

Lesson 26 - Hebrews 12:1-3**Main Idea**

Considering the “great cloud of witnesses” who have come before us, Christians should seek to pursue a life of endurance by faith, seeking Christ only as we await his appearing.

Study Questions

1. “Since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses” (12:1), what two exhortations does the author give us in verse 1?
2. Why does the author tell us to “throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles”? What effects do sin and hinderances have on our spiritual race? How do they affect our endurance? What are some things that might be included in “everything that hinders”?
3. Why is comparing the Christian life to a race an apt analogy both for the author’s audience and for Christians today? How does the analogy of a race apply to our life?
4. What should be our inspiration in running the race with perseverance (see 12:2-3)?
5. Practically speaking, what do think “fixing our eyes on Jesus” (12:2) means?
6. What does the author mean when he refers to Jesus as “the pioneer and perfecter of faith”?
7. Jesus’ motivation for enduring the cross and its shame was “the joy set before him” (12:2). What joy is set before you that can motivate you to endure and persevere? (See Romans 8:18-23; 2 Corinthians 4:17; Philippians 3:20-21).
8. What does active faithfulness look like? In what particular ways do you see Old Testament saints practicing active faithfulness? In what ways can you practice it in certain situations you experience?

9. What is the goal and finish line of the Christian race? In other words, why are we encouraged to endure? What did Christ receive for his endurance? How does considering Jesus motivate you to endure?

10. Why does God allow his people to experience persecution? What is the proper Christian response to it? List some of the various forms of persecution Christians experience.

Gospel Glimpses¹

Pioneer and Perfecter. Jesus is the pioneer (founder) and perfecter of our faith (Heb.12:2). Jesus is the champion of salvation who lives in perfect obedience and complete faith for the sake of his people. Through his perfect atoning sacrifice he secures our salvation, and his perfection leads to the perfection of his people, which will be realized on the last day (see 11:39-40). First to last, God's people are completely and utterly reliant on Jesus for salvation and sanctification.

- How does the “great cloud of witnesses” encourage you? In what ways does Jesus encourage you?

- Are there hinderances in your life that are impeding your progress ion the race? What steps might you take to make to deal with them?

- Take time to pray specifically for God to encourage you as you endure by faith.

¹ Capps pg. 79