



# Young Women Active for Christ

## HEART CHECK

Philippians 2:15 says, “That ye may be blameless and harmless the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.” How can we “shine as lights” in a dark and sinful world? We must live lives of truth.

**Draw Near**—*Worship and and prepare your heart to hear from God’s Word.*

Share prayer requests and lead girls in prayer. Play worship music of your choice and prepare your hearts to hear from God’s Word. This month’s prayer requests:

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**Go Deep**—*Dig into the Bible to learn truths from God’s Word.*

All of Melissa’s friends at her new school are on the track team. Melissa has never been a runner, but she wants to join the team so she can spend time with her friends. Because Melissa knows that she isn’t in the best running shape, she decides that she will start training now so that she will be in great shape by the spring track season. What does Melissa need to do to get into shape for running track?

Buy cute workout clothes

Get a friend to help her

Eat healthy foods

Start running and building her endurance

Watch lots of TV shows about runners

Eat lots of junk food

We all know that if Melissa wants to get in shape for track, she is going to have to work at it. She needs to eat healthier, start running and try to build her endurance little by little. It will be hard, but if Melissa sticks with it, she will be ready for the track team by spring.

Melissa started with a goal in mind - to make the track team. As Christians, we have a goal, too. What do you think our goal is?

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Of all the things we are told to do in the Bible, the most important goal for a Christian is summed up by Jesus in Matthew 22:37-40. A lawyer asked Jesus what commandment of the law was the greatest. Jesus answered and said, “**...Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.** This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, **Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.** On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

According to Jesus, our goal is to **love**. And we love with our hearts. Melissa had to get her body into shape for the track team. We have to get our hearts into shape so we can love as Jesus commanded.

## Get Real—Apply God's Word to your life.

How do you get your heart into shape? You have to work at it.

### 1. Put your heart on a diet.

Have you ever been on a diet? It's probably one of the first things people do when they want to lose some weight or start training for a race. Why? Because input equals output. If you put good things into your body, you get good results. Your heart is the same way. If you fill your heart with good things, then you will see good things start to happen.

Look at the list below. Draw a heart beside the good things you can use to fill your heart and mark out the bad things. Take some time to discuss these choices with your group.

Christian Music

Family Time

Horror Movies

Enjoying Nature

Prayer

Romance Novels

The Bible

Gossip

MTV

Going to church

### 2. Find a workout buddy.

When God created man, He decided really quickly that it was not good for us to be alone (Genesis 2:18). God created us to be social and to enjoy the company and fellowship of others. When you are working out, it's really important to be around others so that you can stay encouraged and accountable to one another.

If I want to stick to a workout plan, I have to be in a group. I am no good at self-motivation. It's way too easy for me to skip the workout DVD and choose to plop on the couch and watch Food Network instead. But when I am part of a group, I want to work out. I like getting to spend time with my friends and I don't want to miss a sweat session because I want to see them and hang out.

When you're trying to get your heart into shape, it's a good idea to have a friend you can trust as your accountability partner. An accountability partner can help you do your best by encouraging you and helping you stick to your goal. When you are weak, your friend can help you be stronger. And when she is weak, you can help her.

Talk with your group about what it means to be accountable and how you think an accountability partner can help you reach your goals.

### 3. Break a sweat.

Knowing what you should do and doing it are two way different things. It's easy to say that you're going to do what's right, but when it comes to living that out every day in every decision, it gets a lot harder.

How can you work out your heart? Put love into practice! James 1:22 tells us to "be...doers of the word, and not hearers only..."

How can we be doers of the word? How do we practice love? Check out Matthew 25:31-46 and discuss this within your group. Write your ideas in the space below:

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### 4. Build your endurance.

Do you like the results you're seeing? I hope so. When we let the Word of God mold our hearts and put His Word into practice, then we become the Christians we are meant to be. But following Christ isn't a one-time decision. It's something we have to choose to do every day.

There will be days when it's hard, but we cannot give up. Hebrews 12:1 tells us to run the race that is set before us with patience.

If anyone knew what it was like to endure hard times, it was the Apostle Paul. Yet, in Philippians 3:14 he encouraged believers to “...press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:13 reminds us we “can do ALL things through Christ” (emphasis added).

Most importantly, we have to keep going. We must continue until the end. If you enter a race and run your best time ever, but stop before you reach the finish line, do you really accomplish what you wanted? No.

I’ve heard some people say that if God lets you wake up in the morning, He has something for you to do that day. I believe this. God is keeping us here on earth for a reason. We have to keep on working and serving Him our entire lives.

Then, one day when we get to Heaven, we can say as Paul, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith” (2 Timothy 4:7).

## Meet the Author



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