

Hurdles of Life

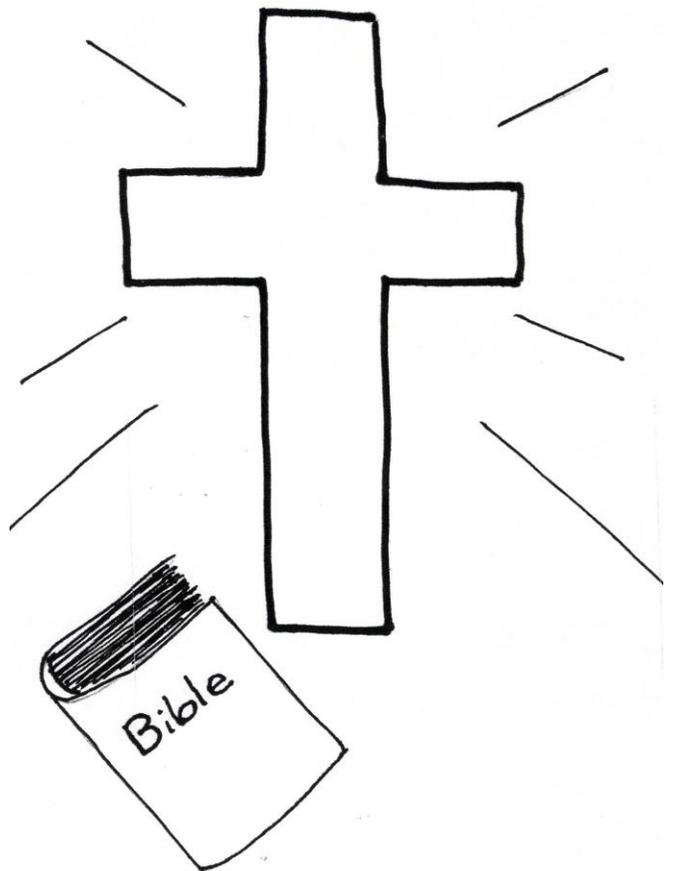
Why We Exist

December 15, 2011

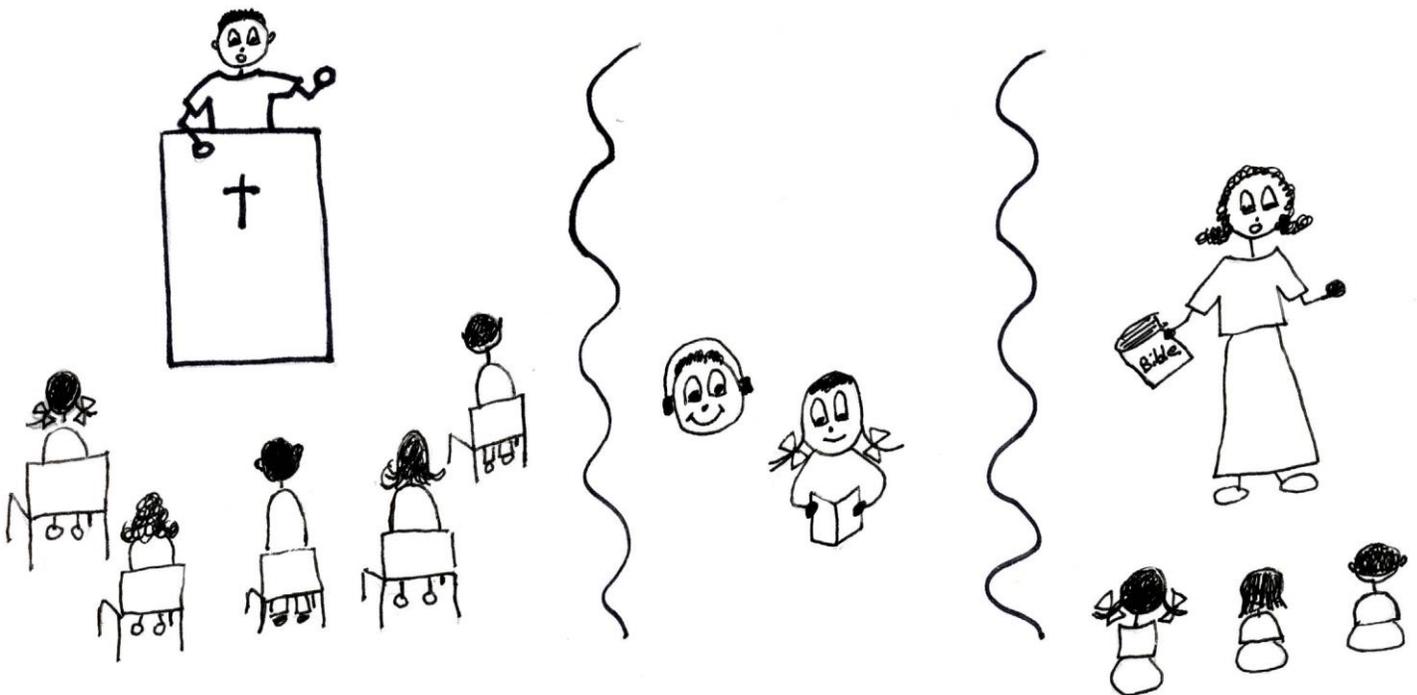
Revised 9-27-20

Believers in Jesus Christ have the only real WHY for human existence and suffering; we are to grow in the grace* and knowledge of Jesus Christ. When we are suffering, we can say, "I know this hurts, but I'm going to consider it joyful because I know what God is trying to do with me, changing me to be more like Jesus Christ. I need to let it happen through the power of the Holy Spirit." This will bring Jesus Christ glory or praise! We will take this grace, knowledge and praise of the Lord Jesus Christ to heaven!! Our meaning and purpose on