

Running the Race: Jesus's Sonship and Ours
Hebrews 12:1–17

Faith Defined (vv. 1–2)

Faith based on God *promises* (v. 1)

People of old "**commended**" for faith (v. 2)

Three Themes

1. The Word
2. Resurrection
3. Action / Obedience / Righteousness

Creation (v. 3)

Abraham (vv. 17–19) – *New Creation*

Abel . . . Enoch . . . Noah (vv. 4–7)

Isaac . . . Jacob . . . Joseph (vv. 20–22)

Abraham (vv. 8–10)

Moses (vv. 23–28)

Sarah (vv. 11–12)

People . . . [Israel] . . . Rahab (vv. 29–31)

Summary (vv. 13–16) – *Better Country* (v. 16)

Summary (vv. 32–40) – *Better Life* (v. 36)

Faith completed (vv. 39–40)

People of old "**commended**" for **faith** (vv. 39)

Promises *perfected* (v. 40)

∨
Jesus Christ
Hebrews 12:1–3
∧

Committed Pilgrims (William Lane)

Disciplinary Suffering (12:4–13)

Sons in Training (12:1–17)

Pilgrimage to the Holy City (12:14–29)

Heirs in Waiting (12:18–29)

Mandates for Pilgrims (13:1–19)

Priests in Serving (13:1–19)

Benediction (13:20–21)

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Postscript (13:22–25)

Postscript (13:22–25)

Jesus Christ, the Greatest Model of Faith

What do know about verses 1–3?

- What does context teach us?
- What do the verses tell us?

Who are the cloud of witnesses? What does it mean to surrounded by?

- All that are found in Hebrews 11
- We have come to the city of the living God (Hebrews 12:22–24), where all the holy ones are

Does these cloud of witnesses suggest anything to us about . . . **the finish line?**

What is the goal of this race?

- Jesus (v. 2a)
- The Throne of God (v. 2b)
- The Heavenly City (v.

What is the race like?

- *Agōn* = fight (1 Tim 6:12; 2 Tim 4:7); conflict (Phil 1:30; 1 Thess 2:2); struggle (Col 2:1)
- “Run the fight”
 - 12:2 = Passive: You have received your race; run the race set before you
 - 12:13 = Active: Make straight your paths; turn your feet towards the path
- *Conquered* kingdoms (11:33); *Struggle* against sin (12:4)

What does he say about the race?

- **Lay aside everything that hinders . . . sin that so easily entangles . . .** Can’t make it to the end, if you hold on to your stuff – **Does this relate to the stolen possessions?**
- **Race set before you . . .** God’s not here to make you a better runner; he gives you his race
- **Looking to Jesus . . .**

What do we learn about Jesus?

- He suffered . . . endured the cross . . . was despised . . . endured hostility

Why doesn't he say . . . looking at Jesus and his teaching . . . Jesus and his miracles? Why cross?

- So that we may endure
- We are to look to his suffering . . . his endurance . . . his race (v. 1)
- **If God doesn't just help us run, but he gives us a race . . . where do we learn the course?**

What does Jesus do in us . . . when we look to him?

- **Founder?**
 - **Archēgos** = founder, pioneer, leader; one who begins something
 - **Acts 3:15** = you killed the **Author** of life, whom God raised from the dead.
 - **Acts 5:31** = God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.
 - **Hebrews 2:10** = For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.
 - **Hebrews 5:9–10** = And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.
- **Perfector**
 - **Teleiōtēs** = Completer, Finisher, Perfector; one who brings something to successful completion
 - **What does perfect mean in Hebrews?**
 - The Son who has suffered, died, and been resurrected to be the high priest in God's perfect place
 - The Son who has suffered, died, and been resurrected to be the high priest who makes us perfect in God's place
- **When? Does Hebrews 12 answer this question?**
 - The righteous saints have been made perfect (12:23) – they were not made perfect before; now they are
 - Jesus is our perfecter (12:2), not will be – he is perfecting our faith;
 - He has started our faith by raising us with Christ – Proof? (Access)
 - He is completing it – but the completion is in the endurance
 - The whole point of Hebrews is endurance, and now he is reinforcing this reality

So the large attention to Jesus in Hebrews 12:1–3

- **Matches . . .** the rest of the book (Hebrews 1–10)
- **Summarizes . . .** the Old Testament (Hebrews 11)
- **Sets up . . .** the call to endure in Hebrews (Hebrews 12–13)
 - Jesus is the Son of God, he is the heir of the kingdom, he is the true priest
 - All who are in Christ are also sons, heirs, and priests
 - The book closes where it began; God wants to make a family of royal priests
- **Hebrews 1:1–4 = Hebrews 12–13**
 - Sons in Training Endure Their Father’s Discipline (12:1–17)
 - Heirs in Waiting Abide in Christ-Centered Worship (12:18–29)
 - Priests in Serving Glorify God by the Spirit (13:1–19)

The Lord's Discipline of His Children (Hebrews 12:4–11)

4 In your struggle against sin
you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

5 And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?

“My son,

do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,
nor be weary when reprov'd by him.

