



Teacher's Toolbox

*Getting your class into God's Word
and God's Word into your class*

ExcitingBibleStudy.com

Bible Series

Hebrews 12:1-13

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HOW TO USE TEACHER'S TOOLBOX: Make a four-page folded teacher's leaflet from the first two sheets by printing two-sided (or by putting the blank sides together). The other two sheets are for duplicating, displaying, distributing, or otherwise using as called for in the lesson plan.

Getting Started

Looking at a picture

- Display the photograph on page 4.
- This is a photograph of a crowd in a stadium ready to watch a race at an Olympics. **Would you rather be on the track or in the stands? Why?** Wait for responses. **Why do so many come to sit in the stands?** Wait for responses. **What effect do the spectators have upon the athletes?** Wait for responses. **What effect do the athletes have upon the spectators?** Wait for responses.
- **The writer of Hebrews had a scene something like this in mind when he wrote the section we are studying today. He pictured the Christian as an athlete surrounded by a crowd of onlookers; he urged us to keep our eyes on Jesus and run the race well.**
- Ask someone to lead the class in prayer as you begin this study.

Exploring God's Word

Thought questions

- Have someone read aloud Hebrews 12:1-4.

● Use these thought questions to stimulate discussion.

- What is the "great cloud of witnesses" that surrounds us?
- What are some things that hinder and entangle us that we should "throw off"?
- What is "the race marked out for us"?
- Since a runner usually focuses on the finish line, why does this passage tell us to "fix our eyes on Jesus"?
- How does Jesus' example keep us from "growing weary" and "losing heart" as we live our lives?

Defining hardship and discipline

● **Hebrews 12:5-13 talks about the relationship between hardship and discipline.** Write those two words on the chalkboard, hardship and discipline.

● **What is hardship?** Wait for responses. Members may suggest that a hardship is any situation or circumstance that is difficult to bear, that creates pain or suffering.

● **What is discipline?** Wait for responses. Remind learners that discipline, from the same root as "disciple," is more about training than about punishment. Any punishment involved is simply a tool to help a person develop self-control.

● **How could hardships and discipline be related?** Wait for responses. Point out that we often learn a great deal from the hardships we experience.

● **What have you learned from hardships you have experienced in the past?** Wait for responses.

● **Let's see what the Bible says about hardships and discipline.** Have someone read aloud Hebrews 12:5-13.

● **How has God used hardships to discipline you and make you stronger as a believer?** Wait for responses.

● **Recognizing that God is a loving father makes His discipline of us not only bearable but welcome. This is an attitude that will help us in the hardships we face. Knowing that God loves us can help us endure any hardship that comes our way.**

Small group work

● Have members get into groups of three to five persons. Ask them to study together Hebrews 12:14-29 and discuss what the passage says about:

- (1) What are the things Christians ought to do and not do?
- (2) What motivates Christians to live as we should?

● After ten minutes, call for reports.

Making It Personal

Skit

● In advance, enlist two persons to prepare and present the skit on Item 2. If they are willing, have them do it in costume (running clothes and tennis shoes).

Planning to run a race

● Give each person a pencil and a copy of the following (duplicate Item 1).

Running the Race

Hebrews 12:1-3 compares living the Christian life to running a race. Review those verses and then answer these questions as a fellow-runner in the race.

1. Look at the "great cloud of witnesses" composed of those who have already successfully completed the race. List three persons you think are especially interested in watching you run.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

2. What do you need to "throw off" that might hinder or entangle you?

Wrapping It Up

● **As believers, we can endure hardships by looking to Jesus as our example of endurance. If we will prepare adequately for the race ahead of us and remain true to the calling, we can be successful in our Christian lives.**

● Ask for three volunteers to lead the class in prayer.

- a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
3. What training have you already had that will help you complete the race?
- a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
4. What techniques will help you to persevere to the end of the race?
- a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
5. What statements will you repeat to yourself as you run?
- a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
6. What motivates you most to complete the race?
- a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

● Allow five minutes for members to complete their sheets. Then have them form clusters of three to five persons to share some insights they gained while doing the activity.

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c. _____

6. What motivates you most to complete the race?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Skit

"B" is doing stretching exercises to warm up for the big race as "A" jogs onto stage.

A: (Breathing hard) Hello, hello! Ready for the big race?

B: Getting there. What about you?

A: Me? Oh, I've been ready. Can't wait to hear the bang of the starting pistol. Say, what's the matter? You look kind of down.

B: I guess I'm a little scared.

A: Scared? Of what?

B: This race. It's pretty important and, well, I just don't know how well I'll do. Sometimes I think I might just back out at the last minute.

A: Don't you dare! You would regret it for the rest of your life. And, besides, I know you'll do well, with all those people rooting for you.

B: All what people?

A: (Pauses) Are you serious? You haven't seen them? (Makes broad sweep of his arm around the room) All those people!

B: (Surprised, seeing the crowds for the first time) Wow! Where did they come from?

A: Those are all the people who have run the race before and completed it successfully.

B: You've got to be kidding! That many?

A: Yes, and even more. I bet half of them are in the restrooms or concession stands.

B: I had no idea so many had run the race. Or that they would be here to watch us.

A: They watch every race that is run.

B: That makes me feel a lot better. But, have you seen how long this track is? It seems to go on forever.

A: Well, the race is not a sprint, you know. It's more like a marathon.

B: Is that the finish line way down there?

A: Yes. Can you really see that far?

B: Barely. But I'm not sure I can run that far. Who is that standing at the finish line in the middle of the track?

A: Well, I can't see that far, but if He's at the finish line, it must be Jesus. Just keep your eyes fixed on Him and you'll make it to the end of the race.