



## Message Series Guide

Nothing Greater

Part II – Running The Race

Hebrews 12:1-13

Many people have a difficult time understanding how to reconcile the idea of an all-powerful, loving God who allows suffering to go on in the world. Christians and Non-Christians alike, have struggled with this problem. Some have concluded that the fact that suffering exists is evidence that the kind of God the Bible describes simply doesn't exist. However, in Hebrews chapter 12 we see that God has good reasons for allowing suffering to continue. He is using suffering to draw sinners to himself and also refine his children. We also learn that God is not indifferent to our pain. He is actually so committed to making sure that none of our suffering is wasted, even the suffering we bring upon ourselves because of our foolishness, that he was willing to also suffer. Jesus endured the cross so that we could be redeemed and brought into the family of God. Because of the cross, we no longer relate to God as criminals to a judge, but rather as children to their father. As Christians we can know that every ounce of suffering we experience in this life has a purpose, and even if we never get to see what that purpose was in this life, we can trust the ultimate purpose is for our good and God's glory.

### QUESTION:

- What is the most memorable experience you have of getting in trouble as a kid?

### READ:

Hebrews 12:1-13

- What is the "therefore", in verse 1, there for?
- Explain the phrase "we have so great a cloud of witnesses." Who are they?
- What is the difference between an encumbrance and sin? What kinds of things could be encumbrances, but perhaps not sin?
- What do we learn in Job 42:7 and John 9:2-3 about suffering?
- What is the difference between discipline "paideia" and punishment "kolasis"? Is this difference important? Why?

### DISCUSS:

- Why does God discipline? What is the purpose? What does this teach us about the nature of discipline?
- When have you experienced God's discipline?
- How can we fix our eyes on Jesus? How can we help each other fix our eyes on Jesus?
- How does considering the persecution Jesus faced help us not to grow weary?

### PRAY:

Ask the Lord to help you see the deceitfulness of sin and the trustworthiness of the Savior. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you be excited to continually grow in understanding what it means to fix your eyes on Jesus.

### RESPOND:

What are some “encumbrances” in my life that are making it harder for me to cast off sin? What is something I can do daily to fix my eyes on Jesus?