

# THE WHOLE STORY

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From Genesis to Revelation

**Hebrews 12:1-17**

***Introduction:***

This passage addresses how a Christian is to battle sin in their lives today and press on tomorrow. In order to race forward as followers of Jesus today and tomorrow one must be a part of the community of Christians, the church, while looking to Jesus the ultimate savior.

One of the big issues of the first-century Christians would have been the persecution that they were suffering. They had to wrestle between Jesus and his kingdom being more important than their day-to-day quality of life, which was impacted because of anti-Christian persecution. The writer of Hebrews encourages the church on this topic by reminding them that God is a loving, caring father, who oversees every inch and second of our lives. He does this through emphasizing the importance of God's fatherly discipline.

***This Week's Main Point:***

***God corrects and changes us in order to create dependence on Him and prepare us for what's coming in the future.***

A child who never learns through either discipline or hardship will miss out on many social and behavior skills that are necessary to thrive in their future. God loves Christians, his children, and desires to see us learn to depend on him through both discipline and hardship.

God disciplines us to show us his love, to show us that we are his true sons and daughters, for our good and to make us holy as he is. We should not make light of God's discipline or lose heart in the midst of it. In order to not take a view that discipline and hardships are nothing or that they should weigh us down we need the perspective and love of the community of believers around us in the church. We are to process God's correction with others.

When we are trained by God's discipline, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace in us - it helps us to live lives that are pleasing to God, and it enables us to live without anxiety and fear because we have been trained to trust our heavenly father for everything.

***Sermon Response Question:***

1) Share one specific story from your childhood when you were disciplined and it helped you grow or change.

***Bible Study Questions:***

2) Why does God discipline Christians? Find four reasons in verses 4-11.

3) What does this passage say will help us “run the race” of the Christian life? Discuss what each instruction will mean in practice.

4) List the commands in verses 12-17 and discuss what each means in practice.

5) As a Christian community, what must happen to ensure that no one misses the grace of God?

6) What is the difference between discipline and punishment? Why is it important to recognize the difference?

***Group Application Questions:***

7) One of the reasons for the Lord’s discipline is to create dependence on him. Is recognizing your dependence on God difficult for you? Why or why not?

8) What are the other two to three things you are most prone to depend on instead of God? How have you seen God use discipline to remind you that you are dependent on him?

***Prayer: Read Hebrews 13:20-21***

- Take turns having your group turn each phrase into prayers of praise, thanksgiving, confession and request for yourselves and others.