

# NOW YOU CAN STOP RUNNING

FINDING THE REST YOUR SOUL  
DESPERATELY NEEDS

TERRY CRIST

 ZONDERVAN  
BOOKS

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*Now You Can Stop Running*

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*To my firstborn grandson,*

*Asher Phoenix Crist*

*May you never feel the need to run but always rest in  
the unshakable truth that you are unconditionally loved  
by the one who provides true and lasting refuge.*

*You are his, and that is enough.*

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# FOREWORD BY CHRIS HODGES

For years, I was running at a pace I thought was sustainable—until my body forced me to stop. Like many leaders, I had mistaken movement for progress and had to learn that strength isn't in striving but in knowing when to stop running.

The wake-up call came during a ministry trip to Australia, where I was teaching and preaching almost nonstop. I hadn't built in time to recover from the fifteen-hour flight, so I propped myself up with caffeine and pushed through the exhaustion. On top of the relentless pace, I was still grieving the recent loss of my father, and our church had just celebrated ten years—a milestone marked by God's faithfulness and the hard work of so many.

I was thoroughly enjoying my life, yet looking back, I now see that it was too full. God kept surprising me, and I had accomplished far more than I'd ever expected. Every part of my life was devoted to knowing him, serving him, and helping others experience Jesus' love. I was faithful in obedience—except in one unintended way: resting. And apparently, because I was overlooking the need for rest, it took a major crash to get my attention.

That crash came on the side of the road in Australia when I thought I was having a heart attack. My pulse raced higher and higher, I couldn't catch my breath, and my chest felt like it was

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caught in a vise. Forced to rest until I stabilized enough to return stateside, I didn't learn the cause until my doctor ran a battery of tests back home. It wasn't my heart, it was my nervous system. I had hit a breaking point, the culmination of running too hard for too long. My body could no longer function at the level of intensity that had become my default. I had to learn to rest.

You can outrun your past for only so long before exhaustion catches up with you. The harder you push, the farther you drift from the refuge your soul is desperate to find. Looking back, I see that I wasn't just physically depleted, I was spiritually running on empty. That's why I love this book by my friend Terry Crist.

*Now You Can Stop Running* is the book I needed long before my panic attack *Down Under*. With wisdom and compassion, Terry offers permission to change the way we view rest and instruction on how to incorporate it as an essential faith practice. He draws on his own seasons of busyness and self-reliance to show us how to walk by faith and experience soul rest in God. In sharp contrast to our culture of constant activity, Terry makes it clear that the only way he has grown in his faith is by learning to surrender more and to strive less.

Delving into God's Word with fresh insight, Terry reveals that the permission to rest we often withhold from ourselves has been not only given by God but wired into how he made us. Our creator designed us to "be still, and know that I am God" [Ps. 46:10](#) and rested on the seventh day to set an example for us [Gen. 2:2-3](#). Sabbath rest requires us to stop our striving in order to refresh our minds and bodies and to renew our spirits in him.

Jesus not only invites us to this same kind of soul rest but reminds us of its necessity: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" [Matt. 11:28](#). When we follow his example and rely on his Spirit as the source for our lives, we discover we don't have to strive. "Take my yoke upon

FOREWORD BY CHRIS HODGES

you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" ☒Matt. 11:29☒30☒

Perhaps you don't need convincing that you need to prioritize rest. What you need is someone to help you realign your relationship with God and show you how to make rest part of your life. Terry offers ways to experience what you know you need but so often tend to overlook until you hit a wall of exhaustion, depression, or burnout. Please take it from me and don't wait until you crash before you realize the ongoing importance of rest. You don't have to work harder or go faster. You can surrender your cares to him and rest in his love, strength, and power.

I encourage you to read this book slowly and carefully, with the eyes of your heart. If fear keeps you running, let Jesus catch you. If spiritual fatigue has brought you down, let him lift you up. Like a slow, gentle hike through a sunlit wooded trail, this book refreshes the soul, nourishes the mind, and soothes the heart. As I read it, I found myself both challenged and encouraged, convicted and comforted.

