

Sermon Title: Let It Go

Speaker: Dr. Jeff Wallace

Scripture: Hebrews 12:1-2

I. Introduction

- John Maxwell quote as foundation: "We teach what we know, but we reproduce who we are"
- CBC's spirit reflects the DNA of its leader
- Setting the tone: Many in the room are weary, burdened, and carrying weight
- Central challenge: God has given us a pathway to let go of what has held us hostage

II. Scripture Foundation: Hebrews 12:1-2

"Since we also have such a large cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us lay aside every hindrance and the sin that so easily ensnares us, let us run with endurance the race that lies before us, keeping our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith."

- Chapter 11 context: The Hall of Faith, a long chain of testimonies showing what faith can do
- Chapter 12 shift: We move from their story to our race, from their faithfulness to our responsibility
- The imagery is athletic: not a casual stroll but a long-distance endurance marathon
- Key insight: The smallest weight becomes a massive hindrance over time
- Runners don't carry unnecessary weight; neither can we
- Two distinct struggles identified:
 - The hindrance: weight that slows us down (not necessarily sin)
 - The sin: that which ensnares us
- NT Wright: "This isn't just about running harder. It's about running the right race with the right focus and with the confidence that Jesus has already gone before us."
- The real question: What are we carrying that is keeping us from running the race before us?

III. Five Keys to Running Free

Key 1: Check the Weight

- Not everything you are carrying is yours to carry
- Many are exhausted not because life is heavy but because they are carrying what God never assigned to them
- What we carry that isn't ours:
 - Other people's expectations
 - Past failures already forgiven
 - Labels spoken over us
- Just because you picked it up does not mean you have to carry it
- If God did not give it to you, why are you still holding it?
- Core truth: You are not what they said about you. You are who God says you are.

Key 2: Break the Lie

- What you did is not who you are
- The enemy holds people hostage to lies about their identity
- What the enemy says vs. what God says:

- You are not your worst decision
- You are not your lowest moment
- You are not your past mistake
- Your identity is not your history
- Your identity is in Jesus Christ alone
- The distinction: Guilt says you messed up. Shame says you are a mess. God says you have been redeemed.
- You cannot walk into your future while gripping your past
- Progress requires release
- You cannot have peace while holding on to anxiety
- You cannot embrace your purpose while clinging to the pain of your past

Key 3: Release the Burden

- You cannot move forward while holding on to what God has told you to let go
- Too often we live closed-fisted instead of open-handed
- How we release: keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter
- Practical moment: Open hands, throw it, release it
- Warning: Many release it and then run back to pick it up again
- Core truth: Stop picking up what you have already been delivered from

Key 4: Replace the Noise

- The noise of the world is a primary source of weight and burden
- Challenge: Stop consuming divisive media and start consuming the Word of God
- The power of speaking the Word over your own life:
 - Anxiety: gone
 - Depression: gone
 - Guilt and shame: gone
- Scripture anchors for common struggles:
 - Overwhelm: Matthew 11:28
 - Past defining you: Philippians 3:13-14
 - Anxiety: Psalm 55:22
 - Feeling like giving up: Isaiah 40:31
 - Thought life: Philippians 4:8
- Core truth: When you know who you are and whose you are, everything changes

Key 5: Step Into Freedom

- This is the culmination of all four previous keys
- Freedom is not found in what others say about you but in what you know about yourself in Christ
- Illustration: Queen Elsa in Frozen, concealing her gifts out of fear and shame until a defining moment of release
- Core truth: Until there is internal conviction, there will never be external freedom
- True freedom begins with knowing Jesus as Lord and Savior
- Jesus is the pioneer who has gone ahead and the perfecter who brings the journey to completion
- You cannot keep your eyes fixed on someone you do not know