

HEBREWS: Better Than – Living the Upgrade!

Message: BETTER RACE

Heritage Church, Van Buren, AR – March 08, 2026

Text: Hebrews 12:1-17

BIG Idea:

You can ENDURE life's challenges by FOCUSING on Jesus and understanding that God DISCIPLINES you because He loves you.

HOW DO YOU RUN THE RACE OF FAITH WELL?

1. RUN WITH FOCUS — Fix Your Eyes on Jesus

Hebrews 12:1-3 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, ² 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. ³ For consider him who **endured** such hostility from sinners against himself, so that you **won't grow weary and give up.***

2: RUN THROUGH SUFFERING

— God Disciplines Those He Loves

Hebrews 12:4–11 CSB ⁴ *In struggling against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. ⁵ And you have forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons:*

My son, do not take the Lord's discipline lightly or lose heart when you are reprovved by him, ⁶ for the Lord disciplines the one he loves

and punishes every son he receives. (Proverbs 3:11-12)

⁷ *Endure suffering as discipline: God is dealing with you as sons. For what son is there that a father does not discipline?* ⁸ *But if you are*

without discipline—which all receive—then you are illegitimate children and not sons. ⁹ Furthermore, we had human fathers discipline us, and we respected them. Shouldn't we submit even more to the Father of spirits and live? ¹⁰ For they disciplined us for a short time based on what seemed good to them, but he does it for our benefit, so that we can share his holiness. ¹¹ No discipline seems enjoyable at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

3: RUN WITH OTHERS IN MIND

A. Strengthen the Weak

Hebrews 12:12–14 CSB ¹² *Therefore, **strengthen** your tired hands and weakened knees, ¹³ and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated but **healed** instead.*

¹⁴ ***Pursue peace** with everyone, and **holiness—without it no one will see the Lord.***

B. Guard Against Bitterness

Hebrews 12:15-17 ¹⁵ *Make sure that **no one falls short of the grace of God** and that **no root of bitterness** springs up, causing trouble and defiling many. ¹⁶ And make sure that there isn't any immoral or irreverent person like **Esau**, who sold his birthright in exchange for a single meal. ¹⁷ For you know that later, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, even though he sought it with **tears**, because he didn't find any opportunity for **repentance.***

NEXT STEP: RUN to JESUS!