other visions/revelations in these 3 days of prayer?
    - Conviction for sure, but also peace/hope
      - *Personal Story, Option D: tell about when you were both convicted and comforted by the Holy Spirit*
  - vv. 13-14 – Ananias: Wait, what?!
    - Have you ever been called to something crazy?
      - God is preparing me (yesterday’s Promise Point)
        - We don’t know much about Ananias, but certainly God led his life to this moment
      - God can use anyone (today’s Promise Point)
    - Mission: TRUST ME
      - Same as Saul! - a disciple and a destroyer both asked for the same thing (faith!)
  - v.15 – “GO!” (Green Flag!!)
    - Don’t wait, don’t guess, don’t wonder, don’t hesitate
    - “This man is my chosen instrument...”
      - God can use ANYone!
    - “...to proclaim my name to the Gentiles...”
      - Wait, what?!
      - Not just to the Jews, the Chosen Ones!
        - *NOTE: We take this story for granted – this one verse is completely revolutionary!!*
    - “...and to their kings and the people of Israel.”
      - can use anyone to do anything!
  - v. 16 – Saul will suffer for my name (*more on Day Four!*)

- v. 17 – Ananias goes, touches Saul
  - because at the green flag, you GO - can't wait!
  - Calls Saul "Brother"
    - What?! Shouldn't he be scared?
  - Ananias knew the story of what happened on the road
    - God prepared him! (*Day One*)
  - Jesus sent me so you may a) see with your eyes and b) be filled with the Holy Spirit
- v.18 – Saul's sight restored, baptized
  - immediately! GO! Green flag! No hesitation!
    - First thing he did! (Even before eating after 3 days!)
- v. 19 – Saul strengthened
  - by food and hope and fellowship
  - to be prepared for what would come next!

## WRAP UP

- ~ Promise Point: God can use anyone.
- ~ Memory Verse: If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come; the old has gone, the new is here! – 2 Corinthians 5:17

# Day Four Take Ten: Caution

**Are you a risk taker? What is the most dangerous activity you'd be willing to try?**

It's no secret that auto racing is dangerous. NASCAR Hall of Fame driver Cale Yarborough once said, "Driving a racecar is like dancing with a chainsaw." High speeds, hot tempers, and split-second decisions are a recipe for disaster!

In one of his letters, Paul wrote "The Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline." (2 Timothy 1:7) **What helps you feel courageous when you are faced with difficulties?**

Through the years, many equipment adjustments, inspection standards, and safety measures have been put in place. Racing tires have no tread so that more rubber touches the track, giving more grip. Cars are equipped with reinforced steel frames to protect the driver in a crash and restrictor plates in the engines to actually limit how fast the cars can go. Track walls are now made to absorb energy during a high-speed impact so that cars don't bounce back into traffic. Drivers wear harness belts, head and neck restraints, helmets, and full-body fire retardant suits.

Read Ephesians 6:13-17. **What kind of gear does Paul encourage us to put on?**

**What kinds of dangers does this equipment protect us from?**

**When we experience major crashes in our lives, how does can using this armor help us get back on track?**

Promise Point: God can always help me get back on track.

Memory Verse: It is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. – Ephesians 2:8

# Day Four Object Lesson: Caution

## Supplies

- ~ blindfold
- ~ ropes or traffic cones
- ~ gift wrap, ribbon/bows
- ~ 2 of the same item from the camp store

## Set Up

- ~ Wrap items (separately)
- ~ Use ropes or traffic cones to set up a race course (*oval, figure 8, random – your choice*)

## Activity

- ~ Get 2 volunteers, blindfold one
- ~ Announce that whoever can successfully make it through the course gets a gift
- ~ Let the volunteer who is not blindfolded go first – give them the gift
- ~ Have the volunteer who is blindfolded go through the course
  - Gently put them back on the track every time they step off
  - Give them the same gift when they finish

## Application

- ~ God can always help us get back on track
  - Doesn't matter how many times
  - Doesn't matter how far off we go
  - Doesn't matter how anyone else is doing
- ~ Grace = getting what we don't deserve
  - *vs. mercy = not getting what we do deserve*
  - Same gift for the one who "messed up" as the one who "did it right"

Promise Point: God can always help me get back on track.

Memory Verse: It is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. – Ephesians 2:8

# Day Four Small Group: Caution

## **\*\*Helpful Hints\*\***

When talking about sin, mistakes, choices, and ways we've hurt others, some campers may be more comfortable answering questions of "what do some people do..." instead of asking "what do you do..."

