

INTRO

- What's the longest distance you've ever run?

Faith is fundamental to following Jesus. This series explores faith as a journey and how our faith, like a muscle, can and must be exercised to grow and strengthen.

READ

Heb 12:1-3

REFLECT & RESPOND

Several passages in the NT refer to the Christian life as an athletic contest. The race image in vv1-3 provides a helpful metaphor for the journey of faith, offering at least three key ideas that overlap.

Lay Aside Everything

Let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely...

Sin seems an obvious hindrance, but some things (even good things) in life must also be rejected to run effectively.

Qu: what kind of "weight" in our lives could hinder our faith? What good things could slow us down in pursuing Jesus?

Run With Endurance

Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us...

The race in mind here is a marathon, not a sprint. Expectation and preparation are key. We should expect a marathon to be difficult and challenging, but with good preparation, we can endure.

In fact, running, like exercise, is resistance to the body; we need resistance for health and strength. The same is true in our spiritual race.

Qu: in what way/s do our expectations impact how we deal with hardships and challenges in life and in our faith? How does Scripture help give us the right expectation particularly of hardships?

Looking To Jesus

Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith...

Like a long-distance run, the Christian life requires sustained effort. How do we sustain our effort? By fixing our eyes on Jesus.

Jesus is our reference point when the race gets tough, or we get discouraged, helping us see beyond the immediate. He is our example of faithfulness, too, having run his race well. And he is perfecting our faith, sustaining us throughout (Phil 1:6). Therefore, cultivating our relationship with Christ is critical to faithful living for God.

Qu: Like in a marathon, we need the right "fuel" to give us energy to keep going. What fuels your relationship with Christ?

The journey of faith is like a marathon. We can run our race well as we lay aside everything that hinders us and fix our eyes on Jesus, our example and sustainer

RESPOND & PRAY

- For any particular needs that arose through the discussion
- For our expectations of life to be biblically realistic
- For increased stamina in our journey of faith