earth have eternal meaning and importance!!! *Go to allaboardgodstrain.org and read *Grace, Grace, and More Grace*.

Scripture: James 1:2-4 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete [spiritually mature], lacking in nothing.



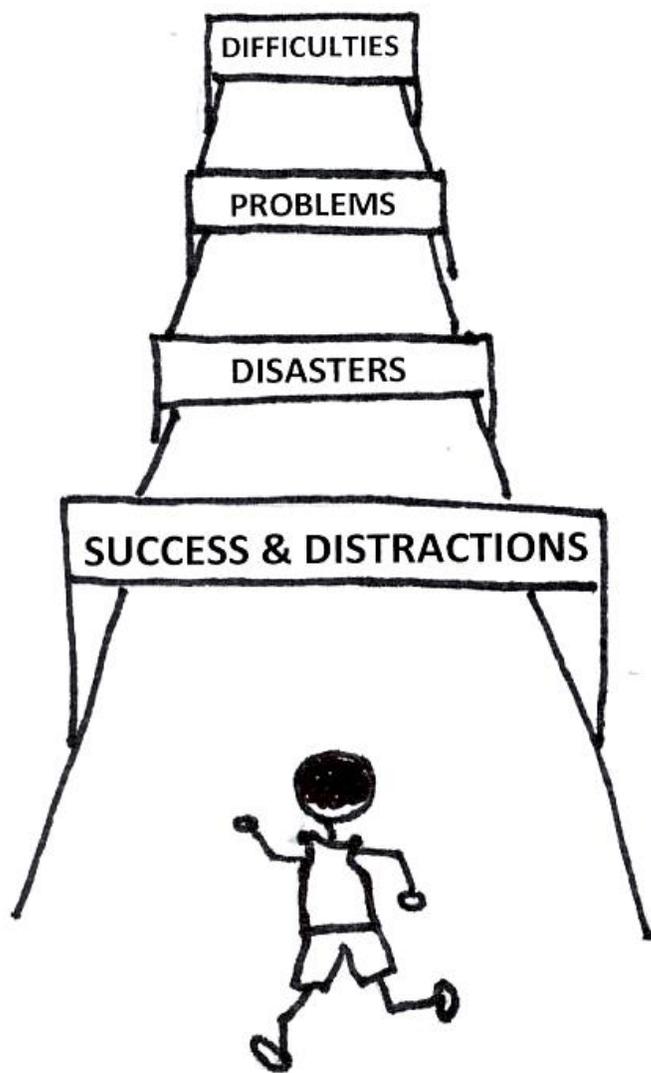
CONSIDER: We are to think about what we learn about God and take the time to let the Holy Spirit change our minds to divine viewpoint. **KNOW:** In Bible class and reading the Bible on our own, we learn so we will know divine viewpoint. **LET:** Let the Holy Spirit's work in us continue! Don't choose to turn our backs on Him. Let Him grow us in the truth of God's word. The word of God is alive and active! It is



