

Disciplined Perseverance – Growth Group Study
Hebrews 12.1-12 – John Malcolm
12 July

Have you ever competed in any activity that required endurance – if so, tell the group about it and describe how you prepared for it?

Read Hebrews 12.1-2

Jesus is the pioneer (the first) and he is the perfecter (the finisher).

What do you think it means that Jesus has marked the race out for us?

Do you think of these markers as a series of life events (what God wants us to do) or as godly characteristics (the person God wants us to be)?

How do you recognise a “life event” marker or a “character” marker that has been left for you by Jesus?

What do you do to “fix” your eyes on Jesus? How would you explain this to a person who was new to Christianity?

Hebrews suggests we should throw off hinderances and sin that entangles – what do you think is meant by this and how do you do this?

Read 2 Corinthians 3:18

In the Sunday sermon it was said, *God loves me as I am, but he does not leave me that way!*

If God loves us, why do you think he seeks to change/transform us?

Read Isaiah 53:5 & Colossians 2.13-14

Sometimes we think of discipline as punishment. What do these verses teach us about punishment for sin?

Why is there no longer any reason for God to punish us?

Read 2 Timothy 3:16 & Hebrews 12:7

For you, does the idea of discipline normally have a positive or negative connotation?

(Note the word in Timothy translated “training” is the same word used in Hebrews which is translated as “discipline”).

Considering the previous readings (Isa 53 & Col 2), why should we not think of God disciplining us as punishment?

Name some positive disciplines you have found helpful in life. (Perhaps think of the discipline needed to succeed in study, sport, music or your work)

Read Hebrews 12.7-8

What does the presence of God’s discipline teach us about our relationship with him?

At times our human experience of discipline is skewed by human weakness (anger or frustration) but seen at its best, how is discipline a sign of love.

How is God’s relationship with us like a parent at their child’s sports day or like the coach of a team?

How do you think God disciplines (trains) us to be more loving, kind, generous?

For reflection

Is there an aspect of your character you could ask God to help you to “throw off” or to develop?