Proverbs 3:11–12

6 \ For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and
chastises every son whom he receives.”

7 It is for discipline that you have to endure.
God is treating you as sons.

[a] For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

8 If you are left without discipline,
in which all have participated,
[b] then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

9 Besides this,

we have had earthly fathers
who disciplined us

and we respected them.

Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live?

10 \ For they disciplined us
for a short time
as it seemed best to them,
but he disciplines us
for our good,
\ that we may share his holiness.

11 For the moment
all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant,

but later
it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness
to those who have been trained by it.

The Endurance of God's Children (vv. 12–17)

¹² Therefore

LIFT your drooping hands and
... [strengthen] your weak knees,

anorthoō ^ / **Isa 35:3**

¹³ and **MAKE straight** paths for your feet, [11:10, 13–16; 12:22; 13:14]

poieō orthos / **Prv 4:26**

\ so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather
be healed.

¹⁴

STRIVE for peace
with everyone, and
for the holiness
without which no one will see the Lord.

diokō

¹⁵

SEE to it that no **one fails to obtain** the grace of God;
that no “root of bitterness” springs up and
causes trouble,
and by it many become defiled;

episkopeō

Deut 29:18

¹⁶

that no one is sexually immoral or
unholy like Esau,
\ who sold his **birthright** for a single meal.

¹⁷

For you know
that afterward,
when he desired to inherit the blessing,
he was rejected,
for he found no chance to repent,
though he sought it with tears.

What are the repeated themes in this passage? (vv. 4–11)

1. Sonship (vv. 5, 6 [2x], 7 [2x], 8)

Other related words / themes?

- Illegitimate children (v. 8)
- Father (v. 7, 9 [2x]) + they / them / he [Father] (v. 10)
- Birthright (v. 16)

• What do we learn?

- They are to remember what it means to be a son (v. 5)

Proverbs 3:11–12 – What's the context?

- Proverbs are for sons (25x in ch. 1–9; 60x in the book)
- What son is in view (Prov 1:1)
- Why does the son of David need wisdom?
- How does that apply to Christ? Us?
- God disciplines his children (v. 7)
- No discipline; no sonship (v. 8)

2. Discipline (vv. 5, 6, 7 [2x], 8, 9, 10 [2x], 11)

• What do we learn?

- Discipline is an OT norm (vv. 5–6)
- The call to endure suffering is a part of God's training (v. 7)
- Discipline is for a short time, it is according to wisdom; it is for good; and it for the purpose of greater blessing (holiness, righteousness, etc) (v. 10)
- Discipline is unpleasant in itself; but it is not meaningless (v. 11)

What is the comparison that is being made in v. 4?

- How would this motivate the audience of this letter?
- How does it apply to you?

What do they / we need to remember?

- Discipline is a good thing
- The Father is working in their circumstances
- What wicked men mean for evil, God intends for good – Genesis 50:20
- **The Father disciplines his children – HOW?**
 - The Word instructs
 - The Father uses the suffering brought by men to accomplish his purposes
- **How might eschatology . . . the goal of discipline help them endure?**
 - Life (v. 9)
 - Holiness (v. 10)
 - Fruit of righteousness (v. 11)
 - **Most Important: verses 12–13 applies Isaiah 35 . . . READ**
- **Where have we seen eschatology?**
 - Hebrews 11:13–16
 - Hebrews 11:26
 - Hebrews 12:2
 - ***It is developing . . . the road is climbing***
 - Hebrews 12:18–29

How does the quotation of Proverbs 3 help us understand this suffering?

How do these verses set up verses 12–17?

Hebrews does not command men and women to do things against their nature . . .

He calls sons and daughters of God to be sons and daughters.

What are the commands?

1. LIFT / STRENGTHEN

2. MAKE straight

- Same word is in view – has the idea of o
- The combined impact = endure!!
- Train your body . . . to endure

3. STRIVE - Ps 34:14 /Prov 4:25–27

4. SEE

- The first is an individual calling
- The second is call to care for one another
 - *Episkopoō* = watch over one another
 - Don't miss God's grace . . . New Covenant?
 - No root of bitterness . . . Deut 29:18 = idolatry ~ law
 - Sexually immoral – Esau sexually immoral? → Gen 26:34

How do we apply this?

- How do we strengthen the body / endure?
- How do we strive for peace?
- How do you watch one another?

Don't miss the imagery . . .

The sons of God are marching to Zion . . . and we must help one another get there . . . along the way there are temptations to seek ease . . . (food > birthright) . . . grow bitter (as Esau) . . . and sin (Esau with foreign women)

