

Olympics Winning and Losing



A single session reflection on the experience
of winning or losing using Mark 10:43-45





Unlock, by various names, has been around since 1972, trying to help (mainly) urban Christians to understand and share their faith appropriately. Our life experience matters; our stories; our joys and sorrows. The Bible has plenty to say, more than we'll ever know, about our lives, if we know how to read it and apply it...if we know how to UNLOCK it!

The session outlined in this pack applies the learning cycle on page 3, **starting by using a 'prompt'** to draw out group member's stories. It is up to you which prompt you use (from those suggested on page 4) or to find one of your own to connect with your group. Give everyone time to tell their story and listen carefully as they do. What are the themes and issues arising in the stories? Try to remember so that you can remind people later if necessary.

The next stage is to **find part of the Bible** that comes to mind having listened to the stories. As this session is designed for those that have some Bible knowledge we suggest you ask the group rather than doing this yourself, perhaps reminding them of any stories that get forgotten. If you want to adapt this session to use with a non-church group you will need to be ready to provide some Bible links if they are unable to do so. Then ask the group to explore **connections**, similarities or differences.

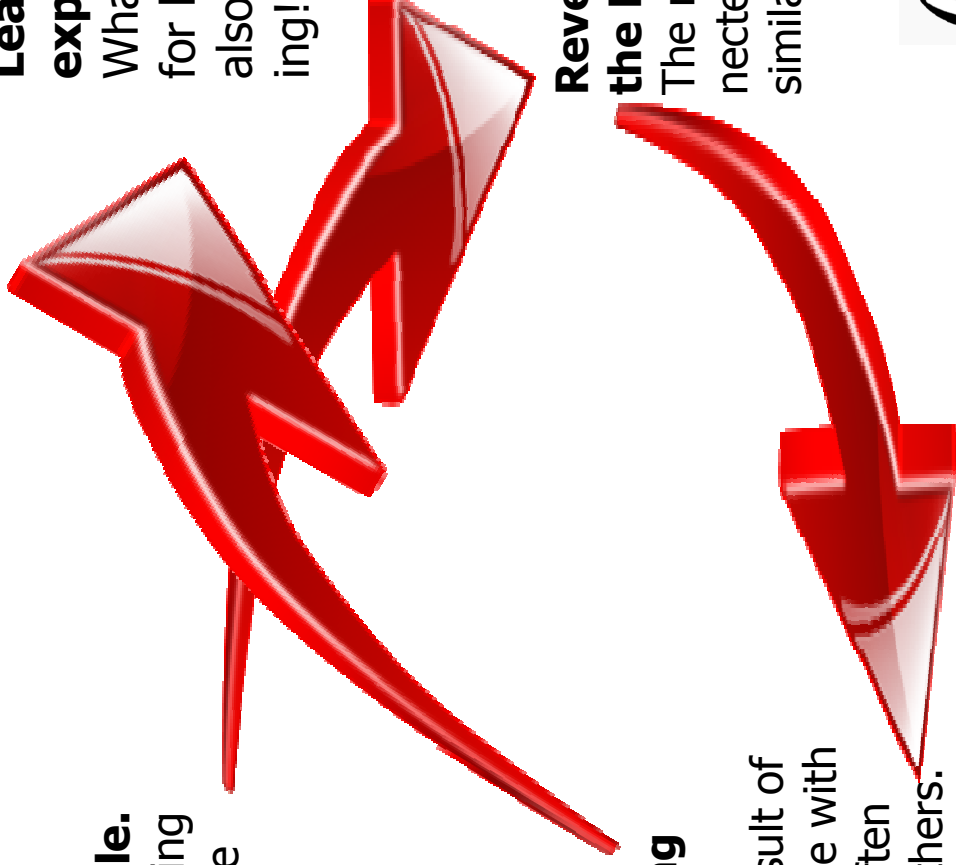
Finally there is a **reflective activity**, giving people an opportunity to reflect on the session and any action they might want to take as a result. The reflective activity creates space in which discussion and reflection can continue in an unforced way.

