

Running the Race

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CELL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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READ | HEBREWS 12:1 – 2

The book of Hebrews was written primarily to Jewish believers who were on the verge of giving up their faith. To encourage them, in Hebrews 11 the writer reminds them of the faith stories of Old Testament saints who had gone before them. Coming to verses 1 – 2 of Chapter 12, we see the writer having reminded them of these great men and women of faith who had gone before them, now encourages the believers to:

Throw off

- Everything that hinders (everything that weighs us down)
- Sin that entangles
- Run the race with perseverance
- Fixing our eyes on Jesus

Likewise, we are running a race that requires endurance and perseverance. In order to go the distance, we can apply these lessons from Hebrews 12:1 – 2.

QUESTION 1 | WHAT'S WEIGHING YOU DOWN?

Some weights of life:

- **Bitterness**

- Joseph's life story – what helped him to be better instead of bitter was that he saw the hand of God in his circumstances.
- Romans 8:28 – in all things, God works for the good of those who love him!

- **Worry**

- Philippians 4:6 – Be anxious for nothing!
- 1 Peter 5:6-7 – There is a connection between humility and worry. Trusting God with a problem is humbling yourself. If we are worrying we are not trusting Him and that is idolatry and pride.

- **The Past**

- Laying aside the past is a decision we make. One of the marks of maturity is our ability to let go of the past.
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 – we are a new creation!
- Don't look back – if we keep looking back we cannot run into the future.

ASK

Do you struggle with any of the weights of life mentioned above? Share with one another any hindrances that are weighing you down. Looking to the word of God, how can we throw off these hindrances?

PRAY

Pray for each other for the necessary faith, courage, boldness, Christ-like mindset and discipline to throw off these weights that bog us down.

QUESTION 2 | WHAT ARE YOU TANGLED UP IN?

- Romans 14:23 – whatever is not of faith is sin.
- Sin will steal the grace we need to run the race. How can we deal with sin? We need to call it as it is. Jesus did 2 outstanding things for us: he lived a perfect life and he made a perfect atonement. His righteousness is ours.

ASK

When we sin, is our immediate response to run to God or to run from Him? We must recognize that we were crucified with Him, and His forgiveness of our sins frees us from guilt and shame.

PRAY

Pray for a greater revelation of the righteousness we have in Christ in our lives. It is when we truly understand we have been made righteous by God's work alone that we can truly live free!

QUESTION 3 | WHO ARE YOU LOOKING TO?

- As we run the race, Hebrews 12:2 says we are to “fix our eyes on Jesus...”
- Real strength to run this race comes from looking at Him. In order to look at Jesus, we have to take our eyes off ourselves. This requires a deliberate decision to lay ourselves aside.

ASK

What can we do to be intentional about fixing our eyes on Jesus? Rev Joe shared 3 practical handles: (1) Look to His word (2) By His spirit (3) With His people. Assessing yourselves using these 3 handles, how are you going about your journey of fixing your eyes on Jesus? What could you do better?

PRAY

The struggles we face tend to make us want to withdraw from each other but very often the tests and trials we face are designed to so show our dependence on Christ and on the Body of Christ. Take the opportunity to pray for each other that we would journey together and journey well in the course of fixing our eyes on Jesus as we run this race.