powerful!

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Our loving Father has set a course before us and it includes obstacles or hurdles: problems and difficulties, disasters, and heartaches. There are also obstacles of success, distraction, and pleasures. NO WORRY! He has also given us everything we need to "jump over" these hurdles - the filling of the Holy Spirit and His thinking found in the Bible.



God has all the power to make us spiritually mature and complete. When we have faith* in God's word during suffering, the power of the Holy Spirit is released in our souls! We have **God's power** doing the work of getting us through our difficult times! He's leading us to more grace and understanding of Jesus Christ and God the Father. He's growing us in the fruit of the Spirit, making us spiritually mature and complete! Awesome!

*Go to allaboardgodstrain.org and read *Faith*.

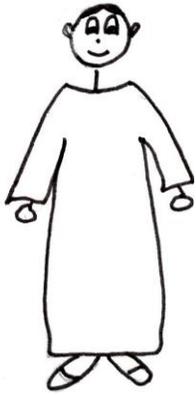


Philippians 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

We have a lot of weights we carry around with us in our minds. We need to shed them in order to run the race better. The weights are making it difficult for us to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Just to name a few: worry, fear, pride, selfishness, guilt, bitterness, jealousy. Carrying all this around, there is **NO WAY** we can run our race. Nor can we leap over the hurdles. Now it is crucial to know **HOW** we are supposed to lay aside these weights. We are supposed to let our Lord carry our heavy burdens and in exchange we are to take His easy yoke - His thinking found in the Bible. We are substituting God's thoughts and promises for our weights or burdens.

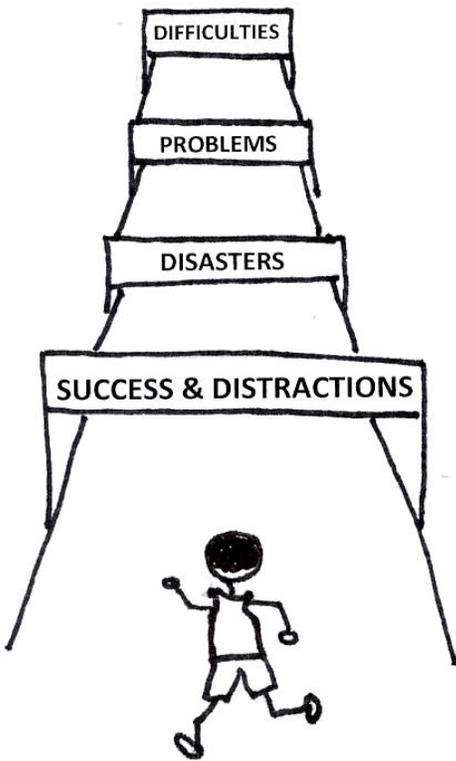
Matt 11:28-30 Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and **YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS**. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.





