

**Hebrews 12:1–2 (ESV)**

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, <sup>2</sup>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.

**How do I do this?****1. Consider Jesus (Hebrews 12:3–4)**

Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. <sup>4</sup>In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

**2. Embrace Discipline (Hebrews 12:5–11)**

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. <sup>6</sup>For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.” (*Proverbs 3:11-12*)

<sup>7</sup>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? <sup>8</sup>If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. <sup>9</sup>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? <sup>10</sup>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. <sup>11</sup>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.

**Romans 8:28 (NASB)** And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.

**3. Stop Whining (Hebrews 12:12–13)**

Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, <sup>13</sup>and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.

**4. Get Along with Others (Hebrews 12:14–17)**

Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. <sup>15</sup>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; <sup>16</sup>that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. <sup>17</sup>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.

**Two key things about unforgiveness:**

- 1. Unforgiveness will cost you your birthright—the fulfillment of the plan that God has for your life**
- 2. It will cost you in your other relationships because of the root of bitterness.**

**5. Keep the Long View in Mind (Hebrews 12:18–29)**

For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest <sup>19</sup>and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. <sup>20</sup>For they could not endure the order that was given, “If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.” <sup>21</sup>Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I tremble with fear.” <sup>22</sup>But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, <sup>23</sup>and to the **(church)** assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, <sup>24</sup>and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. <sup>25</sup>See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven. <sup>26</sup>At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.” <sup>27</sup>This phrase, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. <sup>28</sup>Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, <sup>29</sup>for our God is a consuming fire.

## Discussion/Study Questions

*These questions can be used for personal study and/or in a Small Group format. We'd love to hear how you are putting them to use, so let us know at [smallgroups@mannachurch.org](mailto:smallgroups@mannachurch.org).*

----- (optional) play sermon video -----

### Discuss and Apply

1. What has impacted you the most so far from this sermon series? Encouraged you? Challenged you?
2. When we keep our focus on Jesus, we are able to do things that we never thought we could. Have you seen this to be true in the lives around you?
3. "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." According to Hebrews 12:11, why is discipline so important in our walk with God?
4. We might not choose our circumstances, but we do choose our responses. What happens to our growth when we choose to complain? What about when we choose to praise God instead?
5. Hebrews 12:15 reminds us how important it is to keep ourselves from letting a "root of bitterness" spring up. What situations might tempt us to become bitter? How can we combat this temptation?
6. Our circumstances are not accidental; they're part of the integral role God has given us in His plan for the Kingdom. How can this knowledge affect our responses to challenges in our lives?

### Grow Together

After discussion, we encourage you to pray for one another. Prayer unifies you as a group, and there is power in agreement. If your group is larger than six people, you may want to split into smaller groups.

**Prayer Point:** "Lord, thank you that You always have our best interests at heart. Thank you for loving us in spite of the moments when we don't have faith enough to trust You. Help us to run our races this week joyfully and with endurance."

### Going Deeper

- This week, journal about ways you can practically live out Hebrews 12:1–2. What weights can you set aside this week? How can you run "with endurance"?