

gun lap

by Robert Wolgemuth

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION: Let's Get Started

1. What is a “gun lap”? How does Robert use this as a metaphor for where you are right now?
2. How are you feeling about your gun lap—physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually?
3. Are you afraid of getting old? Anxious about dealing with an aging body?
4. Why is it important to think about these things?
5. Why must you remember that this book isn't about dying, but about living, and living well?

CHAPTER 1: You Need a Coach for This?

So, what's the use of having a running coach? Doesn't he just say... “Run faster!”...or is there something else?

1. In this chapter, Robert writes, “If you and I are going to have ‘a gun lap for the ages’ ... we must choose to want a great gun lap.” Reflect on that statement. Do you really want to run a final lap that means something special?
2. Take an honest look at your spiritual life. Are you spending time with God in prayer and Scripture each day? Why is this important? Is there room for a stronger commitment in your gun lap?
3. Is there someone who has inspired you who has modeled this discipline?
4. In this chapter's gun lap prayer, we ask God, “fill me with Your Spirit so as I face the *inevitable challenges*, I do not panic or despair.” Inevitable challenges ... what are some of those challenges you may be fearful about? How can making the choice to “wanna” run a great gun lap prepare you for those challenges?

CHAPTER 2: Runner to Your Mark . . .

What's the imprint other older men have left on you?

1. Who were the first “gun lap” men you knew? What kind of example did they set?
 2. Have you had that moment yet that Robert refers to, when you look in the mirror and are shocked that ... this is me?
 3. What are some of the strong characteristics—physical, relational, spiritual, or otherwise—that the gun lap men who came before you may have handed down to you?
 4. Can you list some characteristics you'd like to, as you cull through the things that have brought you to your gun lap?
 5. How can making the choice to “wanna” run a great gun lap prepare you for those challenges?
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CHAPTER 3: Left Behind . . .

What happens when technology races past your understanding of it and ability to use it?

1. How would you describe your relationship with modern technology?
2. Robert writes, “For me, computer trouble stirs that same feeling of being lost. It’s worse than car trouble. Much worse.” Do you relate to this? What kinds of feelings do you get thinking about phones and screens and WiFi and “the cloud”?
3. What’s one thing you learned from this chapter, or something that changed your perspective about technology?
4. In this chapter’s gun lap prayer, we ask God, “Forgive me for resenting what I don’t understand.” Is there any other area besides technology where this prayer would be just as appropriate for you?

CHAPTER 4: Self Conversation . . .

Tell that shaming and troublesome voice to be quiet. Speak to him first.

1. What’s the difference in talking to yourself and listening to yourself?
2. What does it mean to counsel your heart according to truth? How can doing so change the habits of your mind, and your outlook on life?
3. What does Robert mean when he says “good thinking starts with good theology”?
4. What is something you learned from this chapter about self-talk? What’s one thing you can apply, beginning today?

CHAPTER 5: Another Really Important Year . . .

What does—and should—marriage look like at our age?

1. How did it feel when you read the story of the man whose wife told him she didn’t love him?
2. On a scale of 1-10, how would you grade the condition of your marriage now? What words would you use to describe your marriage? Words like *warm, loving, joyful*, or perhaps words like *distant, cold, unsteady*?
3. List some of the character traits you love about your wife, and some ways God has used her to bless you. Make a note to tell her this week, even today. Name some of the ways you’re grateful for her.
4. What can you begin doing today to try and make your marriage the best it’s ever been even now in your gun lap?
5. This chapter’s gun lap prayer says, “I pray that in the time You’ve still given me, You will help me to be the man of her dreams.” What would it look like if God really answered that prayer?

CHAPTER 6: In Shape for This Race . . .

It’s so important that we continue to take good care of our bodies...maybe even more so than ever before.

1. “You are what you eat.” We’ve all heard that phrase plenty of times. If that’s true ... what are you? How would you assess your physical health at this point in your life?
 2. Why does being in good shape physically matter for your gun lap?
 3. In this chapter, Robert gives a list of instructions from Scripture that should characterize our lives: be self-controlled; be worthy of respect; be sensible; be sound in faith; be sound in love; be sound in endurance. Where could you improve in the coming years? What will you do to pursue that growth?
 4. Robert mentions the sad reality of some men who, in their gun lap, have given into some kind of tragic, awful behavior. The reality is, men don’t just wake up one day and decide to commit egregious sin; they drift. Incrementally. Is there any area of your life where you’re drifting? Bring that to the Lord now, in prayer, and consider sharing with a friend in his gun lap for support and encouragement.
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CHAPTER 7: Free Time Isn't Really Free . . .

You're going to find that you have more time on your hands at this age. What are you going to do with it?

1. How have you anticipated more free time in your gun lap? Have you looked forward to spending the last few decades of your life on perpetual vacation, or viewed it as an opportunity to keep working, but maybe in a different way?
2. Robert asks, "Is there meaning and purpose in the free time our gun lap has granted us, or is this our opportunity for shifting our lives into neutral and enjoying the dividend of our life's work?" How would you answer that question?
3. How would you say you're using your free time now? Is there a better use for some of your free time that you could invest in others?
4. What have you learned from this chapter about how to use your increasing free time in a productive way?

CHAPTER 8: A Nice ROI . . .

You've heard of mentoring. Now's a good time to find a young man or two and mentor him.

1. How do you define the phrase "leave a legacy"? Is this something you've been thinking about as you run your gun lap?
2. There are several ways we can invest in future generations of people. In the book, we talk about Ken. Is there anyone you are currently mentoring? Any younger men in your neighborhood or church whom you could possibly mentor? If so, would you pray that God would give you courage to pursue that relationship. If not, pray that He would bring someone like that into your life.
3. What did you learn from the story of Moses and Jethro? How can you apply what you learned in that story?
4. In this chapter's gun lap prayer, we ask, "I pray that You will give me a love for these younger men, a desire to live authentically and transparently, and to honor You in how I go about this." What do you think it would look like if God answered that prayer? Will you commit to making this a part of your regular prayer life?

CHAPTER 9: Running with a Limp . . .

So you've been diagnosed with something. You're going in for surgery. Again. What's your attitude about this and how can you embrace it with joy?

1. Paul viewed his weaknesses, his brokenness—his limping—as an opportunity to glorify God in his gun lap. What are your weaknesses, your limitations, your limps?
2. Looking at the story of Jacob wrestling, how can a bodily injury and a blessed heart come from the same event or experience?
3. Robert writes, "We could worry. We could gripe and complain. ... Or we could embrace the inevitable and thank our Father for blessing us with yet another opportunity to tell others about this special encounter with deity." What would change in your life if you viewed your weaknesses as opportunities to tell others about the gospel?
4. As you look back on the limps you've walked with in past seasons of life, how has God sustained you? Jot down a list of ways he has provided and cared for you, and thank Him. Let this be motivation to trust Him to do the same moving forward.

CHAPTER 10: Living to Make Christ Known . . .

Some call it witnessing. Others refer to it as sharing your faith. Either way, this is a great season to do more of it.

1. As you look back on your life, what would you say is the one thing that has been at the center? People? Things? Faith?
2. What does it mean to "live to make Christ known," as the chapter title says?
3. Robert says that as he gets older, telling people—even total strangers—about the Lord gets easier. Have you had that experience, or a different experience?
4. In this chapter's gun lap prayer, we ask God to help us focus on what's most important in the one life we have. What practical steps will you make to prioritize Christ and the Good News in your gun lap?