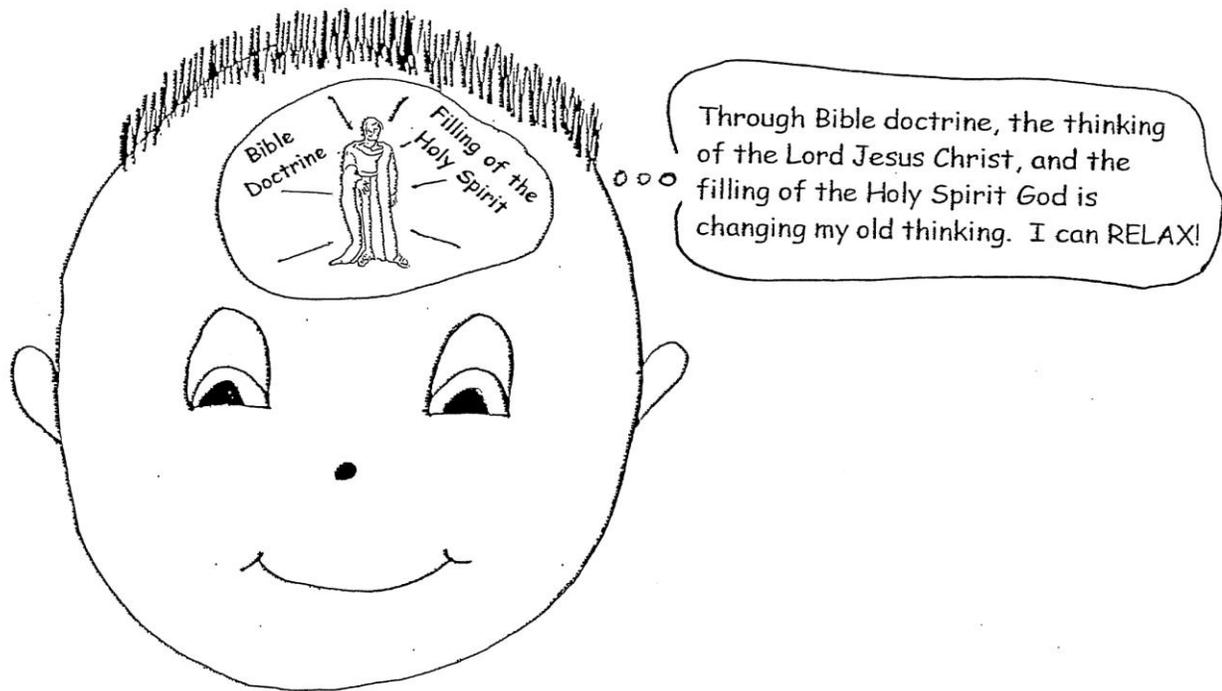
We are to keep our eyes on Jesus. He is our Coach and the reason for jumping the hurdles. He is the Prize! Awesome! In order to clear each hurdle, we need to receive the word of God with a humble or teachable heart, believe it, and guard it with the strength the Holy Spirit gives us. If we

do this, we'll be running in faith and grace with confidence! We'll be able - through God's power - to jump the hurdles! God's great desire is that we leap over each and every one by believing His promises about what awaits us on the other side of that hurdle - our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!
More joy!



