

How to Run with Perseverance

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Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0 : 00] Take your Bibles and turn to the New Testament book of Hebrews, Hebrews chapter 10. We're going to read two passages from the book of Hebrews. The first is beginning in Hebrews 10.32.

Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering.

Sometimes you are publicly exposed to insults and persecution. At other times, you stood side by side with those who were so treated. You sympathized with those in prison.

And joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions.

So do not throw away your confidence. It will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

[1 : 10] For in just a little while, he who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith.

And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him. But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.

Now, faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. And then skip down to verse 39.

11-39. These were all commended for their faith. Yet none of them received what had been promised.

God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect. Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

[2 : 25] Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

If you don't have your Bibles open, please open them to Hebrews chapter 12. That vicinity.

The Christian life is a lifelong race that requires great exertion and great endurance. Life is hard. Much of it is uphill and into the wind. But the Christian's life is even harder because on top of all the normal difficulties that everyone faces, the moment you begin to follow Christ, you become the target of Satan himself and all of his demons, the world that opposes you, and you begin to realize you now have a battle inside of you with your own flesh that wars against the spirit that you didn't have before.

[3 : 56] And all of this difficulty in the Christian life has caused some to stumble, some to become disenchanted with the Christian faith, and even to go back and to quit, quit the race.

It's caused others to think that they certainly must be missing out on some secret which, once learned, would make the Christian life easy, as others claim, as it looks to them, as they look at their brothers and sisters who seem to be having life by the tail.

Well, let me just begin this morning by saying, if you are finding the Christian life difficult, welcome to the club.

Welcome to the club, or the family of God. The Lord Jesus says, in this world you will have trouble, tribulation, hardship, pressures.

The Apostle Paul went around visiting the churches he had planted and encouraged them to remain true to the faith, saying, we must go through many hardships before we enter into the kingdom of God, in order to enter the kingdom of God.

[5 : 11] So rather than doubting your salvation, or wondering if you're on the wrong path, or missing out on some secret, know this, that difficulty is a mark of the Christian life.

It is a characteristic of life on the narrow road with Jesus. And another truth that we must note is that perseverance in holiness to the end of our life is absolutely necessary for salvation.

There are no trophies for quitters in this race. Jesus says in Matthew 24, 12 and 13, that because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold.

But he who endures to the end shall be saved. You must finish the race. You must persevere in holiness to the end.

Now these Hebrew Christians were struggling with persecution. They were struggling with difficulty in their way, on their race. And so they're told here in Hebrews 10, 36, you need to persevere.

[6 : 18] You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you'll receive what was promised. So don't turn back now. You must finish the race.

Don't let difficulty make you shrink back. And with confidence, the writer goes on in verse 39 to say, but we, we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who, and the word is in the present continuous tense, those who go on believing and are saved.

And so because the Christian race is hard and because persevering to the end is absolutely necessary, the whole book of Hebrews is filled with warnings and encouragements to keep going, to not turn back, to persevere to the end.

Now, the Lord knows that we need heavy doses of encouragement to not grow weary and lose heart, to not slow down, to not turn back.

And so my big text this morning is just such encouragement to run on, to persevere in holiness to the end of your life. It's Hebrews 12, 1 and 2. And it says, Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles and let us run with perseverance the race that is marked out for us.

[7 : 53] Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Do you see it? Right there in the middle, our theme, let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

So three points this morning on how to run your race with perseverance all the way to the end. They all begin with an E. First of all, we're to run encouraged by examples of faith.

Verse 1 says, Therefore, since we're surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses. Now this points back to all the men and women of faith in chapter 11 who've run their race before us.

And I'm really not sure that the idea here is that they're all watching us from heaven as we're running. I really believe they have better things to do. I rather believe, though that's a possible interpretation of a witness, this cloud of witnesses, I rather believe we need to consider what a witness does.

[9 : 11] A witness testifies. A witness bears witness. And I think that's the better meaning here. If we've just finished reading chapter 11, we've heard this great cloud of witnesses weighing in on us, testifying to us about how they ran their race with faith, trusting God, taking Him at His word, being sure of what they hoped for, the promises made to them, the certainty of things that they could not see, and how God always kept His promise.

So their very life story to a man and to a woman continues to testify to us that no one who trusts in Him will ever be disappointed. So run on by faith in Him.

