

Title: Faithracing // **Scripture:** Hebrews 12:1-29

ARRIVAL / SOCIAL TIME *15-20 minutes*

Spend the first 15 minutes or so of your time together catching up and socializing with one another. Also find time to catch up together on how the assignments from last week turned out.

SERMON REVIEW *5-10 minutes*

What is your metaphor for life? These metaphors guide our perspective for what we should expect about life. For Forest Gump, life was like a box of chocolates. For Doris Day, life was a bowl of cherries. All throughout the Bible we are given images for life. James tells us life is a vapor. In Hebrews 12 the author tells us that life is a race. And in this race, like every race, we should expect hardship. How we handle hardship tells us a lot about ourselves. The author invites us to run our race well enduring hardship through divine discipline and self-discipline, gaining perspective through Jesus who is both the author and perfecter of our faith, and by keeping our eyes on the finish line. In doing so, we join the great cloud of witnesses who have gone before us and are standing today to cheer us on.

THE MAIN THOUGHT *keep this in mind as you facilitate discussion*

Our perspective drives our perseverance.

SEE IT – Questions *10-15 minutes*

Picture (What is the story saying?): What is your metaphor for life? What metaphor for life does Hebrews 12 give us? (a race) What kinds of hardship does this passage say we will face in our faith race? How are we supposed to work through this hardship? (divine discipline, self-discipline) What does divine discipline look like? What does self-discipline look like?

Mirror (Where am I in the story?): What hardships are you facing right now? How are you facing these hardships? Describe ways you are tempted to handle hardship that might be less than what the author of Hebrews is calling us to. How can we draft off Jesus in our hardship? Use this week's Change UP exercise to explore this idea more.

Window (How does the story change how I see those around me?): How might living your life as if there is "a great cloud of witnesses" watching you change the way you think about hardship in your life? How does the grace of running to Zion trump the judgment of running to Sinai? Which Bible character's story in Hebrews 11 inspires you the most in your own hardship right now? Why? Which person of faith in your own life that has gone before you inspires you most right now in your own hardship? Why?

BE IT – Practice

Change UP // Draft Day *15 minutes*

Part of running a race is knowing how to draft off the person in front of you. This week Jon challenged us to "draft off Jesus," the author and perfecter of our faith. Take some time with your group to practice drafting off Jesus. Make a list of hardships that your group is going through. Then make a list of hardships that Jesus went through. Talk with your group about how we can draft off Jesus in our hardships by looking at how Jesus handled hardship. Invite your group to reflect on what Jesus offers us in his hardship that we can hold onto in our own hardships.

Change IN // Thanksgiving Day *5 minutes*

Next week, all over our country, we will celebrate Thanksgiving. Let's start our practice of giving thanks early by naming some things that we are thankful for. Then hand out thank you cards to your group. Invite them to write a thank you message to someone in their life. Invite your group to celebrate Thanksgiving early by delivering their cards this week.

Change OUT // Race Day *5 minutes*

Part of every great race is the crowd of people who cheer the racers on. In Hebrews 12, we are told that we are surrounded by a "great cloud of witnesses" who are cheering us on in our life race. These are saints of the past who have gone before us and now cheer for us to run our portion of this great relay. But the truth is we don't have to wait until our race is over to cheer others on in their race. Choose one person this week that you can encourage in their life race and make time to cheer them on.

CLOSING PRAYER *5 minutes*

Take a few minutes to gather any prayer requests and pray for each other to SEE IT and BE IT this week.