

The Race Before Us

Heb. 12:1-2

Introduction:

- A. Christian life compared to a race.
 - 1. Witnesses are those in chapter 11.
 - 2. Participants are Christians.
- B. Christian life must have qualities needed in a race.

Discussion:

- I. It Requires *Freedom* (“Let us lay aside ... weight ... sin ...”)**
 - A. From the weight of sin.
 - 1. Its guilt. (Acts 22:16).
 - 2. Its practice — in thought, word or deed. (2 Pet. 2:1; Col. 3:8-9)
 - B. From every hindrance.
 - 1. Things that choke out the word. (Mark 4:19).
 - 2. People and relationships that hinder. (Matt. 10:37).
- II. It Requires *Effort* (“Run”)**
 - A. Must work. (Phil 2:12; 1 Cor. 15:58; 16:10).
 - B. Must strive (Lk. 13:24; Phil 1:27).
- III. It Requires *Endurance* (“Patience” - kjv).**
 - A. Must wait for the reward. (“American Prayer”; Cf. Gal. 6:9)
 - B. Impatience may cause one to either quit, burn out or cut corners.
 - 1. Gospel preaching.
 - 2. Church growth.
 - C. Patience easier with better understanding.
 - 1. Of the purpose of suffering for Christ (vv. 4-13).
 - 2. Of the value of heaven — worth endurance and wait.
- IV. It Requires *Vision* (“Looking ...”)**
 - A. Look to Jesus.
 - 1. His suffering - “endured the cross” (cf. 1 Pet. 2:20-21).
 - 2. His victory - “sat down at right hand”
 - B. Look to the future - “race set *before* us.”
 - 1. Not good to brood over past.
 - 2. Not good to depend on past.
 - C. Look too the “cloud of witnesses” (ch. 11),

Conclusion:

- A. Get into the race — obey the gospel.
- B. Run to the finish (cf. 2 Tim. 4:6-8).