

Scripture Passage: Hebrews 12:1-3

Memory Verse: Hebrews 12:1-2

Theme Song: Finish the Race

Big Idea: We can follow Jesus when we keep our eyes on him.

## READ

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Read Hebrews 12:1-3 aloud to your family. If your kids can read, consider having one of them read or letting them take turns reading.

### Hebrews 12:1-3

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, <sup>2</sup> fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup> Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

## SING

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Play “Finish the Race” from the *Doorpost Songs: This Is Love* album and sing together. If you have small children, find a toy instrument and let them bang away! If needed, print copies of the lyric sheet for your family.

## MEMORIZE

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Pick a section of the verses to memorize as a family. Use the suggestions below or choose your own. Use the long version for older children and the short version for preschoolers.

### Long Version (Hebrews 12:1-2)

Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.

### Short Version (Hebrews 12:1)

Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

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## **LEARN**

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Read the Big Idea and short devotional aloud to your family. If you have time, use the discussion questions at the end of the devotional.

### **What's the Big Idea?**

We can follow Jesus when we keep our eyes on him.

### **Family Devotional**

Have you ever run a race? Not a short sprint, a long race. Or maybe you know someone who runs long races like a marathon. (That's a really long race!)

If you've ever run a race you know that running is not easy. It takes a lot of energy, a lot of strength. It takes commitment to finish. It takes discipline and training so that our bodies can handle running for so long. And most runners know that there is a point during a long race when you feel like quitting. That's when runners need perseverance. Perseverance means not giving up, even when you've given every ounce of energy and strength you have and it would be easier to just stop running.

The Bible compares following Jesus to a race. It takes energy and strength. It takes a commitment to follow him. We train ourselves to follow him by reading the Bible, praying and worshipping together. And still there are moments when we have used up all of our strength and energy and we're just not sure we're going to be able to finish. We need perseverance to keep following Jesus.

In those moments, the Bible tells us to "fix our eyes on Jesus." That means to look at him and not look away. You see, Jesus had a hard race to run, too. His race led him to a cross, where he died for each one of us. But Jesus finished his race as a winner. He endured the cross and then rose from the dead victorious.

And you and I can finish as winners, too. If we fix our eyes on Jesus, he can give us strength so we don't grow weary and tired. He can give us hope so that we don't get discouraged and lose heart. When you're not sure if you have any energy or strength left, Jesus can help you persevere and finish the race!

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## **TALK**

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Talk about what you have learned as a family. Use the questions below or ask some of your own.

1. How is following Jesus like a race?
2. What is “perseverance”?
3. What is something difficult you are facing now? How can you persevere in that situation?
4. How can fixing our eyes on Jesus help us to persevere?

## **PRAY**

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Pray together. Here are some ideas:

- Thank Jesus for enduring the cross and finishing his race.
- Pray for a difficult situation that you or your family are facing. Ask God to give you perseverance.
- Ask God to help you and your family fix your eyes on Jesus.