

## **Introduction**

Our spiritual lives can be frustrating. It seems as though no matter how hard we try the same old sins trip us. We ask God to forgive us. We promise never to fail him only to fall flat on our faces in the same pile of feces. The sin that trips you up is probably different from what shackles your best friend. We're all unique with individual weaknesses and tendencies.

## **Addresses our problem**

Hebrews 12:1-15 NLT

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne. Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won't become weary and give up. After all, you have not yet given your lives in your struggle against sin. And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said, "My child, don't make light of the LORD's discipline, and don't give up when he corrects you. For the LORD disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child." As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children at all. Since we respected our earthly fathers who disciplined us, shouldn't we submit even more to the discipline of the Father of our spirits, and live forever? For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God's discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness. No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way. So take a new grip with your tired hands and strengthen your weak knees. Mark out a straight path for your feet so that those who are weak and lame will not fall but become strong. Work at living in peace with everyone, and work at living a holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord. Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many.

## **Sermon in a Sentence**

God's grace frees us to sprint without shackles as we keep stride with Jesus.

## **How?**

How can I believe that? I've failed so many times. How can I ever expect to be free from this sin that shackles me?

## **God commands it**

Three aspects of sin: the Capacity to sin; the Inclination to sin; the Practice of sin

## **Power Source**

The power to break free comes from Jesus. Radio receivers

## **Run with Jesus and learn obedience**

HABIT TRACK A description of how a “slave of sin” becomes a “slave of righteousness” establishing a new habit of obedience

### **New Point of View**

Too many followers of Jesus live defeated lives. They struggle to resist persistent temptations expecting to fail every time. But we can strip off the shackles of sin because God’s grace is powerful enough to set us free not just to forgive us.

### **First Steps**

1. Predetermine my pattern of temptation.
2. Plan to avoid it.
3. Protect the condition of your heart.
4. Pray for God’s help.
5. Pick an accountability partner.
6. Persist in believing you can change.

### **So what?**

So what lifelong habit would you like to be released from? Have you been stuck in this cycle of good intention – I want to change – you make the effort – you fail and then you feel guilty. Good intention, effort, fail, feel guilty. The Holy Spirit can break those chains and set you free to sprint without shackles. Are you ready? Are you ready for freedom now?