

Hebrews Chapter 12 The Response of Faith

Running with endurance (1-3)

Therefore – Looking back at all that has been said and especially chapter 11.

Cloud of witnesses surrounding us – The men and women of the O.T. mentioned in chapter 11.

Lay aside... every encumbrance – Anything that hinders our spiritual progress. It may not be a bad or sinful thing but nevertheless it may be a hindrance.

And the sin – Any sin in our life will slow down our spiritual growth but especially unbelief.

Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us –

Endurance – Used also in 10:36. The idea is to “stay under” the weight, to remain steadfast.

The race set before us – God has put us in the race. We must decide how we will run.

Fixing our eyes on Jesus the author and perfecter of faith who for the joy set before Him...

-Endured the cross

-Despising the shame

-And has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (signifying His work is finished, 1:3, 8:1, 10:12)

Consider Him...

-He endured

-So that we may not grow weary and lose heart

Look around at the winners, Look at ourselves, Look at Jesus

Enduring Discipline (4-13)

Three proofs of God’s Love:

1 – The Scriptures (5-6), Proverbs 3:11-12

Key word – “Sons” Greek – *huois*, an adult son

2 – Personal experience (7-10)

We all understand discipline in the family setting

3 – The blessed results (10-13)

The peaceful fruit of righteousness

When we respond correctly to discipline we are prepared to run the race and also help others.

Therefore (having been trained or disciplined) ...

-Strengthen the hands that are weak...

-Make straight paths for your feet...

Pursuing Peace and Holiness (14-17)

What is our goal for running the race of the Christian life? Peace with others and Holiness before God!

The sanctification without which no one will see the Lord – This is not

speaking of eternal life. It may be speaking of our personal walk with God but more likely it is speaking of those to whom we minister.

Root of bitterness – Bitterness is like a cancer. It will slowly grow until it spiritually (and sometimes physically) kills you.

Immoral or godless person like Esau – A description of a spiritually bankrupt and worldly person.

When he desired to inherit the blessing he was rejected - Not in the sense of eternal life but his inheritance.

Arriving at Mount Zion (18-24)

Mt. Sinai	Mt. Zion
Earthly (may be touched)	Heavenly
Darkness and gloom	Light and peace
All were full of fear	All worship God
The Old Covenant of Law	The New Covenant of Grace
The blood of Abel (vengeance)	The blood of Jesus (mercy)

Church of the firstborn – All Christians are children of God but not all will be recognized with the rights of the firstborn son.

Righteous men made perfect - Perfect in the sense that they have reached their goal. They will reign with Jesus as they receive their inheritance rights.

Dangers of Turning Away (25-29) The final warning!

See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. The *Him* could be referring to Moses or God speaking in the giving of the Law.

Him who warns from heaven – Jesus

His voice shook the earth then – Exodus 19:18

Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven – A quotation of Haggai 2:6. Revelation 20:11, 21:1 speak of this new heaven and earth.

Things that can be shaken – All temporal, temporary things, the treasures of this world.

Therefore, since we receive a kingdom – There is only one proper response for us as God’s children: *Serve God with reverence and awe from a grateful heart!*

For our God is a consuming fire! This is a quotation of Deuteronomy 4:24 and in context is speaking to God’s people.

Summary:

Look by faith in three directions:

Look back – At the cloud of witnesses as a motivation and also at Esau as a warning.

Look Up – At the glory of the heavenly city.

Look Ahead – At the unshakable kingdom.