I pray you experience the gift Terry offers here in ways that cause you to stop running and start resting. If you long to experience the rest your soul desperately needs, take a deep breath and know that you're in the right place. If you want to grow in your faith and know God more intimately, now is the time.

Now you can be still and know that he is God.

Now you can stop running and start resting.

—CHRIS HODGES, founding pastor, Church of the Highlands; author, *Out of the Cave* and *Pray First*

## READER'S GUIDE

Welcome to *Now You Can Stop Running: Finding the Rest Your Soul Desperately Needs*. Far too many of us spend our lives running from things that hurt us or racing toward what we think will fulfill us. All of that running leaves us exhausted and disconnected from the source of life and peace. But there is hope. God is with you right here and now, offering refuge and rest for your soul. This book will guide you in reconnecting with him and his gracious provision for your deepest needs.

If you find yourself feeling restless and dissatisfied with your life, this book is for you. My prayer is that, positioned at the intersection of Bible study and soul care, it serves as both a guide and a trusted companion. Through stories of biblical characters who faced similar struggles, you will gain insights and practices that will nurture your spirit and lead you to the feet of Jesus. Here's what you can expect and how to engage with the material to make the most of your journey.

### WHAT TO EXPECT

**Biblical Exploration.** Each chapter centers on a different biblical character who embodies the themes of running and seeking refuge. You will journey through the lives of Cain, Hagar, Jacob, Moses, Elijah, David, and many others. Their stories are rich with

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lessons about human frailty, divine grace, and the transformative power of encountering God.

**Spiritual Practices.** At the end of each chapter, you will find a spiritual practice designed to help you internalize lessons and apply them to your life. These practices are crafted to foster soul care, reflection, and a deeper connection with God. I encourage you to practice the ones related to why *you* run until you feel you have found refuge and rest in that area of your life.

**Personal Prayers.** Each chapter concludes with a prayer that ties together the chapter's themes. These prayers are meant to guide you in your conversations with God, offering words that reflect the struggles and hopes we all share. They are starting points for your own heartfelt dialogue with God.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Take your time. This book is best experienced slowly and reflectively. Take your time with each chapter, allowing the stories and lessons to resonate deeply. Don't rush. Give yourself the time to absorb and reflect on the insights presented.

Engage actively. Interact with the material through the suggested spiritual practices. These are not just add-ons but integral parts of your journey. They are designed to help you move from understanding to transformation, from head knowledge to heart experience.

Reflect and journal. Consider keeping a journal as you read. Write down your thoughts, feelings, and any revelations that come to you. Reflect on the questions posed in the spiritual practices sections and document your prayers. This process will help solidify what you've learned and provide a record of your spiritual journey.

Be open to transformation. Approach each chapter with an open heart, ready to be challenged and changed. Allow these

## READER'S GUIDE

biblical characters' stories to speak into your life. Let the spiritual practices guide you into deeper intimacy with God. Embrace the prayers as expressions of your own spiritual longing.

Lead a group discussion. If possible, read this book with your community. Sharing insights and experiences with others can enrich your understanding and provide mutual support. Discuss the biblical characters, spiritual practices, and prayers. Learn from each other's perspectives and support one another in soul care.

In this book, you will find an invitation to spiritual refuge and rest grounded in the timeless truths of Scripture. May you discover the peace that comes from ceasing your running and resting in Jesus' loving arms. Happy reading, and may God bless you on this journey.

With grace and peace,  
—TERRY CRIST

# CAN'T STOP RUNNING

## *From Avoidance to Awareness*

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and  
burdened, and I will give you rest."*

—MATTHEW 11:28

I was born running.

In our family videos, captured on vintage film reels, I am barely in the frame because I'm in constant motion. Back then, everyone felt the need to perform for the camera—smiling, waving, mouthing words that couldn't be heard. I was the kid who couldn't sit still, a whirlwind of energy that refused to be restrained.

