

# PLAYING HURT

Leader Guide

Sermon Series:



Description of Series: A selective, expository series on how the church can be effective in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

When you're not the home team, you have to play the game differently.

Last Week: A Deep Bench (2 Timothy 3:12-4:8)

Today's Sermon:

## Playing Hurt

### Key Passage: 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

#### **How to use this leader guide**

This leader guide is to help you become more familiar with the sermon passage in preparation for your group discussion. I open this leader guide and follow along with the sermon which is a big help in driving the sermon deeper into my being. The answers below give you direction in the discussion, but not all the answers.

We want people to engage. That's why we created a separate participant's handout. It would be ideal if group members had the participant handout before the sermon. The first part of the participant's handout includes questions that follow along with the sermon. The second part focuses on group engagement: group discussion questions, applications, exercises, prayers, reflections, and/or a spiritual discipline to name a few.

**Icebreaker Question:** What do you think motivates an athlete to persevere even when hurt?

**Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.**

**Group Question:** What were some points from the sermon that made an impact or challenged you the most? What phrases, points, quotes or illustrations resonated with you and why?

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### I. God will humble us. (2 Corinthians 12:7-8)

**Group Question:** Share a time when God humbled you in your pride.

**Group Question:** There has been a wide variety of explanations as to what this “thorn in my flesh” actually is. Was it a temptation? Chronic sickness? Physical disability? Emotional distress? None can be too sure, but it is being characterized as “a messenger of Satan.” What does it reveal about the nature of this thorny hindrance, and God’s working. What principle can we develop from observing the oppositional forces of Satan and God at work? How does each have a different endgame? How do we see this dynamic taking place in the Old Testament in the life of Job?

*“Our suffering helps to build godly character.”*

*“Pain can be either constant or reoccurring.”*

**Group Question:** Reflect upon and share a time in your life when you encountered suffering, your so called “thorn of the flesh”. How was God working in your circumstances to build godly character. How did you see Satan working against you? What was your attitude like being in the middle of it? How and/or when were you able to realize God working through it? What did you learn, or are still learning, about that experience?

**Read Romans 5:1-5.**

**Group Question:** How would you explain this chain reaction of events, from one, to the next? Where does it begin (v. 1), how is it sustained (v. 5), how does one event flow into the other, and the end result?

**Group Question:** “As believers suffer, they develop steadfastness; that quality deepens their character; and a deepened, tested character results in hope (i.e., confidence) that God will see them through.” *Bible Knowledge Commentary, 456.* What suffering in your life has increased, or perhaps decreased, your confidence in God? Why?

**Group Question:** How does James 1:2-4 help us understanding Romans 5:1-5?

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### II. God will help us. (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)

**Group Question:** “Transformation happens best through adversity.” Agree? Disagree? Why?

**Group Question:** Paul writes, “I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” In today’s sermon, we find “God’s grace is both sufficient AND strengthening.” Yet, in our time of weakness and hardships, what is our natural tendency? Why? What should it be? What needs to change in your thinking to delight in your hardships and weaknesses?

*“Blessings come through transformation, not substitution.”*

**Read Hebrews 12:1-3. How was “throwing off the weight” described in today’s sermon?**

**Group Question:** What burden is weighing you down? What is keeping you from running freely? (sin, emotions, hurts from the past, anger, unresolved conflict, guilt, etc). How do those things distract you from keeping your eyes on Jesus? Discuss with your group how you can throw off the weight from what is entangling you.

This week’s sermon was packed with great bible verses worth saving to memory. They can be a source of encouragement when you encounter hardship. Choose one to commit to memory for this week.

- **2 Corinthians 12:9-10**
- **Romans 5:1-5**
- **James 1:2-4**
- **Hebrews 12:1-3**

**Next Week:** *Two Minute Warning* (1 Peter 4:1-11)

Interested in discussing the sermon as part of a group?  
Contact Adult Discipleship Pastor Jason Scott: [jscott@chapelrock.org](mailto:jscott@chapelrock.org).