

## Connection Group Discussion Questions

For the week of April 3, 2016

Hebrews 12:1-3

*These questions are to be used as a spring board for discussion.*

*Answers may or may not be found in the sermons.*

### **New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)**

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

<sup>3</sup> Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart.

### **Common English Bible (CEB)**

*So then let's also run the race that is laid out in front of us, since we have such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us. Let's throw off any extra baggage, get rid of the sin that trips us up, <sup>2</sup> and fix our eyes on Jesus, faith's pioneer and perfecter. He endured the cross, ignoring the shame, for the sake of the joy that was laid out in front of him, and sat down at the right side of God's throne.*

*<sup>3</sup> Think about the one who endured such opposition from sinners so that you won't be discouraged and you won't give up.*

### **Connection Questions:**

1. Talk about the differences you see in people who have a casual approach to their faith verses those you think are spiritually mature.

2. People who try to be physically healthy generally develop a plan. What would a healthy plan toward your faith look like?
  
3. Is it unreasonable for a person to have as a spiritual goal to participate in some type of spiritual discipline for one hour each day? Why or why not?
  
4. How does being spiritually mature assist you in living a healthier life?
  
5. Tim Rainer researched attendance patterns of those who attended worship services on a weekly basis. What he discovered was after 5 years if people were only attending worship services with no other connection to church 83% of those responding no longer attended church. What possible conclusions can we derive from his research?
  
6. Church consultants often look at a church's average attendance in worship as the best indicator of a church's strength. Do you agree with that perspective? If not, what would be the best indicator to discern that a church is vibrant and growing?

7. Paul in our text indicates perseverance as a factor in a mature relationship with God. Discuss what you think he means.
  
8. Paul also in our text describes a mature relationship with God to running a race. Discuss what you think he means with the analogy.
  
9. Paul also says stay focused on Jesus as the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. Discuss what you think he means.
  
10. Prayer is a key ingredient in our faith journey. Do you agree with this statement? Discuss ways in which a deeper emphasis on prayer could assist us personally and the church as a whole.