Verse 4 of chapter 11, By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man when God spoke well of His offerings.

And by faith, notice, he still speaks. He still speaks even though he's dead. He's still testifying as one of that cloud of witnesses, testifying to us from the pages of Scripture to go on believing all that God has said.

You'll not be disappointed. Noah, I've never seen a global flood before in my life, but by faith I took God at His word and built the ark and it all happened just as He said it would.

[10 : 48] His word is faithful. Believe it. Go on believing what you cannot see. And so with Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Rahab, this great cloud of witnesses are all shouting the same

encouragement.

Go on believing. Go on by faith. You'll not be disappointed. God is faithful. Now that's what we need plenty of, that kind of encouragement from examples of the faith.

So are you continually being encouraged by these many examples of perseverance found in chapter 11? 11. Well, you are if you're reading your Bibles regularly.

Faith comes, how? By hearing the word. Including the word of this great cloud of witnesses that all through your Bibles are weighing in and testifying to the faithfulness of God.

And such variety we find. There's something for us all. Young people, old people, that trusted God and never were disappointed.

[12:01] Well, they had some difficulties to endure, didn't they? If you just, we didn't take the time to read chapter 11, but you know that. You know that Abel himself for his righteous following of God, though he was commended by God, he was killed by his brother.

So there are difficulties in the believer's life and race, these who have gone before us, but they're rejoicing in heaven now. The race is over and done.

We're still down on the track. You're still running your race. And it's not exactly like their race. Our races are all different. Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

Maybe you've been to a cross-country meet and it's not on a track, but it's through the woods and it's through the countryside and somebody has marked off the track and it puts stakes or cones, flags, some way that you know where to go on the race.

Well, the picture here is that we've had someone mark out our race for us, every one of us, individual races. And if your race has you running through a storm, a storm of sickness and sorrow, through the dark forest with no light, up some hill difficulty, know this, your race has been marked out by a sovereign God of all wisdom who loved you so much that he gave his own son to die for you and still has everything you need for your journey.

[13:42] You may not be called like Noah to build an ark, but you are called perhaps to build a family. You might not live in the palace with Moses, but like him, young people, you might be called upon to choose mistreatment from the world, to align yourself with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time.

You see, whatever the race marked out for us, we all have need of faith in the unseen. And need to persevere in the right way.

Chapter 13 and verse 7 will tell us there's even some in our midst that we are to imitate their faith as well. Remember, your leaders and those who spoke the word of God to you, consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.

That's what we're being told here. This great cloud of witnesses be encouraged by their example of faith and imitate their faith. Now, that's the first way that we are to run if we would run with perseverance to the end, encouraged by faithful runners before you.

Secondly, we're to run with entanglements thrown off. Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles.

[15:10] Now, when Olympic runners of the day came to the starting line, they stripped down. They threw off anything that might weigh them down. They got rid of it.

Whatever might entangle them or hinder them. And now we're being urged to do the same in our race of life. And there's nothing more entangling than sin. If we're wanting to persevere to the end, we can't afford to drag sin around as we're running the race.

So we throw it off. Living for the praises of men. You know, Noah wouldn't have got far in his race of building the ark if he was living for the praises of men.

Living for the pleasures of sin, the treasures of this earth. Moses would never have left Egypt if he was clinging to such things as the treasure since he lived as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

Not obeying hard commands, Abraham had never left the comforts of home and ventured on a bare promise and lived like a nomad in tents all of his life.

[16:26] No, no. If you're going to persevere in holiness to the end of the race, you'll need to declare war on sin and just keep throwing it off. I have no doubt that this will be your greatest difficulty in the Christian life because you find sin clings to you like your skin.

It's all around you and within you. So finishers of the race live their entire lives repenting. That was Luther. One of the first of the 95 theses.

We live the whole Christian life repenting, getting rid of sin, confessing, renouncing it, starving it, mortifying it, saying no to it, avoiding the occasions of its temptation. There's too much at stake to dally with sin if we aim to run the race with perseverance to the end. Even little sins can stumble us.

A little lie, a little pornography and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death. But there's more to throw off than sin.

[17 : 37] Not only sin but everything that hinders. Everything that hinders you from running the race that God has marked out for you. I knew a man who found that playing golf was hindering him from the race God had called for him to run.

Now it's not sinful to play golf. But he threw it off in order to not be hindered in finishing the race that God had given him to run.