But as the years passed, I ran for other reasons too.

Running was my escape. From my earliest memories, the wind brushing my face and the pounding of my feet on the ground were more than just physical sensations. Running transcended sport; it was my release valve, my escape, and a metaphor for my life. Dissatisfaction fueled my running as I sought to distance

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myself from generational conflict, familial expectations, and even childhood trauma. It drove me toward an idealized future in which my life would finally make sense.

As I matured, running remained my steadfast companion. The challenges of school, the burden of parental expectations, and the ache of young love lost spurred me to keep running in the solitude of dawn or the stillness of evening. Sometimes it felt like escaping. Paradoxically, the very act of running that drove me from pain also taught me resilience, endurance, and mental discipline. As the saying goes, "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger." There were days when my legs felt like lead, my lungs screamed for air, and my heart pounded in my chest like a war drum. Yet I persevered. Each time I thought I couldn't go on, I remembered why I started: to outrun the shadows, to quiet the voices, to heal the pain.

Running also gave me space to reflect on deeper issues. I began to realize that just as I was running physically, I was also running spiritually. Running—both as a feet-on-the-ground activity and as an abstract concept—became an opportunity to wrestle with the questions stirring in my soul:

- What is the source of my inner compulsion to flee?
- Will I ever find a rest that endures?
- Is there a sanctuary in this world where peace resides?

As I wrestled with these questions, a deeper realization took shape within me: the greatest challenge we face is not the road we travel but the trauma we carry.

Over time, I realized I was carrying a heavy load of unresolved emotions as I ran. All the running in the world couldn't lighten that burden. No matter how much I tried to stay one

step ahead of my struggles, I found that escape wasn't the same as healing.

This book is about what I found when I began to live in the light of that realization.

## RUN FOR YOUR LIFE

I have this theory: we are all running either from or toward something—driven by hidden wounds, unmet needs, and holy longings. In this sense, running becomes a metaphor for how we distance ourselves from pain or pursue the desires of our hearts. These internal drives motivate us to act, to move, to leave, to search, to strive—all driven by a profound ache for something more.

Yet here lies the paradox: the harder we chase what we yearn for, the farther it seems to slip from our grasp. The pursuit demands more of us—faster, farther, longer—until we're trapped in an endless cycle. Instead of finding relief, we're left drained, exhausted by the very restlessness we were desperate to escape. From the cradle to the grave, life unfolds as a series of dashes—between risk and reward, brokenness and wholeness, chance and comfort, the known and the unknown. We run from the past, haunted by regrets and fears, and we run toward the future, compelled by the allure of what lies just beyond our reach. For most of us, running feels as natural as breathing. It's not a calculated act of cowardice but an instinctive act of survival. At its core, it's a testament to our yearning for refuge and rest.

---

WE RUN FROM  
THE PAIN OF  
YESTERDAY  
TOWARD  
THE HOPE OF  
TOMORROW.

## NOW YOU CAN STOP RUNNING

We run from the pain of yesterday toward the hope of tomorrow.

This spiritual and emotional running reveals itself in countless ways: in our avoidance of deep fears, unhealed wounds, and unmet longings; in impulsive choices and racing thoughts; in our hesitation to build meaningful connections. It surfaces in our addictions, restless habits, and the neglect of our souls' deeper needs.

But what if there's more to it?

What if we're not just running away but also running *toward*? What if, beneath the surface, our pursuit isn't for something but for *someone*—one who invites us to rest from our striving and find refuge in him? If such a being exists, then our running is transformed. It's no longer an exercise in futility but a journey toward the peace, safety, and wholeness our souls were made to experience.

As Augustine observed, "Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee."<sup>1</sup> Ultimately, the restlessness and weariness we feel find their rest in Jesus.