When talking about being hurt by other people's choices, be careful not to suggest that because Paul learned how to endure his sufferings, campers should be silent and unaffected by the hard things they have gone/are going through. Some kids have faced horrific things and should not be expected to handle them with the grace of an adult, much less an apostle and martyr!

Tonight at chapel/campfire, the speaker will present the Gospel message and offer an opportunity to respond. Please be in prayer for your campers and for wisdom in what to say to those who have doubts or questions.

### Promise Point:

- God can always help me get back on track.

### Memory Verse: Ephesians 2:8

- It is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.

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## INTRODUCTION

- Recap yesterday
  - o Promise Point: I am not alone.
  - o Verse: Romans 8:39
- Theme Intro: Caution
  - o **What does "caution" mean?**
  - o **Would you consider yourself a cautious person?**
  - o When a yellow flag waves during a stock car race, the race enters a Caution period. The race slows down and there is no passing – race positions are locked until the green flag waves again.

## RACING

- It's no surprise that the biggest reason for a yellow flag is a wreck.
  - o Wrecks are inevitable in auto racing! Driving at 200mph just inches from 40 other cars – something is GOING to happen. (*not if, but when!*)

- Bumping another car, getting spun out, hitting the wall, even flipping through the air – it happens so often that the term “the Big One” only refers to the biggest wreck of each race!
  - **If auto racing is so dangerous, why do the drivers do it?**
  - **Is there anything you’d be willing to risk your life to experience?**
  - **Has there ever been a time when you felt “over your head” in a situation but didn’t know how to get out? (physical or moral)**
  - **Is it better to survive those situations or avoid them? Why?**
- Because the race positions are locked during a caution, drivers won’t lose their spot while they get gas or tires, so teams will often use this time to do a pit stop.
  - **Have you ever wished regular life would just pause so you could deal with something in your heart/head/family/friendship that needed attention?**
  - Often it’s not possible (and sometimes it’s not healthy) to take a pit stop from our actual lives, and usually the race wouldn’t hold our spot if we did, so we have to keep pressing toward the finish line...so...**how does someone go on after a “wreck”?**
- Wrecks are one of the most exciting parts of auto racing! Of course, no one wants anyone to get hurt, but other than some bold passes and the last few laps, it can get a little boring watching cars go around an oval for three hours. (*Honestly, Reality TV only exists because of the same “wrecks are fun to watch” sentiment!*)
- But when a wreck happens, no matter whose fault it is, everything can change for a driver in a split second. Not only could it change what place they hold in the race, but whole lives could be changed (*or even ended!*).
  - *Personal Story, Option A: tell about something that happened in the blink of an eye that turned your world upside down.*
  - In racing, miscalculated choices and little mistakes have big consequences! Our choices and mistakes have consequences too!
    - **What are some choices and mistakes that “leave debris on the track” of our lives?**
      - *Perhaps give examples of “crash” (choice) and “debris” (consequence) scenarios – if you cheat on a test, you will fail and not be trusted in the future (and won’t actually have learned the material); if you lie to your parents, you get grounded and hurt the relationship; if you choose to view inappropriate things online, you open the door of your mind*

*to sin and bad habits; if you skip basketball practice, you get benched and you let your team down, etc.*

## DISCUSSION

- Sometimes, adrenaline, aggression, rivalries, or previous incidents will lead to drivers bumping, spinning, or wrecking each other on purpose.
  - o **What are some ways that people choose to hurt each other?**
  - o Choosing to go against what God says is right is sin. Not only could we hurt other people, but we hurt our relationship with God.
    - HOWEVER, even after a huge crash, if crews can get the car repaired, the driver can continue with the race, can cross the finish line, and might even win if things work out that way! Sure, it's easier not to crash in the first place, but the race is not over!
      - Read or have a volunteer read Romans 3:22-24.
        - o Not if, but when! Sin is GOING to be in our lives, but *(today's Promise Point)* God can always help me get back on track!
      - Once you're back on track, stay there!
        - o Read or have a volunteer read Ephesians 5:8 – live in the light!
          - **What are some habits that can help you stay on track?**
        - o Don't have to do it alone
          - **Who are some people that can help you stay on track?**
- In racing, a yellow flag is displayed after the wreck happens – **what are some (metaphorical, not NASCAR) “red flags” that show up to let us know a situation is dangerous for us?**
- Sometimes a “bump” on the track does nothing other than make the other driver angry or annoyed, and it's not technically against the rules of the sport. Things just keep moving.
  - o **Why/when is doing something still wrong even if you don't get caught, if there are no consequences, or if it's not technically prohibited in that situation?**

