

Olympic Pin Trading Evangelism Guide

Introduction

Pin trading has been called “the unofficial spectator sport” of the Olympic Games.

Pin trading has a long and rich history of breaking down barriers between countries, athletes, spectators, and locals.

It is believed Olympic pins have their origins at the 1896 Games in Athens, Greece. They were made of cardboard and were originally used to identify athletes, officials., and the media. Very quickly fans began to collect them and a new “sport” was born!

There are many different types of Olympic pins. A non-exhaustive list would include:

- Countries
- Olympic Committees
- Sports
- Venues
- Corporate Sponsors
- First Responders
- Evangelistic
- Media

For more information on the various types of pins, *Inside the Games* has a helpful guide

<https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/12341/types-of-pins>

Environment

- Be alert and aware of those around you.
- Dress in fun, country celebrating colors - this can help you connect with others from the same country, or to engage in good natured ribbing that can lead to a meaningful gospel conversation.
- Wear lanyards with pins attached. (don’t display multiples of evangelism pins as this diminishes interest, uniqueness, and can make the people you are seeking to engage with feel like they are “just a number” or that you are trying to “sell” them Jesus.)
- If wearing a hat, add pins. Not only will the hat help protect you from the sun, but it will be a walking billboard to others that you are into Olympic pins and open to discuss and trade. (same rule as with the lanyards listed above, do not wear multiples of the same pin).
- If wearing sunglasses, be sure to remove them as you begin to engage in conversations. People want to see your eyes especially if you are going to be discussing deep, meaningful, spiritual things.

Engagement

- Authenticity is the key to any gospel engagement. That is especially true with Olympic pin trading evangelism.
- You should seek those you encounter “as you go” about Paris whether heading to grab a pastry for breakfast, purchase water, or just hanging around a popular tourist location. Are they wearing a fun country specific hat, or facepaint? Ask them about it. And listen! Genuinely hear them and their story. Are they from France? Ask them how they feel about the Olympics being in Paris (be prepared for a negative response as this is a fairly normal response from locals). Stay positive.
- Know the medal count. This may sound superficial or even vain, but knowing who is ahead in the medal count, both overall medals as well as leading in gold, is a popular topic and being aware demonstrates that you are genuinely interested in the Olympics.

Transition

Once a genuine encounter has begun, transition the conversation to Olympic pins.

Examples:

1. Don't see any pins?

Ask “are you collecting any pins?”

No?

“Can I give you your first Olympic pin?”

“I have a pin I'll give you... can I tell you the story behind it?”

WAIT & PRAY

2. See pins on a hat or lanyard?

Yes?

“Great! I think it's fun to collect pins.”

“I have a pin I'll give you if you'll let me tell you the story behind it?”

WAIT & PRAY

3. Pull the gospel pin from your hat or lanyard and hold it in the palm of your hand.

*By directing the person's attention to your hand, you can limit background distractions as you go through the gospel using the Gospel Pin.

**Don't pull out a bag full of pins. This can be a distraction for a couple of reasons:

1. It can be perceived by the person you are engaged with that you are just a “Jesus salesman” and not being authentic.
2. Other people may see the large # of pins, interrupt your gospel conversation causing the person to become distracted, and may lead to greedy reactions.

Prepare for next gospel conversation

Once you have completed your conversation and gospel discussion and the person(s) have walked away, pull out a new pin to replace the one you have taken off your hat or lanyard.

Gospel Presentation

The IMB has produced three different pin designs for Paris 2024 pin trading evangelism. Each pin is designed with two ways you can share the gospel:

1. **The conversational approach:** Many Europeans are skeptical of being “preached” at. The idea is to enter the gospel presentation with more back-and-forth conversation to build some rapport. Each pin has an “I Am” statement connection image pointing towards Jesus. As it is a conversation starter, there is no one way to use this, but we will offer some tips on how to use these below.
2. **The Gospel Colors:** Each pin contains an ordered series of colors which can be used to present the gospel clearly and quickly. The “I Am” statements mentioned above can be quickly mentioned while the focus of the presentation remains on the colors. There are various versions of the gospel color sharing method. We have chosen one that aims at briefly summarizing the biblical narrative, beginning with creation first.

Follow-up

After completing each conversation consider praying for them and offering to exchange information as follows:

“It has been great talking with you, I’d love to stay in contact so that we can continue this conversation if you are willing. Can we exchange contact information?”

Use the “*Who Am I?*” follow up card to exchange information. Have your new friend fill out the first page with their information and feel free to offer your information as well.

Point out the QR code on the paper you leave with them and the NFC tag which they can tap with their phone to take them to the “Who Am I?” Gospel web site.

After saying goodbye be sure to jot a few notes about the person down on the half that you have kept. Also, note whether it was a green, yellow, or red conversation, indicating their receptivity to the gospel.

Green – Prayed with them to receive Christ.

Yellow – Open to continuing a conversation; interested.

Red – Somewhat or very closed to the gospel; not-interested.