Throughout this book, we'll explore the concept of running similarly to how Paul Tournier uses the term *place* in his groundbreaking work *A Place for You*. Tournier, a renowned Christian physician of the twentieth century, considered a place to be more than a physical location. He saw it as a metaphorical and relational space where we find opportunities for growth, healing, and self-discovery.

His pastoral-therapeutic approach helped patients discover their places in the world, spaces where they could deeply connect with others and with God, leading to a more integrated and authentic life. For Tournier, a place can be anything that makes us feel at home: a house, a comfortable suit, a beloved book, a typewriter, a song, a spot in nature, or even a comforting memory.<sup>2</sup>

These are all places within time and space, each offering a sanctuary for the soul.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, running to distance ourselves from what hurts us and to pursue what we think will fulfill us can take many forms: an urgent sprint, a careful retreat, or, paradoxically, even a standing still in quiet inner defiance. In the folksy wisdom of Willie Nelson, "Still is still moving to me."

Running is an act of resistance, pushing back against life's constraints and challenges. Rest, on the other hand, is the act of surrender.

The Bible is filled with stories of people who ran not just from physical danger but from emotional, spiritual, and existential crises. Hagar ran from the trauma of being used as a surrogate and of being abused by the one who enslaved her. Jacob fled from family dynamics. Moses fled after killing an Egyptian. David spent years evading King Saul's wrath. And Esther rose from obscurity in a race against the clock to save her people from genocide. These figures embody the complexity of our urge to run, driven by guilt, fear, duty, and sometimes a sense of inadequacy or to fulfill a higher calling.

But for every story of a biblical character running from someone or something, there's a story of their finding rest, facing their fears, surrendering their wills, embracing their healing, and accepting their missional calling. Hagar returned to give birth to her child after receiving the assurance of having been seen by God. Jacob stopped running from Esau after making peace with his identity. Moses went back to lead his people to freedom.

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## NOW YOU CAN STOP RUNNING

David, after years of running from an abusive mentor, finally became a king after God's own heart.

Their stories bear witness that you can stop running too.

The same God who loved and guided Jacob, Moses, Hagar, and David walks alongside us today. He is not a God of empty promises or false hopes. His rest is genuine, and the refuge he provides is safe and secure.

What are you running from?

What deprives you of tranquility and leads you to seek refuge?

What causes that aching dissatisfaction in your soul?

It's okay if you don't know the answers. We are often too close to our own lives to see bigger patterns or discern deeper meanings. That's why we need spiritual companions, people to journey through life with us and offer the much needed perspective and insight we crave.

Many Christians don't realize that heroes of our faith can serve as fellow sojourners, a running club of sorts. As we immerse ourselves in their stories, we can learn much about ourselves. The answers they discovered may be just the balm we need to soothe our troubled hearts.

In the pages ahead, we'll explore the theme of running woven throughout the Scriptures. In the stories of those who ran before us, we will hear echoes of our own footsteps. Along the way, we will discover why we run and how to slow down enough to find the fulfilling, authentic, spiritually rich life we seek. To stop running is not to cease progress but to confront what we've been fleeing and to find rest for our souls.

## THE RUNNER'S MIND

Running begins deep in the soul long before the feet start to move. In the moments before a race, runners enter a state of

heightened readiness: muscles tensed, hearts pulsing with anticipation, and lungs expanding in preparation, all synchronized in the silent countdown. Then the crack of the starting pistol ignites this poised energy, transforming internal preparedness into external action. This auditory trigger flips a switch in the brain, propelling the body forward and turning potential energy into kinetic energy as the race begins.

The same principle applies spiritually and emotionally as our souls react to the pain we experience, often without our even realizing it.

Through my own experiences and in ministering to others, I've witnessed how deeply our emotional state affects our physical well-being. Often our impulse to run stems from two issues: the trauma response and cognitive dissonance. These forces, frequently operating beyond our awareness or control, significantly shape the trajectory and quality of our lives.

