



# HERE & NOW

Week 4

## BREAKING THE ICE

- What is your favorite Olympic event to watch?
- Share one highlight from this past week!

## MAIN CONTENT

We have been in a series, “Here & Now”, where we have looked at an analogy sprinkled throughout Scripture that says that all of us are running a race in this life.

Read Hebrews 12:1-2 together as a group.

1. How do you think our faith mirrors a race?

In Pastor James Savage’s message, he talked about how we tackle and handle criticism. He started the conversation by talking about the “inner critic” (how we criticize ourselves), the “outer critic” (how others criticize us) and “criticism of others” (how we talk about other people).

2. Out of those three options, which do you find most difficult to manage in life?

Another point James made is that criticism attempts to ask the question: “Do I belong?”

3. How do you think criticism tries to answer that question?

A scenario was described in the message: Imagine a life where people don’t have to compare themselves, they don’t feel negatively impacted by the opinions of others, and their worth and belonging is secure. How would this way of living influence your inner critic, how you handle outer critics, or how we criticize others?

Read Hebrews 10:19-23 as a group.

4. How do you think fasting from something (whether it's food, social media, screens, etc), and replacing it with Scripture can help you train and draw near to God?

Now, read Hebrews 10:24.

5. How does encouragement stop “feeding the monster of criticism” in one’s life?

6. What is one thing you want to do differently this week based on what we talked about today?

Take prayer requests as a group and then close in prayer.

## CLOSING PRAYER

God, thank you for encouraging us and inviting us into this better life, and thank you that we don't have to run it in our own power. I ask that we learn to handle the criticism from ourselves and others in a way that encourages us to pursue what you think about us. I also pray that you would give us the reminder to speak encouragement over others instead of tearing others down. God, would you also teach us and change us in this next month during Awaken? Would you bring to mind things to fast from in order to help us draw closer to you? We thank you for meeting us here, make us more like you. In Jesus name, Amen.

## ACTION STEP

- Go to [crosspoint.tv/awaken](https://crosspoint.tv/awaken) to explore our fasting and prayer resources, and sign-up to receive texts or emails prompts throughout February.
- Sign up for this week's Connecting at Cross Point at your campus at [crosspoint.tv/connecting](https://crosspoint.tv/connecting) to find more ways to get involved at Cross Point, if you aren't serving already.