



Key References:

Hebrews 12:1–13 (NIV)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

⁴In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. ⁵And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says

“My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, & do not lose heart when he rebukes you, ⁶ because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, & he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.”

⁷Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? ⁸If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. ⁹Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live!

¹⁰They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness.

¹¹No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

¹²Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms & weak knees. ¹³“Make level paths for your feet,” so that the lame may not be disabled but rather healed.

1 – Running your race

Read Hebrews 12:1-3. **What are the differences between throwing off “sin that entangles” and “everything that hinders”?**

What criteria should we use to find what is hindering us from living lives fully for Jesus? Do you find this hard or easy to define? How serious do we need to be?

Why is perseverance linked to fixing our eyes on Jesus? What happens when focussing on Jesus that prevents us from growing weary and loosing heart?

What does it mean that the race has been “*marked out for us*”? Why is it important for a Christian to know the purpose and goal of their life? Do you know what yours are?

Are there any areas of your life that you feel that you need to throw off better run God’s race today?

2 – Hardship produces discipline, which produces life

From verse 4 to 11 it then transitions into talking about hardship and discipline. **How do hardships fit into the race-running analogy?**

Verse 7 says; “*endure hardship as discipline*”. **What does that mean? How can hardships produce a mature & disciplined person?**

Does a loving parent discipline a child to punish wrongdoing or to train the child for a better future? How could you use this to help someone understand the kind of discipline found in v4-11?

Are you surprised to see that these verses link hardships to holiness, righteousness and peace? How does hardship produce those three things in our lives? Will they be produced if we take our eyes off of Jesus and what would be produced instead?

Are you experiencing any hardships currently? From reading verse 11 how might they be used to bring a harvest in your life?

Do you have any stories of God’s faithfulness through a trail in your life?