- *Personal Story, Option B – maintaining appropriate boundaries, tell about a time when you felt convicted about something no one else knew about.*
- Because the cars are so close together for much of the race, there's no time or space to slow down or swerve to avoid the danger when something happens right in front of them. If one driver makes an aggressive move, 15 cars could be out of the race!
  - Because sin exists in our lives and our world, unfortunately there are times when we get hurt by other people's choices and mistakes.
    - *\*See Helpful Hints\**
  - Read or have a volunteer read 2 Corinthians 1:8-10.
    - **What is Paul's attitude about the struggles he faced from others?**
    - **What do you think he learned by going through the difficulties?**
    - **How did he have hope to carry on?**
- During the last moments of the 2001 Daytona 500, there was a wreck. It didn't look like much compared to the "Big One" that had taken out 19 cars (including one literally flying through the air!) a few laps earlier, but in the blink of an eye, one of stock car racing's most legendary drivers was killed.
  - Others had died in 60 years of NASCAR, but Dale Earnhardt's death changed the racing world forever. Not only was he mourned by millions, but his legacy continues beyond the life and career that inspired so many.
    - After that race, NASCAR doubled down on safety requirements – most notably by making the outer wall of racetracks more forgiving upon impact and requiring drivers to wear the HANS (Head And Neck Support) device. There's no telling how many lives have been saved by these two advancements.
      - Because of his death, there have been no other driver fatalities in NASCAR since Earnhardt!
        - *[as of publishing, October 2023]*
      - On a MUCH bigger scale, Jesus' death had a major impact on countless other lives, too! Because Christ died, we have been saved from sin and can live forever with Him in heaven!
        - Tonight at chapel/campfire we'll hear more about this, but please come talk to me if you have any questions!!

## REFLECTION

**\*\*TO BE ANSWERED SILENTLY IN BOOKLETS\*\***

- **Read 2 Corinthians 11:23-28** to see some of the dangers Paul faced during his ministry - **how do you think he survived all this?**
- **Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18** – **knowing what he went through, how could Paul call his struggles “light and momentary”?**
- Paul himself struggled with staying on track – in Romans 7:18-19, he writes, “I have the desire to do what is good, but...I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do – this I keep on doing.” **Take a moment to tell God how sorry you are for the times you have failed to be faithful to the race He set for you.**

## WRAP UP

- Promise Point: God can always help me get back on track.
- Memory Verse: It is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. – Ephesians 2:8

# Day Four Chapel: Caution

## Main Text: Acts 16:11-36

- ~ Paul and Silas are thrown in jail
- ~ Their guard becomes a Christian after an earthquake

## Promise Point:

- ~ God can always help me get back on track.

## Memory Verse: Ephesians 2:8

- ~ It is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.

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## INTRODUCTION

- ~ *Optional Activity: Caution!*
  - *Set up a race course consisting of 5-10 hurdles of differing heights – ropes on the ground, yardsticks on traffic cones, fun noodles on folding chairs, etc.*
  - *Get 2 volunteers, assign half of the audience as “fans” for each*
  - *Blindfold volunteers and have them go through the course at the same time*
  - *Have half the audience say/yell (louder = closer) “DANGER!” when their person is approaching an obstacle, other half says/yells “CAUTION” for theirs*
    - *Lots of things to be aware of on our races – temptation, sin cause us to stumble*
    - *Sometimes it feels like we’re going through life blind, but we have a team supporting us (including conscience and Holy Spirit warning us of danger/when to be cautious)*
    - *Hard to know what’s true when lots of voices coming at us*
- ~ *Personal Story, Option A – tell about a time when a friend or Jesus stepped in and helped you get back on track when you were about to get yourself into trouble*
- ~ *Personal Story, Option B – (maintaining appropriate boundaries) tell about how God helped you avoid “debris on the track” of your life that was left from a “wreck” in someone else’s*
- ~ *Personal Story, Option C – tell your own conversion story – who introduced you to Jesus? what were the surrounding circumstances?*

