

I. Introduction and review.

II. Run your race with endurance. v. 1

- A. The life of faith is portrayed as a race. II Ti. 4:7 I Co. 9:24-27 Phil. 2:16 Ga. 2:2 5:7
- B. We are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses.
 - 1. Who are the witnesses?
 - 2. Who is watching whom?
- C. God has set a race course before you.
 - 1. Whatever lies ahead of you, including suffering, has been predetermined by God. Rom. 8:28 Eph. 1:11 I Cor. 10:13
 - 2. Each of us runs the course particularly designed for us by God.
 - 3. God has determined a path of good works for all whom He saves. Eph. 2:8-10
- D. Cast off everything which would slow you down.
 - 1. You can't run the race if you are weighed down and entangled.
 - 2. What was slowing down the Hebrew readers? 3:12 11:25
 - 3. Cast off the sin which keeps you from running well. 3:13 Lu. 21:34 Gal. 5:19-21 Eph. 4:22f Mt. 5:29-30 I Co. 15:33
 - 4. Lay aside even legitimate things which hinder you from pursuing victory. I Cor. 6:12 9:24-27 I Tim. 4:8 Mt. 10:37
- E. Run with endurance. Js. 1:3
 - 1. This is the great concern of the book of Hebrews. 10:23,35-36,39 6:11-12
 - 2. Conversion is just the beginning of the race.
 - 3. You are running a marathon, not a sprint.
 - 4. You must endure to the end. 3:14 10:26ff 6:4ff Mt. 10:22 24:13 II Tim. 4:7-8
 - 5. Those who are truly chosen and called by God will endure. Phil. 1:6 2:12-13 Ro. 8:29ff John 10:27-30 I Jo. 2:19

III. Fix your eyes of the goal (Jesus). v. 2-3a

- A. Looking to Jesus will enable you to endure.
 - 1. Having the goal in sight enables you to continue.
 - 2. Keeping your eyes on the finish line helps you to run straight.
 - 3. Gaze intently at Jesus and don't look anywhere else. Acts 7:55 Phil. 3:8
 - 4. How does Jesus help you to endure?
- B. Jesus is the supreme example of faithful endurance.
 - 1. He brings faith to its perfection. 2:10 6:20
 - 2. He endured the suffering and shame of the cross. 2:14ff Mt. 27:19-54 Phil. 2:5-8 I Cor. 2:2 1:18 15:1ff
 - 3. He never stopped trusting the Father. I Pe. 2:23 Mt. 22:39,42
 - 4. You should expect to suffer if you choose to follow in His steps. 11:35ff 13:13
 - 5. Your suffering is very light compared to His. 12:4
- C. Jesus was motivated by the anticipation of future joy. 11:1,6 Isa. 53:11 Ps. 16:11
 - 1. What joy was set before Him? Isa. 53:11 John 15:11
 - 2. Because of this joy, He counted the shame of the cross as unimportant. Mt. 6

3. He sits victoriously at God's right hand. 1:3,13 8:1-2 10:12 Phil. 2:9-11 Ps. 110
4. You, too, should keep your eyes on the promised joyous prize. 11:1,6,39f Ps. 16:11
I Cor. 9:24ff II Tim. 4:7-8 I John 3:2-3 Rom. 8:18 II Co. 4:17 John 17:13
16:20ff

D. Jesus empowers you to endure.

1. We need more than just a good example to be able to win the race.
2. Through union with Christ you can be victorious. Phil. 4:13 John 15:5 Ro. 6:4ff
3. Jesus is the originator and completer of faith. 2:10 Phil. 1:6 Acts 3:15
4. He sympathizes with our struggles and helps us to continue. 2:18 4:14ff Jo. 17:20f

IV. Concluding Application: Persevere as you ponder Christ. v. 3b

- A. Don't quit until you cross the finish line.
- B. *Consider* Jesus.
- C. Some of you may not yet be in the race.

Discussion questions

1. How is the Christian life like a race?
2. Who are the witnesses and what is their function?
3. What must you lay aside so that you can run your best?
4. What kind of a race are we running?
5. Who determines the course you will run? How does that help you to endure?
6. What is the goal towards which you are running?
7. How does Jesus' example enable you to persevere?
8. How does Jesus empower you to endure?
9. What motivated Jesus to press on to the end?
10. What prize awaits you at the end of the race?