

Concluding Instructions
(Hebrews 12:1-3)

Introduction:

1. According to Hebrews 10:38, Christians are to *"live by faith."*
2. To help us understand what this involves, in ch.11 we read about a number of men and women from the Old Testament who lived by faith.
3. Following the information presented in ch.11, some concluding instructions are given to Christians in Hebrews 12:1-3.
4. Practicing these instructions will enable us to live by faith so we can be in good standing with God.

Discussion:

- I. (vs.1a) WE MUST REMEMBER THAT WE ARE COMPASSED ABOUT WITH A GREAT CLOUD OF WITNESSES
 - A. This refers to the people from the Old Testament listed in ch.11.
 1. (vs.1-31) Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sara, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, the Israelites, and Rahab are listed with the things they accomplished through their faith.
 2. (vs.32-38) Several additional Old Testament characters are briefly mentioned in connection with their deeds.
 3. An application for Christians is made in vs.39-40.
 - a. The people listed in ch.11 lived by faith without receiving the promise.
 - b. Since God has provided something better for His children today, we should be encouraged to run the Christian race with patience.
 - B. From this great cloud of witnesses:
 1. we are encouraged to live by faith
 2. we learn what living by faith involves.
- II. (vs.1b) WE MUST LAY ASIDE CERTAIN THINGS
 - A. We must lay aside every weight (Matthew 7:13-14).
 - B. We must lay aside the sin that easily besets us (Matthew 5:29-30).
- III. (vs.1c) WE MUST RUN THE RACE SET BEFORE US WITH PATIENCE
 - A. Races include:
 1. sprints (short races require speed and quickness)
 2. marathons (long races require endurance).
 - B. Christianity is like a marathon race -- *"patience"* [endurance] is essential (10:23, 36).
- IV. (vs.2-3) WE MUST LOOK UNTO JESUS [Keep our eyes focused on Him]
 - A. (vs.2a) We must look unto Jesus because He is *"the author and finisher of our faith."*
 1. By enduring the cross, Jesus has shown us what *"patience"* is.
 2. (vs.3) By remembering the treatment that Jesus endured, His followers will avoid becoming weary and faint.
 - B. (vs.2b) We must look unto Jesus because of where He is.
 1. He is at the right hand of God.
 2. By keeping our eyes focused on Him we will be headed in the right direction as we endeavor to finish the race (Colossians 3:1-4).