## SCRIPTURE/APPLICATION

- *Acts 16:16-24 - backstory*
  - *vv. 16-18 – Paul and Silas are harassed at Philippi*
    - *slave with spirit made money for owners by fortune telling*
    - *Paul commanded the spirit to leave her*
      - *Jesus our light has power over every kind of darkness!*
  - *vv. 19-24 – slave owners angry*
    - *cared more about the money than the girl*
      - *personal sin (here, greed) impacts those around us*
    - *seized Paul & Silas, got the crowd and magistrates involved*
      - *Yellow flag! Trouble on the track!*
        - *not the first or last time (danger is part of racing!)*
    - *Paul and Silas stripped and beaten*
      - *humiliated and hurt because of someone else's anger*
        - *sometimes racecar drivers wreck each other on purpose*
    - *Paul and Silas thrown into prison, put in stocks, closely guarded*
      - *...because they were dangerous?!?*
        - *the ways of this world get threatened by things of God*
        - *talented rookie drivers "boo-ed" and hated when they beat fan favorites*
- *Acts 16:25-28 – Paul and Silas in prison*
  - *v. 25 – praying and singing at midnight*
    - *WHAT?! After such a rough day?*
      - *prayer = trusting that God is still in control*
      - *singing = because bad situations don't determine God's goodness*
      - *racecar drivers are trained to let go of the steering wheel during a crash*
        - *counterintuitive!*
          - *"Faith is choosing to not trust your instincts." - Keith Harris*
    - *could cause more injury if they hang on*
      - *When have you hurt yourself or someone else by trying to maintain control instead of trusting/surrendering?*

- Other prisoners were listening
  - sometimes others watch to see if faith is real/worth it when life gets hard
    - rookies learn from legends – including how to recover after wrecks
  - our faith in trials gives others hope
    - *Personal Story, Option D - tell about a person who inspired you by consistently trusting and praising God while they went through something awful*
- v. 26 – sudden, violent earthquake – doors open, chains loose
  - Caution!
    - on the racetrack and in life, everything can change in the blink of an eye
- v. 27-28 – jailer freaks out
  - saw doors and drew sword (to kill himself)
    - automatic worst-case-scenario
    - “no way anyone survived that crash!”
  - everyone was still there
    - When have you assumed the worst about others?
      - Why DIDN'T they escape?
- Acts 16:29-34 – the jailer's conversion
  - v. 29-30 - “fell trembling” and asked “What must I do to be saved”?
    - Near death experiences can open people's eyes
      - Jailer experienced earthquake and near suicide
      - car crash, heart attack, mass casualty event
        - *Personal Story, Option E - tell about how you/someone you know changed after going through something terrible*
    - Bad stuff can cause good stuff
      - God can use ANYthing - can redeem awful moments and restore beauty in our lives
  - v. 31 - “believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved”
    - (That's IT, by the way – no other requirements)
    - your whole home/family can!
  - v. 32 – Paul and Silas spoke the word of the Lord to jailer/household
    - can never know the circumstances that create opportunities for ministry

- v. 33 – jailer and household baptized
  - “and household” mentioned 3x in 4 verses – Good News of salvation is not something to keep to yourself!
- v. 33-34 – jailer washed their wounds, brought Paul & Silas to his home, fed them
  - in the middle of the night!
  - immediate change of heart
    - like Paul after Damascus road incident
    - 2 Corinthians 5:17 (*Day Two Memory Verse*)
    - didn't have compassion hours ago when he locked them up
    - immediate fruit of the Spirit
      - Acts 16:34 - “filled with joy”
      - also displaying love, joy, kindness, goodness, generosity
        - Galatians 5:22-23 (*more in tomorrow's Take Ten*)
- Acts 16:35-36 – Paul and Silas released
  - were only there for one night and the life of the jailer was changed forever
    - Literally forever – eternally!
    - Not just him, but household and probably generations of his family
  - Never know when/how moments will come
  - Never know impact of moments
    - God can use anything
    - God can use anyone
    - Anytime, in any circumstance!

## GOSPEL/INVITATION

- We are all sinners, separated from God
  - Romans 3:23
- God loves us anyway and sent Jesus to die in our place
  - Romans 5:8
- The only way to be reconciled to God is through the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ
  - Romans 6:23
  - (*Can't earn our salvation – Ephesians 2:8*)
  - (*no “points system” like NASCAR championship*)
- When we confess Christ as Lord, we are forgiven, redeemed, saved
  - Romans 10:9

## WRAP UP

- ~ Promise Point: God can always help me get back on track.
- ~ Memory Verse: It is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. – Ephesians 2:8
- ~ Remind campers they can talk to any staff at any time with questions