

"Discipline"

- Opening Announcements
- Opening Prayer

Q: What are the benefits of discipline?

Q: What are the challenges?

Q: Are there areas of your life where you feel disciplined or undisciplined? How does it effect you?

Table Time...

READ: Hebrews 12:1-2 "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."

Q: What's the imagery of verse 1?

Q: In chapter 11, the writer gives many examples of people of faith and how God used their lives powerfully. Now, he switches focus to Jesus. According to verse 2, "who" does the writer say Jesus "is"?

Q: What did Jesus' "race" include?

Q: According to this section, what "hinders" US from our "race"?

Q: According to verse 1, what are we to do about that? And HOW?

READ: Hebrews 12:3- 11 "³ Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. ⁴ In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. ⁵ And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. ⁶ For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." ⁷ It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ⁸ If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. ⁹ Besides this, we have

had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? ¹⁰ For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. ¹¹ For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."

SIDE NOTE: The word "discipline" in the Greek is: **παιδεύω^a; παιδεία^a, ας** *f: to provide instruction, with the intent of forming proper habits of behavior—'to teach, to instruct, to train, teaching, instruction.*

Q: According to this section, how does God help us overcome "every sin and weight"?

Q: According to 5-7, what is God's motive in His discipline of us?

Q: According to verse 8, what does it mean if we don't experience the "discipline" of the Lord?

Q: According to verse 10, what is the "point" of God's discipline?

Q: According to verse 11, what is the reality and the promise? How have you seen that true in other areas of your life?

Big Group Debrief...

READ: Hebrews 12:12 -17: "Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, ¹³ and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. ¹⁴ Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵ See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; ¹⁶ that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. ¹⁷ For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears."

Q: According to these verses, "what" are we to do, focus on, discipline ourselves in?

Q: What is the "cautionary tale" of Esau?

Q: What's ONE spiritual discipline that you can engage in that will help you grow?

Q: How might you use the month of Advent to begin a new discipline?