

Faith that Endures

(Online Study, Tuesday Evening at 7:00 PM)

Week 11: Finishing Well -- Hebrews 12:1–3

After surveying a gallery of faithful men and women in Hebrews 11, the writer arrives at the climax of his argument. The great cloud of witnesses is not watching from the sidelines as spectators—their lives stand as testimony that faith in God is worth it. Now it is our turn to run.

Hebrews 12 opens with urgency. Believers are called to lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily entangles, and to run the race that is set before them with endurance. The Christian life is not a sprint; it is a marathon. And the key to finishing is not speed but steadfastness—keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith.

Jesus Himself is the ultimate example of enduring faith. He endured the cross, despised its shame, and is now seated at the right hand of God. His example teaches that the path of faithfulness often passes through suffering, but it always leads to glory. The writer urges believers to “consider him”—to fix their gaze on Jesus—so that they will not grow weary or lose heart. This is how the race is finished. This is how faith endures: eyes on Jesus, weights laid down, and feet pressing forward to the end.

Group Discussion: What does it mean that the faithful men and women of Hebrews 11 are a “cloud of witnesses” surrounding us? How does the example of those who have gone before encourage us to keep running?

Personal Reflection: What weights or entangling sins are currently slowing you down in your walk with Christ? What would it look like to lay them aside and refocus your eyes on Jesus?

Read Hebrews 12:1–3

Study Questions

1. In verse 1, the writer refers to a “great cloud of witnesses.” Who are these witnesses, and in what sense do their lives serve as testimony for us?
2. What is the difference between the “weight” that slows us down and the “sin which clings so closely”? Why does the writer mention both?
3. The passage calls believers to “run with endurance the race that is set before us.” Why does the writer describe the Christian life as a race, and what does endurance require?

4. In verse 2, Jesus is called “the founder and perfecter of our faith.” What does it mean that Jesus both begins and completes faith?
5. The writer says Jesus endured the cross “despising the shame.” What does it mean to despise shame, and how does Jesus’s attitude toward the cross instruct believers facing hardship?
6. Why does the writer say Jesus endured the cross “for the joy that was set before him”? What was that joy, and how does future hope sustain present endurance?
7. Jesus is now “seated at the right hand of the throne of God” (v. 2). What does this position of honor and authority mean for believers who are still in the race?
8. In verse 3, the writer commands believers to “consider him who endured from sinners such hostility.” Why is considering Jesus essential to preventing weariness and fainthearted faith?
9. What does it mean to grow “weary” or “fainthearted” (v. 3)? What are common causes of spiritual exhaustion, and how does this passage address them?
10. Looking at Hebrews 12:1–3 as a whole, and as the conclusion to our series on “Faith that Endures,” what final call does this passage make to every believer?

Now or Later

Reflect on these passages: **1 Corinthians 9:24–27** — Running the race to win an imperishable crown; **2 Timothy 4:6–8** — Paul’s testimony of finishing the race; **Philippians 3:12–14** — Pressing on toward the goal in Christ