

Growth Group Guide

Topic: The Backpack Gospel – Hebrews 12:1–2

Opening Question:

What is something in your life right now that feels like extra weight, something slowing you down in following Jesus?

Key Scripture:

- Hebrews 12:1–2 (CSB): Therefore, since we also have such a large cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us lay aside every hindrance and the sin that so easily ensnares us. Let us run with endurance the race that lies before us, keeping our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. For the joy that lay before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
- Luke 10:41–42 (CSB): The Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has made the right choice, and it will not be taken away from her.'
- 1 Corinthians 10:23 (CSB): Everything is permissible, but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible, but not everything builds up.
- Psalm 32:1–5 (CSB): How joyful is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered! How joyful is a person whom the LORD does not charge with iniquity and in whose spirit is no deceit! When I kept silent, my bones became brittle from my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was drained as in the summer's heat. Selah. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not conceal my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,' and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah.
- John 14:6 (CSB): Jesus told him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 (CSB): Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!

Main Points:

- I. We run better when we drop the weight and fix our eyes on Jesus.
Hebrews 12 calls us to lay aside both sin and hindrances that slow us down.
- II. Hindrances are not always sinful.
They may be good things that still drain energy, distract focus, or limit obedience.

III. God calls us to endurance, not perfection.

Following Jesus is a long obedience in the same direction.

IV. Jesus is both the Pioneer and the Perfector of our faith.

He endured the cross so that we could run free and unburdened.

V. Where we fix our eyes determines where we go.

When we focus on Jesus, we run with hope, power, and purpose.

Discussion Questions:

1. Scripture Understanding Question:

Read Hebrews 12:1–2. What is the difference between 'sin' and 'hindrances'? Why do we need to lay both aside?

2. Group Reflection Question:

How have you seen the principle 'where you look is where you go' play out in your spiritual life?

3. Personal Application Question:

What burdens or distractions are you carrying right now that God may be asking you to lay aside?

4. Practical Implementation Question:

What is one practical step you can take this week to fix your eyes more fully on Jesus?

5. Challenge/Growth Question:

Where is God calling you to run with endurance instead of speed or perfection?

Key Takeaways:

1. Sin entangles us, but distractions can trip us up too.

2. Hindrances may not be sinful but can still slow us down spiritually.

3. Endurance is about daily faithfulness, not instant results.

4. Jesus has already run the race before us—He knows the way because He is the way.

5. Fixing our eyes on Jesus keeps us moving toward Him with hope and purpose.

Next Steps:

****This week, join us in prayer:****

Ask God to reveal what you've picked up that is slowing you down from pursuing Him. Pray for strength to lay it aside and for focus to fix your eyes on Jesus.

Individual: Identify one sin or hindrance you need to lay aside this week. Take a step toward removing it from your life.

Accountability: Share with a group member what you are laying aside and ask them to check in with you about it.

Scripture: Memorize Hebrews 12:2 (CSB): 'keeping our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. For the joy that lay before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.'

LIVE SENT: Encourage someone who is weary in their spiritual race. Share Hebrews 12:1–2 with them and pray together.