

## How Can We Run the Race of Faith?

[Hebrews 12:1-2](#)

Hebrews, Day 45

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*

- Hebrews 12:1-2, ESV

Eight years ago, I ran a half marathon. 13.1 miles is a long way to run, and I had trained for it for months, but the actual race itself was much harder than I anticipated. Running in Western Maryland through the Antietam Battlefield Park and then across into Shepherdstown, West Virginia, the race had several hills which challenged my endurance to the core. My finishing time was not great, and I finished in the bottom fifth of all racers, but I did finish.

The Christian life is a race, one which makes a half marathon seem like a Sunday afternoon stroll in the park. At the end of his life, the Apostle Paul said, "*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*" (2 Tim. 4:7, ESV) I'm sure all believers would like to be able to say the same thing as Paul at the end of their life race. So, how can we?

Hebrews 12:1-2 tells us. As we cross from Hebrews 11 to 12, we are heading into the closing application section of this marvelous book. Looking back at chapter 11, the Hall of Fame of Faith, we see many people who have run race before us: Abraham, Moses, David, Sarah, Deborah, and more. As part of the communion of saints, those who have gone before surround us and bear witness as we run our race. So, how can we run successfully?

We must run with endurance. The race of faith is a life-long race. It will challenge our endurance to the core. It will have steep hills we're not sure we are able to climb. It will have long lonely stretches where we ache for fellowship and feel the pain of isolation. To run well, we must "*run with endurance the race that is set before us.*"

We can get the endurance we need for this race only one way: by looking to Jesus. Of course, we look to Jesus as our example. Of all who have ever run the race of faith, He is the only One who has run it perfectly. He never failed and never stumbled in any way.

Yet we look to Jesus as so much more than just our example. We look to Him as "*the founder and perfecter of our faith.*" Jesus is the One who established the foundation of our faith in Himself, in His person and work. He is also the One who is the finisher and the finish line of our faith, the goal and the One who carries us to the goal.

The author of Hebrews highlights two aspects of Jesus' work as the founder and perfecter of our faith: His endurance on the cross, where He paid for our sins, and His sitting down at the right hand of the throne of God. In enduring the cross, Jesus founded our faith on the solid rock of His righteousness and His atoning work. In sitting at the right hand of the throne, Jesus finished our faith, giving us a sure, immovable anchor in heaven.

We need nothing and no one else for the endurance we need to run the race with preserving joy. Jesus is our complete sufficiency - our example, our coach, our trainer, our strength, our perseverance, our salvation. If we would run with endurance, we must run with our eyes relentlessly fixed on Him!