How well the group know and trust one another will effect the type of story that they share, the newer the group the more light hearted the stories are likely to be.

The Unlock Learning Cycle

Unlocking real life stories of urban people.
Start with the group telling stories from their real life experience.

Leading to more experience.
What we learn now is learnt for life and changes us. We also learn to keep reflecting!.



Releasing life changing skills and confidence.
Change happens as a result of linking real life experience with the Bible. This change often leads to action among others.

Revealing Good News of the Down to Earth Christ.
The real life stories are connected to and compared with similar situations in the Bible.



Introduction

Unlock uses an approach to engaging with the Bible that is different to traditional Bible studies (see page 3). Unlock's approach starts from the stories and experiences of group members whereas a more traditional approach starts from the Biblical text. Unlock's approach has been found to work well with small groups of urban, oral learners from outside of the church. We have many free resources on the Unlock website designed for use with such groups. This resource however is intended as an introduction to Unlock's approach for those that may already be more familiar with the Bible and traditional methods of Bible study. It was developed for use with Unlock's key supporters, those who do the Unlock London walk each April.

Unlock usually works with people outside of church who may be interested in finding out a bit more about faith but perhaps are not attracted to the formal methods of learning often associated with church. Our work is based on a reflective learning cycle and is a tried and tested way of introducing people to the Bible in a non-threatening way. Many churches have activities that draw in members of their surrounding community but then struggle with how to move on from those relationships into exploring faith, especially in urban environments where anything formal might be treated with suspicion.

Unlock is keen to offer its methodology as an option to others seeking to 'make disciples'. We have found that the best way to promote our working methods is to give people an experience of a session that goes through the learning cycle. This short workshop is intended to be used in that way. It was first developed for the 2010 Unlock London Walk, Unlock's primary annual fundraiser, to introduce this method to those who support Unlock by doing the walk. The 2010 walk route included the developing 2012 Olympic site, so the theme of this workshop was inspired by that connection.

If you want materials to use with a group that are not familiar with the Bible there are many resources available from www.unlock-urban.org or at the address below. However it is our experience that each group's circumstances are so unique that it may be best to develop your own materials using themes that you know your group will connect with and reflective activities that are inspired by their own interests.

May God inspire you!

Bible Text in these materials is taken from the Good News Bible (British Usage Edition), published by the Bible Societies and Collins, American Bible Society 1966, 1971, 1976; used by permission.

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Unlock, 15 Station Road, Rotherham, S60 1HN
01709 380 318

office@unlock-urban.org.uk



Unlock Session Planning and Content Outline

Course / Event name: Taster workshop for Unlock Walkers, Newham 2010

Authors/Facilitators: Pete and Sam Taylor (Unlock Birmingham 2009–2010)

Session Name: *Olympics* **Session Theme:** *Winning and Losing*

Aims: Participants will have the opportunity to tell their own stories in relation to experiences of winning and losing. Participants will have the opportunity to share Scriptures that they are reminded of by the personal stories told. Participants will be given the opportunity to reflect on the connections between their stories and the Scriptures and to develop ideas of any plans to change their own thinking or behaviour in the light of their reflection.

Participants will be invited to take part in a reflective exercise to represent their experience, and their reflections on it, in relation to the Bible story they have discussed.

Outcomes: Participants will be more able to engage in a reflective theological cycle starting from their own story or the story of others in the group. Participants will be more able to refer to the connections made with Scripture and intended changed approach in a similar situation in the future.

Participants will be able to reflect on at least one of their own experiences of winning or losing in relation to scripture, and/or be able to identify and acknowledge ‘unsung heroes’ in their own lives.



Session Content

Unlocking Real Life Experience

Film / TV clip: A relevant section from ‘Chariots of Fire’, or a clip of a decisive winning/losing moment in some recent sporting event, or pictures of candidates hearing the results of an election announced.

Photo: Pictures of winners, and of losers.