I knew a man who quit watching TV because it was hindering him from running the race that God had given him to run. Anything you see that's good in and of itself but that weighs you down, slows you up, trips you up is a constant stumbling block to you, a source of temptation that keeps defeating you.

Gone. Throw it away. The stakes are too high. It's radical surgery even as our Lord Jesus taught us in the Sermon on the Mount that if your eye causes you to sin pluck it out.

If your hand causes you to sin cut it off. Your right foot cut it off. It's better to enter into heaven with one than to enter into hell with two. Those are Jesus' words.

[18 : 51] And so we must surgically remove occasions to sin that we keep falling before. Now the good news, Christian, you say, I thought this was to be encouragements to persevere.

Well, it is, but they're often mixed with warnings in the book of Hebrews, aren't they? But the encouragement is this, that if God commands it, he enables it. That's the principle of the Christian life.

If he commands it, there is grace in him to enable you to do it. There is sin killing and sin cleansing power in Jesus Christ.

So keep looking to him. And that brings us to our third E. If we're to run with perseverance to the end of this race, we need to run encouraged by examples of faith with entanglements thrown off and now third with our eyes fixed on Jesus.

Our eyes. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus. And the word here has the idea of turning away from other objects and locking in on Jesus.

[20 : 10] Locking in on Jesus. We look away to Jesus. Now we're told to be encouraged by these other examples of faithful runners who have gone before us to imitate their faith.

But nowhere are we told to fix our eyes on Moses. Nowhere are we told to be looking unto Abraham, the father of the faithful, or David, the man after God's own heart.

But we are told to run the whole race persevering to the end with our eyes fixed on Jesus. Never to let him out of your sight.

Ever looking to him. You see, we're not even told to fix our eyes on our own sins and our own hindrances. Well, we need to see them if we're going to get rid of them. But they're never to be our focus.

You're never to make your sin and your troubles your focus. Christ is to be your focus. He's the one who saves us from our sins. And so, He remains the focus. Fixing your eyes on Jesus.

[21 : 17] Now, that's more than a glance at Jesus once in a while. It's more than a once a week Sunday thing. No, it's the steady fixed gaze that refuses to let him out of your sight.

That's what we need to run this race. Eyes locked on Jesus. 45 years ago, I met a Korean young man. He looked to be not a day over 16, but in fact, he had been in the Air Force of South Korea and was training to fly fighter jets.

And he told me he was dismissed for target fixation. I'd never heard that before. But it seems that once he got his jet locked in on the target, he couldn't get it unlocked.

And he was just bearing down on the target and was going to take it out kamikaze-like unless the instructor had pulled up on the controls. Now, that's a problem if you're flying fighter jets.

But oh, that I had that problem of target fixation on Jesus that locks in on him and doesn't let anything distract me from him.

[22 : 34] Always seeing him wherever I'm flying, wherever I'm running, whatever my circumstances, to gaze, to fix on him.

Now, there are four things about him we need to see, this text tells us. And the first thing your eye, when you fix your eye on him, you need to see him as the object of your faith. We're going to see he's the example of faith.

But he's more than that. He is the very object of faith. So we, in coming, we look away from ourselves, don't we?

We look away from our righteousness, any good things, religious things we've done. We look away from our works, even away from our faith and our repentings. And we look instead to Jesus for life. We look to him for righteousness, forgiveness, for power, for wisdom, for all that we need. And so it's ever looking away from our emptiness to his fullness and receiving from him.

[23 : 36] If you're going to be a Christian, you better get used to receiving. The whole of the Christian life is looking and receiving from him. So, he's the object of faith.

The object of our faith. Faith grows best not just talking about faith, not even just studying about faith.

What is faith? What's its nature? How does it work? Faith grows best by fixing our eyes on Jesus. And as we do, we find our faith and confidence in him growing, strengthened.

Our faith is fed by looking to Jesus. That's the way we were saved. We look to Jesus. Look and live. That's the way we're sanctified. Beholding him, we are being transformed into his likeness from one stage of glory to another.

And that's the way we'll be glorified. We know that when Christ shall appear, we shall be like him because we'll see him as he is. It's the whole Christian life from the beginning of the end to the end.

[24 : 46] Fixing our eyes on Jesus. So where do you see him now? How do you do that? Where do you find Jesus to fix your eyes on him? Well, we find him in the scriptures, don't we?