One of the most common reasons we run is to escape the pain of the past, a key aspect of the trauma response. Memories of abuse and pain can be overwhelming, causing us to instinctively avoid confronting them. The fear of reexperiencing emotional distress, coupled with feelings of shame or guilt, or the belief that facing these memories won't lead to any positive outcome, often drives us to flee from our past.

It hurts to remember, so we try our best to forget. But our minds don't just create new monsters, they also remember former monsters in horrifying detail.<sup>4</sup> Regardless of how hard we try to ignore them, suppress them, or replace them with new memories, our minds keep a careful record of past trauma.

We repeatedly opt for evasion rather than transformation. Avoidance is a behavioral pattern in which we deliberately steer clear of situations, thoughts, or feelings that might trigger emotional discomfort. Initially this strategy offers a temporary

## NOW YOU CAN STOP RUNNING

escape, granting us momentary relief from distressing feelings. This immediate alleviation makes avoidance tempting, turning it into a recurring tactic in our attempt to navigate discomfort. But avoidance only makes matters worse over time.

The long-term effects of avoidance include stunted personal growth and delayed emotional healing. Avoidance accumulates unresolved issues as problems that are ignored do not simply disappear but often grow in magnitude.

Chronic avoidance can significantly impact mental health. It is closely linked to anxiety disorders, depression, and stress-related ailments. When we consistently avoid facing our fears, we fail to develop healthy coping mechanisms. This lack of coping skills can make us more vulnerable to mental-health issues.

Avoidance can manifest in various forms, such as procrastination, denying or minimizing problems, substance abuse, and withdrawal from social interaction. These behaviors can have far-reaching implications. In personal relationships, avoidance can lead to communication breakdowns and unresolved conflicts. Professionally, it can hinder performance and productivity as essential tasks are perpetually postponed.

Avoidance is rooted in fear—fear of physical harm, emotional discomfort, or psychological distress. But refusing to face our fears only makes them stronger. The more we avoid something, the more intimidating and overwhelming it becomes, reinforcing the fear and increasing the need to avoid it.

Avoidance is a temporary shelter; acceptance is a permanent home.

Finding rest means acknowledging the reasons behind our running and embracing Jesus, who transforms our desperate flight into a movement toward wholeness and refuge in his embrace.

Acknowledging and addressing avoidance behaviors is essential to accepting God's provision of refuge and rest. This process

begins with awareness—recognizing our avoidance patterns, identifying what triggers them, and understanding their impacts on our lives. The next step is to confront the avoided situations, thoughts, or feelings. This approach is often used in cognitive-behavioral therapy, and although I am not a counselor, I believe there is value in finding one who is grounded in Scripture. Such support can be instrumental in learning to confront our issues head-on rather than perpetually sidestepping them.

Many of us lack the emotional tools or support systems to effectively work through past trauma. Without the right resources and guidance, facing painful memories can be overwhelming. Consequently, evasion and denial might appear to be appealing, albeit temporary, solutions for coping with intense emotions. The lack of a supportive network can lead us to disconnect from our past experiences, continuing a cycle of avoidance and emotional repression.

Denial only prolongs the journey.

Boarding the train of denial can be tempting, leading us farther away from doing the necessary work to be at peace. In doing so, however, we entrench our feelings. Our minds run in patterns shaped by past experiences and present fears. We run in circles, bound by our own stories, each revolution an attempt to outrun yesterday, hoping to find a foundation in faith where we can finally rest and be at ease.

Facing the past is a formidable task. It demands the courage to confront difficult emotions and the willingness to redefine one's understanding of oneself and one's story. It requires us to unpack the baggage we have carried for so long and explore our innermost struggles. This process can be daunting because it

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A TEMPORARY  
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challenges our established narratives and calls into question the foundation of our identity. No wonder many of us run to avoid it.