Own story: Being less ‘smart’ than my younger sister in childhood; and always being compared unfavourably to her.

Questions: Have you ever won anything? How did it feel to win? Have you ever won when you really thought you wouldn’t? Have you ever come second? Did you feel cheated or unnoticed? Have you ever thought to yourself ‘they deserve a medal’? Who was it and why?

Revealing the Good News of the down to earth Christ

Bible: Mark 10:43-45, 1 Corinthians 9:24, Philippians 3:14, Hebrews 12:1. What, if any, other Scriptures come to mind in light of the stories told?

Releasing Life Changing Skills and Confidence

What connections do you see between the Scripture and your own experience?

Reflective activity

Make an ‘Olympic’ medal and write or draw something on it to remind you of your reflections and conclusions. Award it to yourself, or to someone else who you feel really deserves it.



Olympics - Winning and Losing

Unlocking Real Life Stories of Urban People

See *ideas for 'prompts' on page 5*

- Have you ever won anything?
- How did it feel to win?
- Have you ever won when you really thought you wouldn't?
- Have you ever come second?
- Did you feel cheated or unnoticed?
- Have you ever thought to yourself 'they deserve a medal'
- Who was it and why?





Olympics - Winning and Losing

Revealing Good News of the Down to Earth Christ
Do your thoughts bring to mind any passage of scripture?

- What do you think of the passage below?
- does your story fit with it?

If one of you wants to be great, you must be the servant of the rest; and if one of you wants to be first, you must be the slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served; he came to serve and to give his life to redeem many people.

Mark 10:43-45





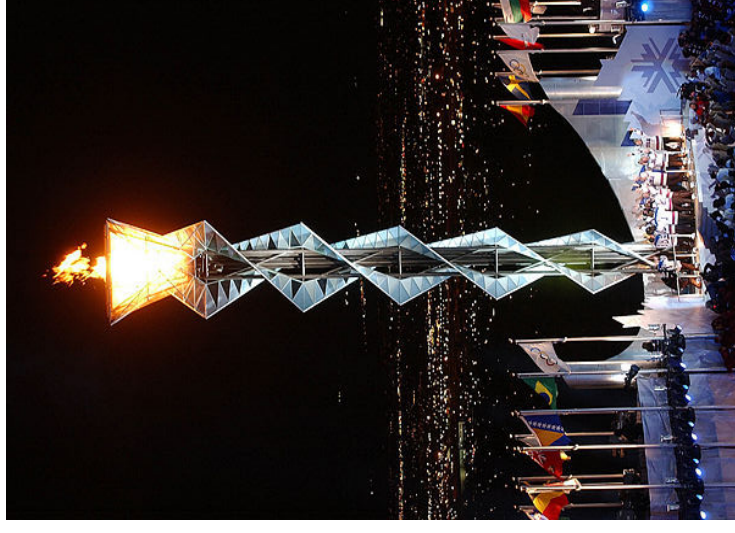
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Releasing Life Changing Skills and Confidence (i)

Are there any links or connections that you want to make between your stories and the Bible passages that have been mentioned?

- What do you want to remember from this session?
- Anything you want to change in your life because of what we've learnt?
- Something you intend to do after the things we have thought about?

If you want to remind yourselves of any of this you can write it on the back of one of the Bible text cards and take it with you.





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Releasing Life Changing Skills and Confidence (ii)

Reflective activity

For each person provide:-

- Gold Card
- About 70cm of ribbon; (parcel ribbon will do).
- Pens (if the card is shiny ensure you have pens that won't smudge)

You will also need a hole punch, some scissors, and some plastic cups, or something else for people to draw round to make their medals.





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Releasing Life Changing Skills and Confidence (iii) Reflective Activity

Cut out your medal, write your name on it and on other side write/draw

- A time when you won something
- or*
- a time when you felt you missed out
- or*
- the name of someone you feel needs
or deserves a medal.

Thread some ribbon through the medal and wear it with pride, or give it to someone who you think deserves it.