That's where he's set before us. That's where he is revealed to us. He's the main attraction. He's the main focal point, the key that unlocks the whole Bible.

The Holy Spirit has been sent into your hearts, Christians, to glorify him. He reads with us the Holy Scriptures and reveals our risen Lord.

Shining his illuminating light upon the Son of God. John, have you seen him? Look at him here.

Look at him there. Look at him here in the Old Testament. Look at him here in the Gospels.

Look at him in the Epistles. Look at him in the book of Revelation. The Spirit of God illuminating our eyes to see Jesus here in our Bibles.

[25 : 44] So then it's in thinking and meditating upon him as seen in the Scriptures that we're seeing him with the eye of faith. I've set the Lord always before me.

Because he is at my right hand, I will not be moved. That's an activity of the mind. We see him with us. Does the Bible say he's with us? Then we see him there at our right hand.

We apply it. We're never without him. He's always with us. We're looking to him. My eyes are ever on the Lord, Psalm 25, 15. Why?

For only he will release my feet from the snare. Eyes ever on the Lord. Nothing looks the same with our eyes on Jesus.

The chains of sin don't look quite so strong with Jesus in view. The hill difficulty doesn't seem quite so tall with Jesus in view. The darkness of night looks not so foreboding since no matter how dark it gets, there's light for a look at the Savior.

[26 : 54] So turn your eyes on Jesus. Look full in his wonderful face and the things of earth, all these difficulties, the hard stuff of the Christian life, the things you battle with every day, some of those big storms that have broken upon your ship, the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace.

Because you're looking to Jesus. We fix our eyes on him as we find him in the scriptures and we see him in our lives. We fix our eyes on him by praying to him. 2nd Chronicles chapter 20, Jehoshaphat is the king of Judah and he finds a vast army coming against him.

A whole coalition of nations way out numbering them. So Jehoshaphat gathers the people together to look to the Lord in prayer.

To look to him for help. It's a beautiful prayer. Praising God for his greatness. And then he turns to petition.

Oh our God will you not judge them for we have no power to face this enemy this vast army that's attacking us.

[28 : 14] We do not know what to do but our eyes are upon you. Isn't that a beautiful prayer? How often have you found yourself just there in your race that God has marked out for you?

You don't know what to do. You have no more options. You have no way out. And you have no power of your own to meet the challenge.

That's a good place to be if it lifts up your eyes to where our help comes from. Our help comes from the Lord the maker of heaven and earth. Our eyes are upon you.

that's seven eighths of the victory isn't it? And sadly it takes us a while often to get to that point where we are looking to the Lord where we are fixed upon him by faith where we lift our eyes up off the problem to see him who rules and reigns over it all.

When the men of Judah came to the place that overlooks the desert and look toward the vast army scripture says they saw only dead bodies lying on the ground no one had escaped for God had caused them to kill each other off.

[29 : 44] We have no power to face this vast enemy but our eyes are on! So we see Jesus as the all sufficient object of faith and then we see him as the author of faith where did you get your faith there's two says let's fixing our eyes on Jesus the author of our faith faith isn't something you were born with faith is not something that your parents taught you faith is not something that you worked up within you this says Jesus authored it Jesus authored it he enabled you to believe on him by his powerful working in you through the spirit the word for author here can also carry the idea of pioneer of our faith the one who authors it but pioneer is a pioneer someone that goes out in front and it just reminds us that

Jesus has been here he's he's been where you're now running the race and he's he's led the way he's lived a life of faith trusting in his heavenly father to provide for him so the way marked out for you is taking you through winding dark uphill places and you don't know where it's leading you but he does he's been here he's leading the way he's the pioneer of your faith trust him he's made it through the wilderness of this world all the way to the father's house follow him trust him he knows the way he'll get you there he's not only the author of your faith thirdly he's the perfecter of your faith as we look at Jesus who are we looking at we're looking at the object of our faith but we're looking at the author of our faith and the one who perfects it isn't there a world of encouragement in that that