Hebrews 12:2 Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

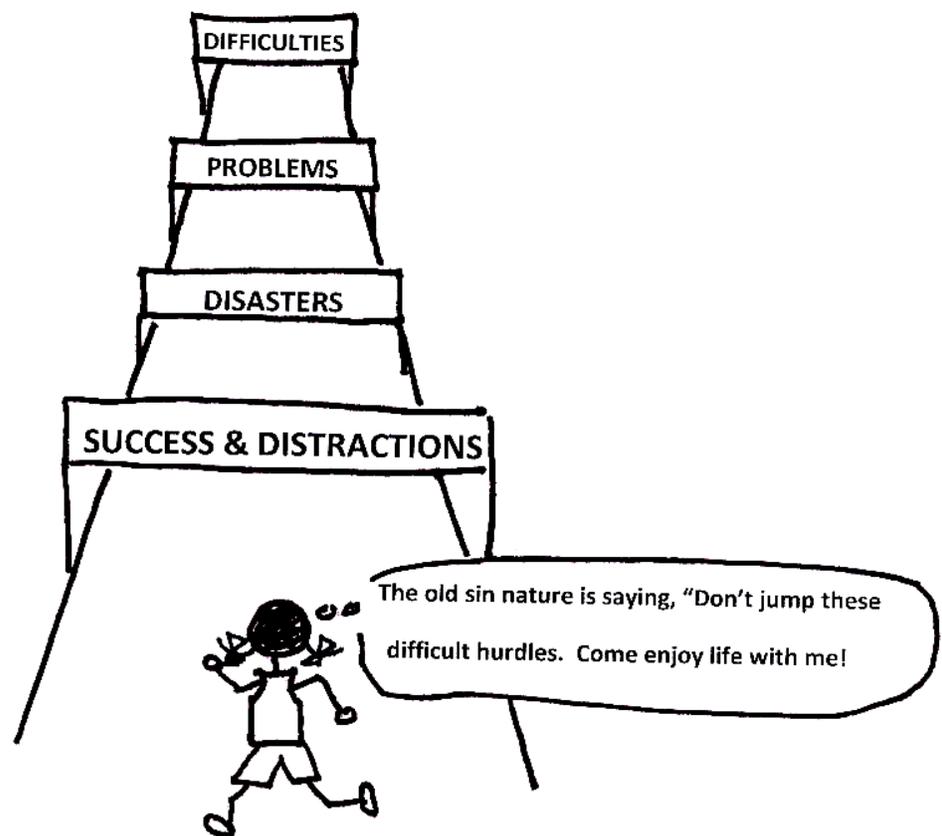
We each have a certain lane in which we are to run and jump hurdles; it is God's plan for you and me. The plan of God, as we allow it to work in our lives, has the power to get us over any hurdle. The power is right inside of you and me. It is the perfect power of the Holy Spirit and Bible doctrine or God's



truths found in the Bible !

1Peter 5:6-8 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

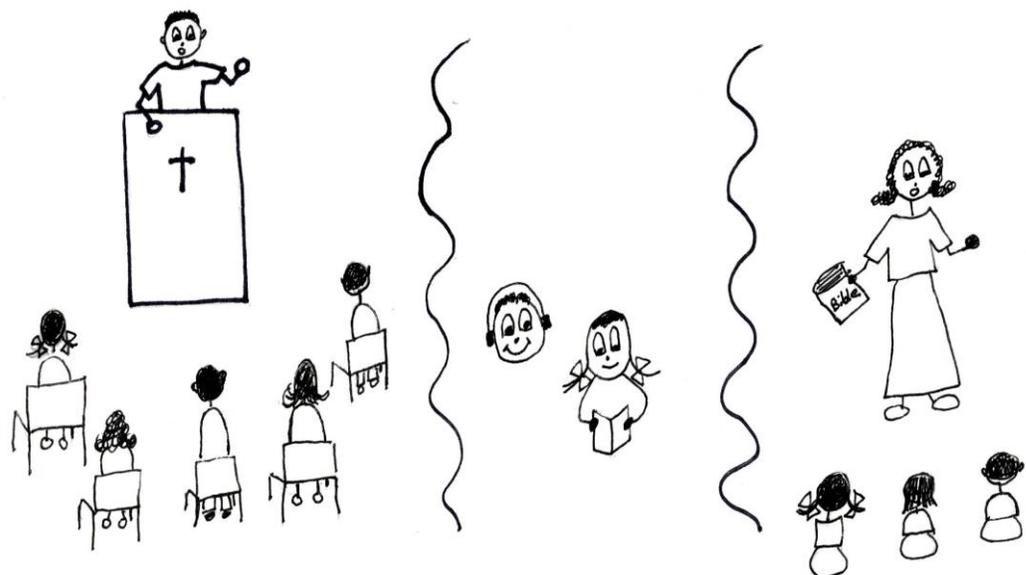
We each have a competitor, our sin nature or "the flesh". It is waiting to get in our way as we run our spiritual race. This competitor is trying to stop us all along the course. It knows what it is doing! It is skillful! It constantly gets in our way! The sin nature wants to produce sin; it wants to get us to do, say, and think the wrong things. It doesn't care if we do human good or evil; it just doesn't want us to be filled with the Holy Spirit and produce divine good.