Pins as an entry into the digital evangelism

We hope that your interactions with people you trade pins with are full of good gospel-centered conversations. While we pray and plan on this, we know that many interactions will be quicker or more superficial than you hope for. One thing we are excited to introduce in the Olympic pin-trading experience is the ability to give each person an entry point into the digital treasure chest of gospel resources, information, and ways to connect with trained biblical responders whenever and wherever they are ready to explore more.

There has been an entire digital strategy built to support and complement your “on the boots” efforts. When you link your new friend to the QR code on the “Who Am I?” follow-up card, you open the doors for them to return to the conversation later and even connect with live digital missionaries standing by to share the gospel.

These pins are more than just tiny-sized pieces of Olympic memorabilia. They are direct links, whether in-person or online, to eternal hope found only in the gospel!

What can be found on our “Who Am I?” digital platform?

- Bible Download
- Bible Reading Plan
- Full Gospel Presentation Page
- Real Responders in 16 languages ready to share truth
- Bible Story/Scripture Videos
- Bible Study Reading Material

Pin Scripts

I AM the Light



The Conversational Approach

1. In-road A:

The torch is often associated with the Olympics, but in fact there is something else that it represents. Can you read the phrase on this pin?

“I am the light”

Do you know where this phrase comes from/who first said this?

One can follow this conversation in many directions, one option is to share the Bible story of the adulterous woman which comes directly before Jesus stating that he is “the light of the world” (John 8:1-12), pointing out the darkness and condemnation of sin, while Jesus extends grace.

Point out man's sinfulness and share how Jesus showed us grace by offering his life and he stands as a light for us to pursue.

2. In-road B:

This pin connects to the theme of light and darkness. At any Olympic games there are great themes of light – nations coming together, perseverance, unity, etc... . But, there are also elements of darkness – self-centeredness, pride, greed, sex trafficking, etc.... In fact, there is light and darkness are themes throughout our entire world. Can you think of ways that darkness pervades in our world?

(conversation partner response with examples)

This is a great entrance into a three circles or other gospel conversation. The important thing is to mention how Jesus is the remedy to darkness as he says, "I am the light of the world".

The Gospel Colors Approach

This is a special pin that reminds us about Jesus and God's love for us.

See the torch - the torch reminds us that Jesus said "I am light of the world."

Each of the colors on the torch represent a part of the story of God's love for us.

Green - The green color reminds us of God's incredible creation.

God is perfect and He created man to be in a perfect relationship with Himself where they would experience the fullness of life as they learn about God, His holiness and His love.

Black – (DARK COLOR - avoid using the word "black" as it can be a barrier for some).

The dark color reminds us that we all have rebelled against God and His Holiness, rejecting His love. Our rebellion (which the Bible calls sin), caused our perfect relationship with God to be broken and has had an effect on every person and all of creation. Our rejection of God and His holiness has led us on a devastating and destructive path away from God's love and forgiveness.

Red – The red color reminds us of the blood of Jesus.

Because God loves us, He didn't want to leave us in our brokenness.

From the beginning, God created a way to restore the broken relationship with Himself through sacrifice.

Jesus lived a perfect life, He taught God's word, He had power over nature, He healed the sick and even raised the dead because He was God.

His blood was shed for you and I so that we can be restored to a relationship with God, becoming His friends and children of God.

The Bible tells us that "while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom 5:8)

Blue – The blue color reminds us that faith is a gift. Jesus' death was a gift, and through faith, we can receive God's forgiveness through the sacrifice He has made. A gift must be received, (EX: I am going to give you this pin, but it's not yours until you take it, receiving it for yourself)

therefore we must open our hearts to Christ receiving forgiveness of sins and allow him to restore our relationship with him. A gift is not a gift if we do something to earn it. In the same way, we cannot earn God's forgiveness and love. (Eph 2:8-9)

White – The white color reminds us that if we turn and follow Jesus we will receive God's forgiveness, being made pure, and get a fresh start with God. When we confess with our mouths and believe in our hearts that Jesus is Lord, the Bible promises that we will be saved and all of our sin is forgiven. (Rom 10:9-10)

Gold - the gold color reminds us of two things.

1. The best. Every athlete competing in the Olympics is going for the gold. Why? Because the gold medal represents the best. Jesus said "I have come that they may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). Jesus wants us to experience the best of this life. The best is not things, money, or fame, but the best life is a life lived with Jesus.

2. Eternal life. Not only does Jesus want us to experience the best in this life, but He wants us to experience eternal life. Jesus said that He was going to prepare a place for us, and He would come back to take us to be with Him forever. (John 14:3)

Closing Transition Questions

1, Everyone in the world is in one of two places - in darkness separated from God, His love, and His forgiveness **or** in the light of God's love through faith in His son, Jesus Christ.

2. Which place are you?

WAIT & PRAY

Sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit is critical at this point.

Don't push people to make decisions.

It's not decisions that we are seeking, but rather first steps in becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ.

