

Part 1. When Life Feels Like a Battle

August 2025 | Central Korean Global Methodist Church | Small Group Gathering

■ How to Use This Guide

1. This study is divided into two parts under a single theme. We recommend reflecting on this theme throughout the month.
2. You may divide the study across two gatherings or cover it all at once, depending on your group's situation.

■ Light Sharing – Getting Started

- ① **One thankful moment:** What is one thing you are thankful to God for this week?
- ② **Getting to know each other:** Is there a worship song or praise you've been listening to often these days? Why?

■ Scripture Reading – Hebrews 12:1–3

Invite everyone to find and read the passage together.

■ In & Out – Into the Word & Into Life

Why is life so hard?

There's an English expression:

"It's always something."

It means life is full of interruptions—problems constantly arise, and something's always going wrong.

The following letter may be old, but it still rings true today:

"If I were to describe my life in one word, it would be 'conflict.' Everything feels like a battle—fighting with my kids, my spouse, my job, even my walk with the Lord. We struggle financially, emotionally, and relationally. Internally, I wrestle with fears and anxiety. I often know what's right, but I can't stick with it. Why is life so tough? Will the battles ever end? Sometimes, I just want to give up and run away."

That's a good question—**why is life so hard?**

The answer is simple: **Because life truly is hard.**

We no longer live in paradise.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God and chose rebellion, they essentially said,

"God, we think we know better than You. We'll live life our way."

As a result, **sin entered the world**, and paradise was lost.

Everything in our world is now broken because of sin.

We live in a **fallen world**.

Nothing on this earth works perfectly—not weather, our bodies, our economy, or even our relationships.

The **only perfect thing** in this broken world is **God's Word**.

But on top of this brokenness, we also face a **cosmic battle**—a war for our souls.

The Bible tells us three forces are constantly at work against us:

1. The flesh
2. The world
3. The devil

■ Three Battles That Attack the Soul

1. The Flesh – The Inner Battle

We each have a sinful nature that resists doing what is right.

“For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh...”

— Galatians 5:17

- Have you ever knowingly done something unhealthy?
- Have you made a choice that made things worse?
- Are there destructive habits you can’t shake?

This is **the war within**.

2. The World – The Cultural Pressure Around Us

This battle is waged through our surroundings—culture, peer pressure, expectations.

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

— Romans 12:2

Culture says:

“If you’re not the best, the smartest, the prettiest, the richest—you’re nothing.”

We idolize the top 1%, forgetting the rest.

This pressure can pull us away from God’s purposes—even if we don’t want it to.

3. The Devil – The Personal Enemy

Satan is real—but not equal to God. He is a created being who rebelled.

“Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”

— 1 Peter 5:8

Satan can’t hurt God—so he tries to hurt you, God’s beloved.

■ Hebrews 11 – The Hall of Faith

Those who ran the race of faith and won—Noah, Abraham, Moses, David—they faced struggles too.

And Hebrews 11:35–38 shows us that **faith doesn’t always lead to a happy ending on earth**.

Some were tortured, imprisoned, stoned, or killed.

“The world was not worthy of them.” — Hebrews 11:38

They pleased God but **didn’t receive all the promises in this life**.

Some rewards are reserved for eternity—**after the race is finished**.

■ The Relay Race of Faith

“God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.”

— Hebrews 11:40

This race has been going on for thousands of years.

Now it's our turn to carry the baton.

Only when every generation finishes their part will the final prize be given.

■ Questions for Deeper Sharing & Prayer

Q1. What's the inner battle you've been facing lately?

Share temptations or struggles you've been fighting inside.

Q2. What's the strongest pressure you've felt from the world recently?

Where do you feel the loudest voice of comparison, expectation, or cultural pull?

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Let's remember the last question:

How can we run our race well and hear God say, "Well done, my son. Well done, my daughter"?

Hebrews 12 offers **six powerful keys** for when you feel discouraged or ready to give up.

1. Remember: *You're Being Watched from Heaven*

"Since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses..."

— Hebrews 12:1

You're not alone.

You're surrounded by witnesses—not to judge, but to cheer you on!

Abraham might say, "I left everything at 80."

Noah: "I built an ark for 120 years."

Moses: "I led a grumbling nation."

They say to you:

"We made it. So can you. Don't give up."

And Jesus is still praying for you.

2. Remove What's Holding You Back

"Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles..."

— Hebrews 12:1

- Not all burdens are sins.
 - Some are distractions, unhealthy habits, time-wasters, unrealistic expectations.
 - Learn to say **no** to run with purpose.
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3. When Tired, Fix Your Eyes on Jesus

"Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith..."

— Hebrews 12:2

Jesus endured the cross because He looked beyond it—to the joy set before Him: your salvation.

Look to Jesus when discouraged—He knows rejection, betrayal, loneliness, and pain.

4. Think Deeply About What Jesus Endured

"Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners..."

— Hebrews 12:3

When you feel like giving up, reflect on Jesus' suffering.

You're not alone in pain.

5. Remember: *The Battle Isn't Over Yet*

“In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.”

— Hebrews 12:4

The race isn't finished.

Your story is still being written.

Keep going—God is still working in you.

6. Accept God's Loving Discipline

“The Lord disciplines the one he loves...”

— Hebrews 12:6

God's discipline isn't punishment—it's training.

He's shaping you into maturity.

You are His child, and He disciplines you in love.

■ Closing Reflection

Your life isn't private—it's being watched, cheered, and prayed over.

You're not alone in this race.

Jesus is interceding for you right now.

■ Questions for Deeper Sharing & Prayer

Q1. What's a “weight” you feel God may be asking you to lay down?

Even good things can become distractions.

Q2. Have you experienced strength or comfort by fixing your eyes on Jesus in a tough time?

Share how God met you in that moment.