Heb 12:1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

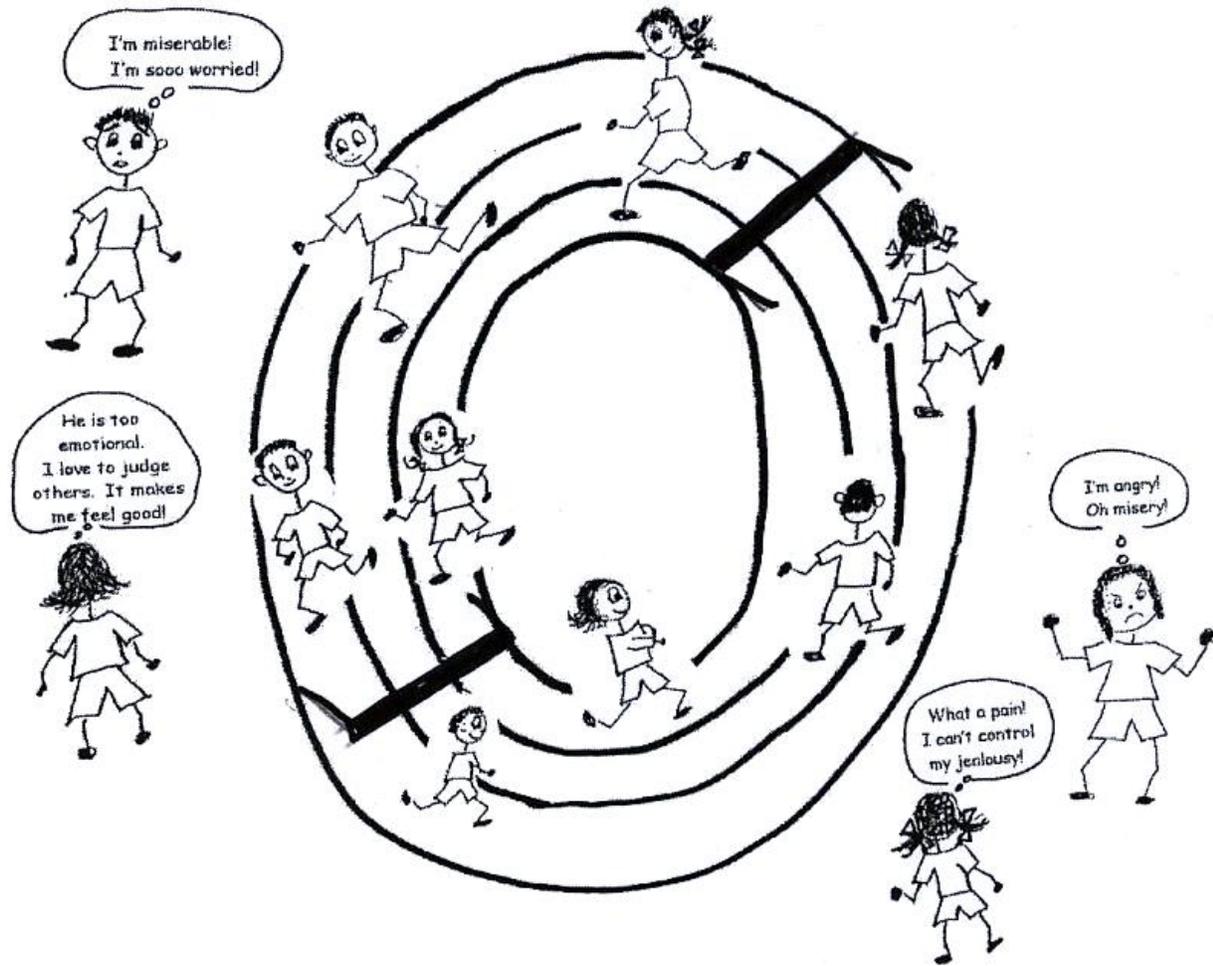
This competitor or enemy, the sin nature, is in every cell of our bodies. That's why we can't get rid of it. We are stuck with it until the day we die; then we will get rid of it. It is the source of all our temptation. It makes war against the things of God! The Spirit and the flesh are rivals for our souls. However, we have a way to put the flesh out of business - we have the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit knows how to handle the sin nature or the flesh; we don't.