### THE RUNNER'S FOOTSTEPS

In addition to the trauma response, cognitive dissonance is the second issue lying at the heart of our propensity to run. Cognitive dissonance is a state of mental discomfort caused by conflicting beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors. We may believe we are strong, confident, and rooted in our faith, but a painful memory or challenging emotion makes us feel weak, timid, and doubtful. When confronted with painful memories or feelings, we may experience an inner conflict that drives us to seek escape or denial as a means of alleviating this discomfort. So instead of examining the reason for the conflict, we try to escape it.

It's like trying to dance to your favorite 1980s ballad while someone plays the bagpipes off-key. *Are they ever on-key?* It's much easier to cover our ears and run away than to sort through the discordant sounds and find the melody.

Our emotional triggers—those silent alarms that set us off on yet another sprint—are echoes of a deeper dissonance. We run from the pain of the past, the uncertainty of the present, and the fear of the unknown future. We flee from the haunting echoes of regret, the burdens of unnamed shame, the weight of the unmet expectations of those we love, and the heavy cloak of judgment we fear will settle on our shoulders if we ever dare to stop. Yet we are also running toward something—a glimmer of hope, a promise of healing, and the prospect of a brighter tomorrow.

In the following pages, we will explore the connection between running and resting as we uncover why we run, what we're running from, and who or what we're running toward. Our lives are a synthesis of movement and stillness, action and

reflection, work and play. The interplay between these opposing forces shapes our perceptions of ourselves and our world. By understanding this interplay, we gain insights into our humanity and spiritual journey, showing us how these different parts of our lives are connected.

As we run, we must ask ourselves what we are running toward. Is it the temporary shelter of our earthly identity, worldly pursuits, pleasures, and accolades, or the eternal stronghold of a life built on the cornerstone of Christ? Ultimately it is not so much about the race but about meeting the one who stands at the finish line, who has been with us at every twist and turn in the path.

We must discern the *true* destination.

In our pursuit of refuge, we will encounter the allure of false security—temporary havens that offer fleeting solace but fail to provide lasting peace. These illusory sanctuaries entice us with promises of quick fixes and instant relief, yet they only conceal the wounds that need healing. Discerning between true refuge and false security is essential if we hope to find lasting rest.

The dangers in our destinations lurk disguised as the security we seek. We run toward mirages of happiness in the form of success, relationships, and material gain only to find ourselves more driven than before. Refuge is found not in these but in the oasis of our relationship with the one who is our ultimate sanctuary.

God is the only finish line who provides safety and sanctuary, meaning and purpose, refuge and rest. The writer of Proverbs assures us, "The name of the LORD is a fortified tower; the righteous run to it and are safe."<sup>5</sup> Seeking shelter from anything less than God will bring us only disappointment and disillusionment.

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THE DANGERS  
IN OUR  
DESTINATIONS  
LURK DISGUISED  
AS THE SECURITY  
WE SEEK.

## NOW YOU CAN STOP RUNNING

No one else is strong enough to save us. No king is mighty enough to protect us.

Temporary emotional escapes, whether through substance abuse, busyness, or pleasures, offer brief relief from our internal turmoil. But these short-term fixes come with hidden dangers, often leading to more destructive cycles of dependence, disillusionment, and emotional pain. By looking at the pitfalls of these temporary escapes, we see how avoiding our emotional and spiritual struggles can block our paths to wholeness.

I want to warn you about another false refuge: the mirage of a "successful life." Many, driven by other people's expectations, dedicate their lives to chasing this ideal, which, although defined variously—career milestones, wealth, familial ideals, achievements—uniformly promises fulfillment. While ambition and the achievement of goals are commendable, the misconception lies in equating success with ultimate satisfaction.

This idea is a carefully curated myth in our culture. The core of our yearning isn't merely success, it's the meaning and purpose we anticipate these accomplishments will bestow upon us. Yet there's a disillusioning twist: attaining a goal rarely quenches our thirst for fulfillment. Instead, the goalpost is continually moved farther, transforming our pursuit into an endless journey in which each summit only unveils the next peak waiting to be climbed.

