

## THE BIG IDEA: Remembering how others ran their race inspires us to run ours.

### The Take-Off

This month is the official start of the holiday season

For some, it's too soon and for others it's not soon enough, but for the next 2 months, it's going to be holiday season 24/7 in the stores and on the screens

What does that mean for us? It means that it's a great season to live out Romans 12:15

In others words, be aware of what others are experiencing and display the proper emotion for **their** moment

For most in the room (and in the workplace, school, etc), the holidays will be bittersweet

This series is all about reattaching ourselves to the people and the promises of God, and specifically after hard times

The enemy comes to steal, kill, and destroy, and his main strategy is to make us forget what God's said and done

But God uses the power of remembering in order to help us stay connected to Him and His children

If a part of the body is cut off, we say it's been dismembered

Instead of staying separated, we need to re-member - reattach - ourselves

This morning, we're going to start by taking a look at what it means to remember the people of God, and it all starts in the cloud

### 1. There's hope in the cloud

- a. It seems like EVERYTHING is stored in the cloud now, doesn't it?
- b. **Hebrews 12:1-3 (NIV)** / A great cloud of witnesses
- c. Did you know about the first holiday in November? All Saint's Day - we remember those saints who have gone on to their reward before us
- d. That crowd is in the cloud, but that's not all - **there's hope in the cloud**
- e. Again, the enemy's strategy is to tell you that you're alone, isolated, cut off
- f. Maybe because of sin, but often simply because of life
- g. An extended illness, and unexpected transfer, anything to make the connection seem weaker
- h. But look what God does:
  - **Romans 11:3-4** / Elijah felt alone, but God had 7000 with him
  - **2 Kings 6:15-17** / Elisha's servant saw that those with him were more than those against him
- i. Here in our text, we're told to remember that we're surrounded by a crowd in the cloud
- j. You are NOT alone - God is with you, God's people are with you, and God's saints are with you
- k. That can give us hope - that can reattach us to His people - but only if we do one more thing

### 2. Remember to run!

- a. If we keep reading, we find that God doesn't want us just to sit around remembering people we've lost
- b. Memories are great, but that can cause us to just remember even more that they aren't with us!
- c. Hebrews 12:2 says that we are to remember them and let that inspire us to run
- d. We've got to **remember to run!**
- e. I remember running my first marathon - Nov. 14, 2009 in Richmond, VA
- f. No matter how tired I was, knowing that I was getting ready to run through a family zone energized me
- g. The crowd in the cloud should change how we run
- h. Here are 3 ways:
  - Run light / "strip off every weight"
  - Run long / "with endurance"
  - Run looking / "keeping our eyes on Jesus"
- i. Bottom line? **Remembering how others ran their race inspires us to run ours**

### The Landing

It's important to remember that it's not about the people who ran, but about the Person they were running to

The great cloud of witnesses is cheering us to to run to Jesus - not anything else

Their lives are signposts pointing us on and cheering us on to Jesus

Today, we commit ourselves to the run - with others and toward Jesus

Let's pray