Jesus who authored your faith will also perfect it now just how does he do that well he puts you into situations where you need him not a little bit but desperately need him or you can't get on without him he sends you trials and difficulties that empty you preparing you to look away to Jesus and to find all that you need in him so he tells his disciples let's go to the other side of the lake and into the boat they go and he's sleeping in the stern and the furious squall comes down out of the hills surrounding the lake of Galilee whips up a storm just pounds that are faster than they can bail it out and finally the disciples go over to Jesus and wake him up don't you care that we're drowning don't you care that we're going to drown he gets up he rebukes the wind and the waves peace be still and everything is in a great calm and then he turns to his disciples and says where is your faith where is your faith you have faith you're following me because you have faith but where is it man it didn't show up in this trial of faith you have no more confidence in me in who

I am my loving care for you than this you see this was a test of faith let's go to the other side of the lake and all part of the journey was this storm in the middle of the sea a test of faith to get them to look to him and it took them some while to get to him and they found out what that he is indeed all they needed all that they needed or another time when Jesus saw the great crowd of 5,000 men plus women and children he says to Philip where shall we find where shall we buy bread for all these people to eat and John inserts he asked this only to test them for he already knew what he was going to do he asked them to test them how many times does

God come to you and test you along the race marked out for you will she look to me or will she panic and look to her own resources he's ever bringing us into trial ever putting us into situations that are over our heads to test our faith to call it forth into practice to exercise it to strengthen it why so that we might persevere to the end so James says consider pure joy my brothers whenever you face trials of many kinds because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance the very thing that we need to get to the end of the race and he knows how to perfect your faith and storms are some of his chosen gifts choice gifts and the disciples what did they learn each time their faith was tested they learned that they had all that they needed in

[35 : 41] Jesus the one that was with them Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones in treating this passage said the disciples messed up a lot with regard to their faith they heard a lot where is your faith oh you of little faith and he says I'm glad they messed up a lot because I find myself there messing up a lot not showing up with faith faith to look to Christ right away to not let him out of sight in the midst of my storm aren't you glad that these disciples had these lessons of faith that we might learn from them to look to Jesus he's the object of our faith he's the author of our faith he's the perfecter of our faith be encouraged he knows how to do it and then lastly!

fix your eyes on Jesus and see him as the ultimate example of faith as I said he's more than the example of faith but he's not less he's left us an example to follow in this area just as in others and so God saved the best for last in this hall of faith that starts back in chapter 11 and goes through all these people in the Old Testament and now we he saved the best for last the Lord Jesus the Lord Jesus he lived as a man his whole life was lived by faith and not by sight just like we must live and so for our encouragement let's look at this specific example before we close this specific example of his faith his whole life was lived by faith!

but this is the example that's held before us here it was his greatest trial of faith would anyone doubt that the greatest trial of faith for the Savior and this is what we read who for the joy set before him endured the cross scorning its shame and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God what a race marked out for our Lord Jesus by his heavenly father a race that took him up the difficult hill of Mount Calvary to that horrible cross on which he must die and what do we see when we fix our eyes on Jesus there well we see him enduring the cross enduring the cross with all its torture and pain and body and soul a body that had every nerve ending in it that your body has and that was screaming for the pain to stop a soul just like your soul except for sin that could be crushed and broken and long for comfort and he suffers not only the wrath of men but the infinite wrath of God as we sang this morning for he was bearing the sins of many in order to make them right with God and so there he is and he's hanging between heaven and earth and he's cursed by both but he's not quitting he's not coming down my son had me doing a crazy exercise of just grabbing a bar and hanging on and seeing how long I could hold on to a bar just hanging my weight and after two minutes I was done you know what I thought about how did Jesus hang there on nails for six hours I quit I said that's it he endured he persevered to the very to the very end and the deepest stroke that pierced him was the stroke that justice gave the justice that our sins deserved for Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us as it is written cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree so this is where Jesus race has brought him here here to the cross and it was for this that he came into the world that he might save his people from their sins and as we fix our eyes on Jesus we not only see him not quitting because of his cross enduring the cross but also scorning its shame the children's catechism asks about the death of Christ and the answer is that he died a painful and shameful death of the cross and often it's the painful death of the cross that we think about but that's not what is highlighted here it's the shame of the cross that's highlighted for us so as we see Jesus on Calvary we're to see him fix our eyes on him and see the shame of the cross that he's bearing the cross saved for the worst of criminals and there he is the one!

