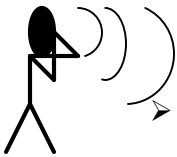


Enduring Hardship While Running the Race

Hebrews 11:39-12:3

Pastor Russ Kennedy, May 16, 2004

Introduction



- The Book of Hebrews was written to a church that was getting old and was settling into the world and _____ its wartime mentality and starting to _____ through life without focus, without vigilance, and without energy. It was just easier to meander in the crowd of life than to _____ the marathon.
- It is a dangerous place to be, as a church and as individuals. So here comes the great question this text asks. "Do you _____ hardship and do you suffer hardship for Jesus?"
- This text asks this question in two great analogies: a _____ to be run and _____ to be endured.

Our _____ (11:39-12:1a)

Before we can set out to run hard and finish well, we have got to be _____. There are many compelling reasons for enduringly running the race. In this text, the motivation does not come from spectators, but from prior _____.

_____ They Are

These witnesses are the _____ whose faith is commended in chapter 11.

_____ They Witness

The point here is _____ that we ought to behave in such a way because these people are watching us. The word is "one who _____." They are people who have experienced something or seen something to which they are bearing witness.

_____ They Say

They tell us that true faith _____. They tell us to keep on believing the _____ of God and trusting the _____ of God.

- Faith is measured, not by what it receives, but by what it _____ (v.39). These Old Testament saints say to us, "Believe God in an obeying way even if you _____ see the promises fulfilled in your lifetime."
- God's purposes and plans were to bring about the complete fulfilling of His promises for all His saints _____. So we also are straining forward and looking toward that day when they and we together will fully receive the longed for and eagerly anticipated _____.

Our _____ (v.1a)

If we are going to run _____, there are some things we have to deal with.

Hindering _____

The Hebrew Christians were carrying around _____ weights. They were trying to run the Christian race encumbered by their religious _____.

- There are things in the Christian life that may be _____, but will become a hindrance to my endurance.



Entangling _____

...if you are going to deal with entangling sins, you have got to be utterly committed to running and _____ well. Otherwise, the battle with sin, with its victories and setbacks, will become a _____ for the race itself.

The _____ (v.1b)

Christians are running a _____.

With _____

The Christian race is a _____.

The _____ **marked out**

It is the _____ long run through grueling events whose tasks test our strength and demand great endurance. And it is a marked out course.

Our _____ (v.2)

Its _____

In this verse is the _____ to all that has gone before. Dealing with hindering weights and entangling sins so that we run well with endurance is done by _____ our eyes on Jesus.

- When I stumble and struggle and don't run well and find myself spiritually out of breath, it is normally because I have become _____ - _____. Looking away from self to Jesus is the skill that running the Christian life well demands.

Its _____

Why do we look away to Jesus? Because Jesus is the _____ of our faith and He is the _____ of our faith.

Our _____ (v.3)

Its _____

It is hard to imagine that this race can become _____ and soul deadening. But it happens. It is a constant danger.

Its _____

"Consider _____ who endured." Over against the stress and struggle and strain of our trying to run well, when our hearts fail, compare _____ lives with Jesus'.

Conclusion

- _____ the Bible. Listen to the faith and hope and love of the saints in the Scripture. Look at how they _____. Be encouraged to keep looking at Jesus because they did even when their sight would be dim and shadowy.
- _____ for running well by setting aside time to deal with those hindering weights and entangling sins. It does not just happen. It is something that _____ enables you to do.
- _____ with endurance.
- Be on the _____ for spiritual weariness and faintness of heart. In the moments when faith fails, then look away to Jesus. Ask Him for greater faith and finishing faith.

And say to yourself all through your run this spring and summer and fall and till you hit the finish line in eternity—say to yourself over and over again, "The present suffering is not even _____ to be compared to glory that follows. The pain is worth the gain."

Have you begun this race that Pastor Russ has spoken about?

Show me your notes next week for a surprise!

Pastor Dale