Galatians 5:16-17 But I say, walk by means of the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please....



When we run the race we are propelled by the Holy Spirit. However, the sin nature does what it can to stop our progress and get us off the course. As weights or encumbrances hold us down, the sin nature tries to get us away from the course. Time for the Holy Spirit! He is bigger and stronger than the sin nature. He can handle it. We just have to let Him! Through the power of the Holy Spirit we are to lay aside and move away from anything that gets in the way of our spiritual advance.

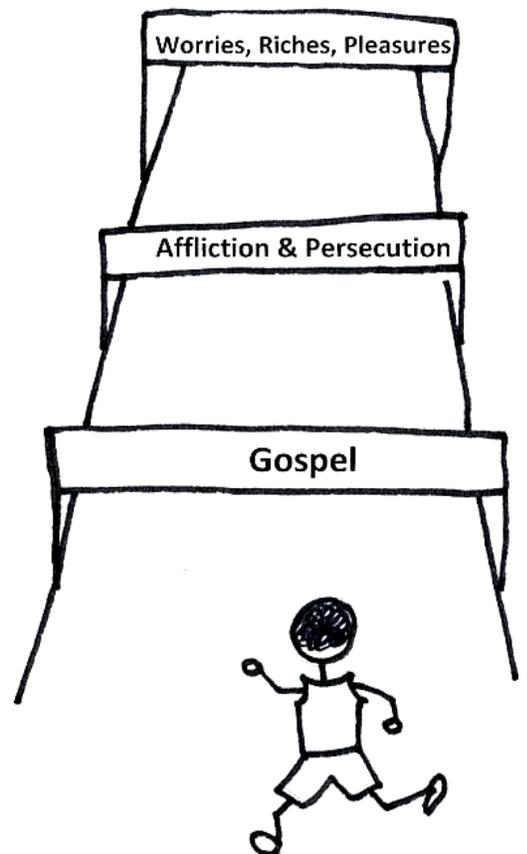
Hebrews 12:1-2
Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith....



Read the "Parable of the Sower", Luke 8:11-15

This parable points out the different ways people respond to or answer the Word of God. There are these hurdles we have to "jump". First there is the Gospel. This is the step or decision point of hearing and believing the Gospel (Luke 8:12). Second there is affliction and persecution. This is the step or decision point of handling affliction and persecution and exercising faith in the word of God (Luke 8:13). Third is the hurdle of worries, riches and pleasures of life. This is the step or decision point of facing worries, riches, and pleasures (Luke 8:14). The word of God will help us over every hurdle!

Luke 21:34 Be on guard, so that **your hearts** will not be **weighted down** with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap;





1 Corinthians 9:25-26 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly....

Points To Remember

1. Believers in Jesus Christ have the only real WHY for human existence and suffering; we are to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ which will bring Him glory or praise.
2. The word of God is alive and active! It is powerful!
3. God has all the power to make us spiritually mature and complete.
4. We have a lot of weights we carry around with us in our minds. We need to shed them in order to run the race better.
5. We are to keep our eyes on Jesus.
6. We each have a certain lane in which we are to run and jump hurdles.
7. We each have a competitor, our sin nature or "the flesh", waiting to get in our way as we run our spiritual race.
8. This competitor or enemy, the sin nature, is in every cell of our bodies making war on the things of God!
9. When we run the race we are propelled by the Holy Spirit, but the sin nature does what it can to stop our progress and get us off the course.

Questions For Discussion

1. What is the reason for human existence?
2. How can suffering be joyful?
3. What power must we use to make suffering joyful?
4. How do we get rid of our burdens?
5. What tries to stop us from living in the plan of God?
6. What are some of the spiritual hurdles we have to jump?
7. Can we jump them on our own power?
8. How do we build up spiritual muscles so we can jump the hurdles?
9. Who is our Coach and always cheering us in our race ?