This is the ache we all carry, isn't it? The gnawing sense that no matter how far we go or how much we achieve, there's still something more we long for—something deeper, richer, truer. As C. S. Lewis writes, "There have been times when I think we do not desire heaven but more often I find myself wondering whether, in our heart of hearts, we have ever desired anything else."<sup>6</sup> It's not just heaven as a place that we're yearning for; it's the presence of God, the sanctuary of being fully known and

completely at rest in him. This is what our restless hearts are running toward, even when we're not aware of it.

## TRAVELING LIGHT

Much like an ultramarathon, life is not about how fast we run but how lightly we travel. The "race is not to the swift,"<sup>7</sup> as Ecclesiastes reminds us, but to those who persevere. The journey is about finding your pace, understanding your rhythm, and appreciating moments of respite along the way, however brief they may be. It's about seeking God and finding him in the beat, pause, step, and stride.

Eventually we all must slow down. Some may resign themselves to lives of exhaustion and quiet desperation, as Thoreau aptly described.<sup>8</sup> Some may lose hope of finding rest or experience a loss of zeal and passion. Even if the impulse to flee fades over time, this is not genuine refuge and rest. Rest is more than merely ceasing to run.

Ultimately my restlessness found refuge in Jesus. His redemptive work on the cross addresses our deepest longings for refuge and rest. In him, we discover that our past wounds can be healed, our present anxieties can be calmed, and our future can be secured. His grace turns our desperate running into a journey toward the very things our hearts most long for.

By understanding the motives for our running, we uncover the unmet needs, hidden wounds, and holy longings within us, unraveling the profound yearnings of our hearts.

Slowly, we learn to discern between true refuge in God and the false security of the world. This empowers us to distinguish between fleeting respites and enduring healing, guiding us toward restoration and wholeness.

In the chapters ahead, we'll explore a tapestry of biblical

## NOW YOU CAN STOP RUNNING

wisdom and some pastoral insights as we join the race with others who have gone before us. Together, we'll uncover how a relationship with Jesus can guide us through our past pain, give meaning to our present struggles, and illuminate our path forward with hope. Rather than repeating past cycles of brokenness, we will discover a renewed wholeness and authenticity to carry with us into the future.

This book is your invitation to find refuge and rest. Let it guide you to a finish line where you will discover not just respite but sanctuary—resting in the boundless love of God.

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## COMING HOME

Begin your day by orienting your soul to what God has planned for you. He has good plans and purposes and has gone before you into every second that awaits you. Before the daily rush begins, carve out a sacred space where your spirit can breathe. Open the Scriptures—whether through reading or listening—and allow the words to seep into your heart. Don't rush. If you're already in a rhythm, continue with what works for you. If not, consider starting with something simple and manageable, like a daily reading from the *Once-a-Day Bible* or *The One Year Bible*.

Pause and linger. After you've absorbed the Word, sit quietly. Let the truths you've encountered resonate within you. Allow them to settle into the soil of your soul, nourishing you for the day ahead.

Breathe with intention. Close your eyes and breathe slowly. Inhale deeply, welcoming the gift of life that God has graciously given you. As you exhale, release the tension, the worries, the distractions that cling to you. This isn't about emptying your mind but about becoming fully present, aware of the breath that

## CAN'T STOP RUNNING

sustains you and the Spirit of God who breathes life into you. In these quiet moments, recognize that you are being held, loved, and guided.

### PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, guide me in the quiet stillness of your presence, where I can face my tendencies to avoid and escape. Help me cultivate a heart of awareness, open to the truths you reveal and the lessons you teach me each day. Grant me the courage to confront my fears and anxieties with faith instead of fleeing them. Teach me to embrace every challenge as an opportunity to grow closer to you, trusting that your grace is sufficient to transform my fears into pathways of peace. In Jesus' name, amen.*