

# THE BOOK OF HEBREWS



## 14. A Call to Persevere

*(Leader's Copy)*

### Introduction

When major sporting events take place, like the Olympic Games, thousands attend the event, but millions of others around the world are watching on television. The Christian life is like a sporting event. This is the picture painted for us in Hebrews 12.

### Scripture Reading:        **Hebrews 12:1-13**

- ❖ Who are the witnesses that are referred to in verse 1? How do these witnesses encourage us?  
*(The witnesses are those men and women of faith mentioned in chapter 11. They encourage us as they have already gone through the difficulties we are facing and finished the race. They have received their reward and are assuring us that it is worthwhile to persevere.)*
- ❖ What three things are we urged to do in verses 1 and 2?
  - i.        *Throw off everything that hinders us and the sin that entangles us.*
  - ii.       *Run the race with perseverance.*
  - iii.      *Fix our eyes on Jesus.)*

**Share**

What are some of the things in your life that hinder you from running the race? How can you 'throw them off'?

- ❖ List the things revealed about Jesus in verses 2 to 4.
  - i.        *He is the author and perfecter of our faith.*
  - ii.       *He endured the cross and opposition from sinful men.*
  - iii.      *He now sits at the right hand of the Father.)*
- ❖ How can these truths about Jesus help us to persevere in our Christian life? Can you share an experience when you have been strengthened by remembering what Jesus did for you?
  - i.        *As we realize that Jesus is the author and perfecter of our faith, we will have the assurance that he will complete the work he has begun in our lives.*
  - ii.       *As we see the suffering of Jesus it will give us courage when we face suffering.*
  - iii.      *As we understand how he persevered, because he saw beyond the present, it will strengthen us to hold on, knowing that we too will receive a reward.)*

The author of the book of Hebrews has been encouraging us not to give up our faith. He reminds us to look at the example of Jesus, who did not give up in the face of great suffering. Then he goes on to show that we should expect difficulties in our lives because God allows these to discipline us.

- ❖ Why should God's discipline be an encouragement to us and why does God discipline us? V5-8, 10-11  
*(We should be encouraged because he only disciplines those he loves and accepts as sons. If we were not disciplined, then we would be like illegitimate sons. The reason he disciplines us is for our good,*

*so that we may share his holiness and a harvest of righteousness and peace will be produced in our lives.)*

**Discuss**

In what ways does God discipline his children? V7. Also see 1 Corinthians 11:30-32, Deuteronomy 8:3-5. Can you think of a time in your life when God has disciplined you?

- ❖ How should we respond to God's discipline? V7, 9, 12, 13

*(We should endure it! We are to submit to the Lord in that discipline and draw on his strength to see us through. It is important that we are careful to respond rightly to the Lord, so we do not hinder those who are weaker than us. As we do this God will work in our lives to make us more like Jesus.)*

### Conclusion

Probably many of us have experienced discipline from our earthly fathers as we were growing up. It probably wasn't a pleasant experience, although most fathers were trying their best to teach us the right way. As it says in v10 they did as 'they thought best'. There may be some who feel their fathers were unfair and mean, but as we look at our Heavenly Father we can be sure that he truly disciplines us for our good.

God's desire is that we become like Jesus. There is a crowd of witnesses cheering us on, urging us not to give up, but to persevere and let nothing hinder us. It will be worthwhile, there is a great reward ahead. "Keep going," they shout!