

The Light - Junior Series
Lesson 64

The Race



2012

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

If YOU have never believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, you have the opportunity to do so right NOW. Simply tell God the Father that you believe in His Son, Jesus Christ, who loved us so much that He came down from heaven and became a man to take our place and pay for the penalty for all the sin of all mankind. Jesus, the Savior died on the Cross for your sins and the sins of the whole world. Then Jesus was buried but He rose again and He is alive today seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven. When you make the decision to believe in Jesus in simple faith based on His work on the Cross, you are now a believer and will always be a child of God. When you die, you will spend eternity with Him in Heaven. *(Acts 16:31) "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."* *(John 3:16) "God loved the world so much that He gave is One and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."*



Lesson

1 Cor 9:24 "Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? (So) Run in such a way as to get the prize."

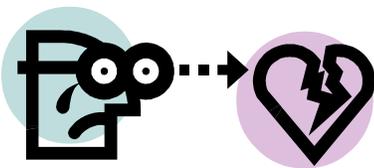


The Father's plan for our life is called a "race to run" in the Bible. Along the path of that race, the Father allows hurdles to be put in our path. There are hurdles of suffering and hurdles of lust or pleasure. God's great desire is that we jump over each and every one of the hurdles placed in our path by believing His promises about what awaits on the other side of the hurdles and using the power that He alone supplies to us.

There is only one way to get over the hurdles and get on with our race. That is to receive the Word of God with a humble heart, believe it, and guard it with all our strength...we decide to guard it. We must use the power of the Holy Spirit to do that. Do you remember how to do that? Yes, we rely on Him to help us to remember and use the Word of God in our souls...to remember the promises of God. Then we walk by means of the Holy Spirit or in this case...we RUN by means of the Holy Spirit.

Let's take a look at these verses in [Hebrews 12:1-3](#): "Therefore, since we have so great a **cloud of witnesses** surrounding us, let us also put aside every burden and the sin that so easily traps us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, (2) fixing our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, hating the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (3) For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow exhausted and lose heart."

The **cloud of witnesses** is the Old Testament saints mentioned in [Hebrews chapter 11](#). The meaning of witness here is not that they are witnessing to us how to run our race but instead these are their testimonies or their witness to the **faithfulness of God** as they ran their race. They are not spectators watching us. We look to them for encouragement to run and finish our race.



Notice that there are burdens or weights of difficulty and there is sin. The burden while it can be a sin is also a weight on us that pulls us away from God and His plan for our lives. In the Greek language of the New Testament, "burden" means "a bulk or mass"; so symbolically it means "a burden or weight." It means to throw off the weight that is keeping us from finishing our race and winning it. Burden means to prevent someone from doing something.

We have a lot of burdens or weights, and we need to shed them in order to run the race better. Can you imagine running a race with 20 pound weights in each of your hands?

But we're not talking about those kinds of weights. We're talking about burdens of the heart. Many of these weights or burdens are matters of our heart. These can



be sins that put us out of fellowship with our Lord. Luke 21:34 " Be on guard, so that **your hearts will not be weighted down** with lusts and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap..." In this case the weights or sins are getting in the way of our growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and running our race.

Let's look at some of the burdens, weights or sins that can get in the way of our winning our race. There's a whole bunch of them like worry, fear, guilt, keeping up an image that you're cool, hanging out with bad friends and being influenced by them, being two-faced, being hyper-sensitive, being self-consciousness, being unable to forgive, being discouraged, being disappointed, regret, thinking that you have let God down, being mean to your peers, or rejection.



If we carry all this around...there is NO WAY we can run our race or NO WAY we can jump over the hurdles with simple faith like we're supposed to. As long as there are no barriers in our way, we can sometimes carry around that extra weight. But when we come to a hurdle, all of a sudden that extra weight becomes a problem. We can't jump over them with the extra weight so we have to get rid of those weights.

Now it's really important to know HOW we can get rid of these weights. Psa 68:19-20 "Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears our burden, the God who is our salvation. Selah. (20) Our God is a God who delivers; from the Sovereign LORD comes escape from death." 1 Peter 5:6-8 "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, (7) casting ALL your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you." Matt 11:28-30 "Come to Me, all who are tired and heavily burdened, and I will give you rest. (29) Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. (30) For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."



We are supposed to let our Lord bear our heavy burdens and in exchange take His easy yoke.

Heb 12:1 "Therefore, since we have so great a **cloud of witnesses** surrounding us, let us also put aside every burden and the sin that so easily traps us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us..." So again, you see, the fact is that we can usually get along fine with the weights as long as we are just going along down the course, however, eventually we will meet up with that HURDLE! We cannot get over the hurdle with all that extra weight. And then we go nowhere until we get rid of that useless weight. So change your mind about a behavior that is hindering or keeping you from running your race (the plan of God).

It's time to take an honest look at what we spend our time doing...that worry we are pre-occupied with...that pleasure we constantly treat ourselves to...and ask ourselves: Is this thing a weight, or is it a wing? Does it give you energy in your race, or is it holding you back? The moment that something gets into a place in your soul that is not in God's mind for you, it automatically becomes a weight or a heavy burden no matter what it is. "Therefore, since we have so great a **cloud of witnesses** surrounding us, **let us also put aside every burden and the sin that so easily traps us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us...**"

Close in prayer

Prepared from Pastor John Farley's lesson on November 30, 2011
Lighthouse Bible Church

