Hebrews - Jesus the Final Word:

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Hebrews 12:4-17

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Our world is obsessed with removing discomfort and friction from our lives
We are deeply formed by this desire.

*Do you recognize the ways this desire has shaped you?
*What does comfort, care, relief, and kindness look like to you?
*In what ways do these expectations form the ways you expect God's love to feel?

Being loved by the Father can at times involve discipline
Read and discuss Hebrews 12:4-8 (NIV)
4 In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. 5 And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says, "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline,
and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,
6 because the Lord disciplines the one he loves,
and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son."
7 Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? 8 If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all.

*What do you take away from this passage about the discipline of the Father? What do you think God is after through our discipline?
*What does it actually feel like to be a child of God?
*Right now, do you more need to pay attention to the Lord's discipline or do you need to not lose heart?

Hebrews is asking its hearers to trust the Father's care in the middle of what they are going through
Read and discuss Hebrews 12:9-11 (NIV)
9 Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! 10 They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. 11 No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

*What do you think it looks like to share in God's holiness? How does discipline play a part in that?
*What is challenging for you about this passage? How do you recognize that all pain we experience isn't discipline?
*Does the phrase, 'later on' encourage you? Can you give an example of when, sometime after a discipline you were able to recognize it for growth?

What the Father is growing in them (us), becomes something to practice with each other
Read and discuss Hebrews 12:12-15 (NIV)
12 Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. 13 "Make level paths for your feet," so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.
14 Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. 15 See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

*How are you practicing this passage with someone else? Is there someone that is walking with you? Who would notice that you're losing heart and say something about it?
*Is there a place in your life where it has been hard to recognize God's care? What potential discipline, weariness, or pain, might actually be God's love?
*What is the Spirit saying to you about drawing near to God with your hurts, what you need, what you don't understand?

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