



Finish the Race

Week of August 14, 2016

These discussion questions can be used the week following the message. You can use these questions for personal growth and development, or as a guide for your Connect Group discussions.

Message Recap:

Read Hebrews 12:1-2

Before every single one of us there lies a race. It is a race that God has given to each of us. While our paths may intersect with many others across the span of this race, it is still ours alone and it is up to us to finish it. The good news is that, while we must finish it ourselves, we don't have to run it without help. Many people have come before us and have run their races, some even similar to our own. Many are running around us right now, and many more will follow. And best yet, God is always with us. He has given us everything we need to finish it. All we have to do is shed the things that slow us down, and avoid the things that could potentially trip us up.

Pray

Lord, give us the strength and perseverance to run the race that you've given us. Help us not be weighed down by the things that we know hold us back. Help us shed that weight, keep our heads up and our eyes forward, and help us run as hard as we can 'til it's finally over. Thank you for being there for us, and thank you for giving us reminders of all those who've come before us. Even though we may stumble along the way, give us the courage to keep getting back up no matter what.

Getting Started

- What was a sport that you used to play, perhaps in high school or college? If you didn't play sports, talk about something else you liked to do competitively?
- What was it that motivated you to do that activity?

Listening Deeply

1. What do you think the race you're running is? Do you have a clear picture of what God has called you to do? If you're not sure what it is yet, reflect on your gifts and talents. How might God use them to bring glory to his kingdom?
2. What is it that keeps you from participating in your race? What slows you down or trips you up?
3. Do you have any cheerleaders (besides God)?
4. Who are you cheering on as they run their race?
5. Are there any particular verses, phrases, or ideas that motivate you in your race?
6. How could your Connect Group help cheer you on or help you with the things that might be tripping you up?

Living Wide in Jesus

Jesus, while dying on a cross, gave the thieves next to him the option of finishing their races side by side with him. While they were taking their last breaths, Jesus was there alongside them, just like he's with us now. All you have to do is accept his offer of forgiveness, and do whatever you can to run until you can no longer. Have faith and trust in the Lord. He will lead you on your journey...

- **Remember:** You are not the first, nor the last. Take comfort in the fact that God has sent others ahead of you. Just as they have finished their races, so you too can finish yours!
- **Reflect:** God knows your race; every twist and turn. He has prepared you for them, and he has given you the strength to get past all that which hinders you!
- **Take heart:** More than anything, know that the Holy Spirit will always be with you. Even when you feel your strength failing, know that he will lift you up and cheer you on until the very end!