A. If ready to turn and follow Jesus, lead them in a prayer of commitment.

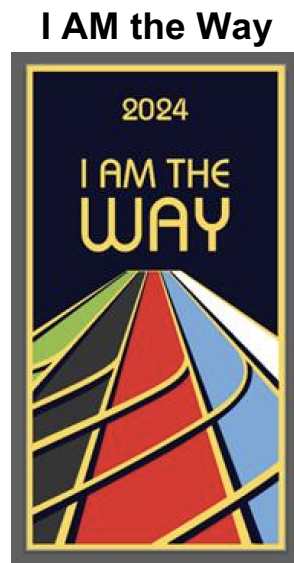
B. If they claim to be a follower of Jesus, ask them for details of when they first began following Jesus and what their relationship with Him looks like today.

C If not yet a follower and not yet ready to make a commitment, challenge them with the following:

Tonight when you are about to close your eyes and drift off to sleep, take a minute and talk to God. Talk to Him like He's really there and He's really listening, because He is. Tell Him about your encounter with me today and ask Him what you should do with the story you heard today. Then just listen. Don't be afraid to ask God to reveal Himself to you. Our encounter today is a part of His way of connecting to you.

D. Commit to pray for them, regardless of where they are with Jesus and exchange follow-up information cards.

E. Invite them to one of the events we are hosting during the week or to meet again for a meal or drink before you leave.



The Conversational Approach

1. In-road A:

The runners track (as pictured in this image) is a feature of the Olympic games. But there are only a few runners who make it this far. It's a tough road to get to the Olympic games! Do you see the phrase added above the track? Do you know where this phrase comes from?

The Bible?

That's right, it's a statement from the Bible! Jesus said these words, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." In a sense, we are all like Olympic runners. But, God designed us to run this life race towards Him. It's pretty easy to get off track. In fact, Jesus said, "broad is the way that leads to destruction... but narrow is the road that leads to life." (Matt 7:13-14)

This is a great start to sharing your own personal testimony and how Jesus led you down his path. You can ask them to share where they are at on their spiritual journey and conclude by sharing the clear gospel.

2. In-road B:

I love this pin because it shows a clear colored path through complete darkness. The path represents Jesus as "The way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). We live in a dark world full of problems. Do you see any conflict or problems in the world?

(conversation partner response with examples)

This is a great entrance into a three circles or other gospel conversation. The important thing is to mention how Jesus is the remedy to darkness as he says, "I am the way".

The Gospel Colors Approach

This is a special pin that reminds us about Jesus and God's love for us.

See the path - the path reminds us that Jesus said "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

Each of the colors on the track represent a part of the story of God's love for us.

Green - The green color reminds us of God's incredible creation.

God is perfect and He created man to be in a perfect relationship with Himself where they would experience the fullness of life as they learn about God, His holiness and His love.

Black – (DARK COLOR - avoid using the word "black" as it can be a barrier for some).

The dark color reminds us that we all have rebelled against God and His Holiness, rejecting His love. Our rebellion (which the Bible calls sin), caused our perfect relationship with God to be broken and has had an effect on every person and all of creation. Our rejection of God and His holiness has led us on a devastating and destructive path away from God's love and forgiveness.

Red – The red color reminds us of the blood of Jesus.

Because God loves us, He didn't want to leave us in our brokenness.

From the beginning, God created a way to restore the broken relationship with Himself through sacrifice.

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The Bible tells us that "while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom 5:8)

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I AM Vine



The Conversational Approach

1. In-road A:

This pin contains a laurel, the ancient Olympic victor's crown. This pin is special because it holds more significance than just simply an Olympic's prize. Can you guess what deeper meaning rests behind this laurel?

(Listen)

The phrase next to the laurel says, "I am the vine". This is a statement of Jesus. In the Bible Jesus says that he is like a vine and his people are like the little branches or leaves that come out of the main vine (John 15:5). Jesus was saying that by design humans were made for a connection to God, and that connection comes through Jesus himself. It is only through this connection that we are able to live for the true purpose God designed us for.

This is a great start to sharing your own personal testimony and how you have a deep vine connection to Jesus. You can ask them to share where they are at on their spiritual journey and conclude by sharing the clear gospel.

2. In-road B:

The laurel is a symbol of victory, a "gold metal" prize that every ancient Olympic strived after. However, this laurel has deeper meaning, it represents Jesus. Jesus said that he is the vine (John 15:5). He was pointing out how important it is to follow his ways to be a true victor in this life. The laurel is shining bright in gold against a stark black background representing the darkness and problems of this world. Do you see any major problems or darkness in this world?

(conversation partner response with examples)

This is a great entrance into a three circles or other gospel conversation. The important thing is to mention how Jesus is the remedy to darkness and true victory only comes through abiding in Him as he is the true vine.

The Gospel Colors Approach

This is a special pin that reminds us about Jesus and God's love for us.

See the vine - the vine reminds us that Jesus said "I am the vine, you are the branches, ...apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

Each of the colors on the laurel represent a part of the story of God's love for us.

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