

The Christian Race Must Be Run with Patience
(Hebrews 12:1-3)

Introduction:

1. Holidays and special events provide opportunities to study a variety of subjects.
2. To illustrate,:
 - a. Valentine's Day provided an opportunity to study passages that teach us about "love" and "the heart"
 - b. "racing" is receiving a lot of attention in our area this weekend.
3. In our lesson we are concentrating on the fact that "the Christian race must be run with patience."
4. These verses reveal 3 guidelines that will help us achieve this goal.

Discussion:

- I. FIRST, TO RUN THE CHRISTIAN RACE WITH PATIENCE WE MUST LOOK TO EXAMPLES OF FAITHFUL MEN AND WOMEN
 - A. (vs.1a) We are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses (similar to a stadium setting).
 - B. These witnesses are the people listed in ch.11.
 1. (11:4-31) Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sara, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and Rahab are listed.
 2. (11:32-38) Others are mentioned in connection with the trials they faced.
 - C. The application for us is made in 11:39-40.
 1. These people obtained a good report because they ran their races with patience.
 2. Since God has provided far greater blessings for His children today, we should be encouraged to run the Christian race with patience.
 3. These great people from the Old Testament are a great source of encouragement (Romans 15:4).
- II. SECOND, TO RUN THE CHRISTIAN RACE WITH PATIENCE WE MUST LAY ASIDE CERTAIN THINGS
 - A. (vs.1b) We must lay aside every weight (Matthew 7:13-14).
 - B. (vs.1c) We must lay aside the sin that easily besets [entangles] us.
 1. (Matthew 18:8-9) Jesus teaches us to get rid of anything that will keep us out of heaven.
 2. (Romans 13:12-14) We are to cast off the works of darkness.
 3. (Colossians 3:5-6) We are to "mortify" our earthly members.
- III. THIRD, TO RUN THE CHRISTIAN RACE WITH PATIENCE WE MUST LOOK UNTO JESUS (Keep our eyes focused on Him)
 - A. We must look unto Jesus because He is the author and finisher of our faith.
 1. By enduring the cross He has shown us what running the race with patience is all about.
 2. (vs.3) By considering the treatment that Jesus endured we will not become weary, and we will not faint in our minds.
 - B. We must look unto Jesus because of where He is.
 1. (vs.2b) He is at the right hand of the throne of God.
 2. If we keep our eyes fixed on Him we will be headed in the right direction (Colossians 3:1-4).

Conclusion:

1. Have you entered the Christian race by becoming a Christian?
2. If you have, are you running your race with patience?
3. Those who enter the Christian race and run it with patience have something special to look forward to (2 Timothy 4:7-8).