

Run The Race Of Faith

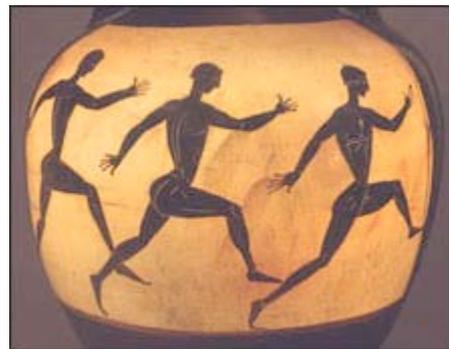
Hebrews 12

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

Hebrews 12:1

Hebrews 12 begins where Hebrews 11 finished off. The list of Faith Heroes in Hebrews 11 are now described as a “cloud of witnesses”. This does not mean that dead saints literally watch events here on earth. But the writer to the Hebrews describes our faith predecessors in Olympic terms. They are metaphorically sitting in the stadium stands and cheering us on as we compete in the race of faith (which is more about finishing than competing).

Ancient Olympian marathon runners were known to have trained with weights attached to them while they ran. But when it came time for the real race they “stripped off”- literally!



Run The Race of Faith

The author tells his audience to strip off, lay aside, or throw off, every weight which hinders us in our race of faithfulness to Christ. He is not yet dealing with sin which he mentions immediately after this.

1. What are some things that are not sin, yet can hinder a believer from being fully devoted to Christ? (Note 1 Corinthians 6:12)



2. The writer to the Hebrews then describes sin as that which is “easily” recognised as being a hindrance to walking with Christ. How do we know what this “easy-to-recognise” sin is, and how should we strip it off?

3. According to latter part of Hebrews 12:1, what type of faith-race is required from believers?

This faith race is not just about how you start or even the pace of your progress but how you faithfully keep going and eventually finish.



Run With Eyes Fixed On Christ

4. How does considering what Christ went through leading up to the Cross encourage believers to endure hardship in their walk with Christ? (Hebrews 12:2)
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Jesus is the Author of our faith. He plants initial faith in our hearts. We can't even claim our own faith! It is a gift! (Romans 12:3; Eph. 2:8)

5. But what does it mean to describe Christ as the *Finisher* of our faith?
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6. Why does the writer of Hebrews say that believers should not be discouraged? (Hebrews 12:3)
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The Suffering of Christ For Us



7. When Hebrews 12:4 says that Christ resisted sin to the point of shedding blood, what might he be referring to? (Luke 22:44) What does this indicate about when Christ's suffering began?

8. How does this analogy make the excuse "I couldn't help myself" seem like a lame excuse for sin?

The race of faith is not about moving mountains or receiving miracles, but about remaining faithful and loyal to Christ even when circumstances would plead not to. The race of faith is for the long haul. This means that we will have bad days and lose some battles in our efforts to live a godly life- but as we keep being faithful and deal with sin through repentance and confession we are assured of joining Christ in celebrating the victory of this war.

Amen.