[41 : 15] whom now numbered with the transgressors there's one on each side of him thugs thieves pirates and to the casual passerby what did it look like that day it looked like three losers dregs of the earth getting what they deserved the shame of the cross and then there was the shame of the mocking taunts as he suffers there they hit him while he's down and what did they say well he saved others he can't save himself and the shame of it was that it now looks like that that he can't save himself and someone shouts well if you're the Christ the king come down from the cross and we'll believe you and the shame is that right now it looks like he's just another one of these blaspheming pretended false messiahs who can't come down and the one that must have cut him to the quick the most was he said that he trusts in

God well if God wants him let him now rescue him and the shame is that it surely looks like even God doesn't want him now as he continues there on the cross he who is holy blameless and pure now appears to be a great sinner unwanted by God and man the shame of the cross but it says he scorned it he scorned it or he despised it you know what that means kids he treated it as if it was nothing if you're ever despised by someone it means someone looks down their nose and they don't have any respect at all to you they treat you as a nothing a nobody and that's how Jesus treated this shame as great as it was he despised it as a nothing nothing to move him his face was

set as a flint he's going to finish the work his father gave him to do and so though the shame of what perseverance in the race marked out for

Jesus don't you love him he's doing that for you dear Christian this is what he did he persevered under the weight of my sins and yours and all the iniquities ever laid upon him and I want to know what enabled such perseverance in my savior what kept him from quitting his race marked out for him well we're told we're told it was the joy that was set before him it was for that that he endured the cross it was for that!

that he! scorned its shame it was for that he kept running his race for the joy notice set before him so this is a future joy that we're talking about a joy nowhere in sight there on the cross to the naked eye of Jesus all he could see and feel was misery and horror pain and shame abandonment by God but there it was this future!

joy that could be seen with the eye of faith and faith pierced through to see the joy that was coming a faith that is sure of what he hoped for what his father had promised him a faith that was certain of what he could not see all the joy that awaited him as the reward for his suffering the joy that his heavenly father had promised him the joy of bringing many sons and daughters to glory that was the joy set before him the joy of returning to the heavenly father having completed the work that he gave him to do that all that was lost in Adam had been restored through the work of Christ a work that would would put right all that sin made wrong a work that would fulfill the purpose for which God created Jesus

[45 : 45] Christ can return to the father and say father I've done all that you gave me to do what joy of a son to return to a father knowing that he's completed the task to have his father reward him well done son well done the joy that was set before him and it was this joy perceived by faith alone that caused him not to quit his race on the cross but to run on endure the cross scorn the shame and so we ask well what was the upshot of it all what was the outcome of his faith was his faith in God's promises disappointed not on your life for the father raised him from the dead on the third day and then 40 days later raised him to his own right hand where he sat down at the right hand of the throne of God exalted!

now to the highest place given the name that's above every name a name at which every knee will one day bow the joy that was set before him that he saw by faith this is the Jesus we need to fix our eyes on and as we do and see him on the cross this is what we need to see that he persevered through faith in the coming joy two uses one for the believer one for the lost dear believer are you finding the race marked out for you as hard his was harder and so verses three and four tell us consider him consider him look look at him gaze on him him who endured such opposition from sinful men so that you will not grow weary and lose heart in your struggle against sin you've not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood but he has he has he did and looking away to Jesus you'll find strength to persevere in your race all the way to the end see by faith the joy set before you you see you must do as he did you must see the joy set before you that everlasting joy that will crown your head gladness and joy that will overtake you and the sorrow and sighing that will flee away for you forever the great joy of seeing your Lord Jesus face to face being welcomed by him into his everlasting kingdom well done good and faithful servant enter into the joy of your Lord come and share your master's happiness the very joy of Jesus come and share it that's the joy set before you the joy of being with him forever in whose presence is fullness of joy and at whose right hand are pleasures forevermore and no greater joy no greater pleasure found in seeing his joy and having you there with him oh that will be glory for me glory for me when by his grace

I shall look on his face and see there nothing of disappointment nothing of rebuke nothing of scorn but the joy of seeing me enjoying the presence of God forever with him that's enough joy to keep on running brother and sister running to the end through thick and thin you still lost my friend why why when there's such a savior that died for sinners that welcomes you to come to him just as you are to be saved and promises that all who do come to him he will never drive away but will welcome and receive and save you so bring your sins to Jesus to have him save you from them you be the humble sinner and he will be the faithful savior look and live look to

Jesus Christ and live amen may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our father who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word amen amen so