

Gospel Therefore

Gospel Endurance, Part 3

Fixing My Eyes On Christ

Sun, 25-Mar-2012 / Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Peter LaRuffa

Do you see what this means—all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It means we'd better get on with it. Strip down, start running—and never quit! No extra spiritual fat, no parasitic sins. Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he's *there*, in the place of honor, right alongside God. When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he plowed through. *That* will shoot adrenaline into your souls!

The Message : Heb 12:1–3

1. We have a race to run! Weighty, clingy sin must be laid aside and put off if we want to endure to the end. (12:1)

God calls us to lay aside two things—**weight** and **sin**.

NASB: “every encumbrance”

NKJV, NRSV: “every weight”

TEV: “everything that gets in the way”

NJB: “everything that weighs us down”

“The Greek term translated as “weight” is used philosophically as “be careful of ‘the good’ as the enemy of ‘the best.’”

Utley, R. J. D. (1999). *Vol. Volume 10: The Superiority of the New Covenant: Hebrews*. Study Guide Commentary Series (124). Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International.

Yes, God is calling us to lay aside sin, but we shouldn't stop there. We are to consider not only that which is outright sin, but also anything that isn't best, or easily distracting us from running hard and finishing well.

“The ancient papyrus manuscript P⁴⁶ has “easily distracts.” This reference is to anything that trips up the believer in the race of life (cf. Phil. 3:13–14). It may be a recurrent sin, an out-of-balance desire or even the presence of many good things—anything that causes them to neglect the things for which they are gifted and called by God.”

Utley, R. J. D. (1999). *Vol. Volume 10: The Superiority of the New Covenant: Hebrews*. Study Guide Commentary Series (124). Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International.

2. Remember—there is one mediator between us and God, and that's Jesus Christ Himself. There is no better example of “Gospel Endurance” than Christ—the Author and Finisher of our faith! (12:2)

1 Tim. 2:5 “For there is one God, and there is **one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus...**”

Jesus endured the cross, despised the shame, and did so with joy. He looked beyond the present suffering of the moment to what would be accomplished in the end; glorifying His Father by redeeming sinners like you & me!

3. We must fix our eyes on Christ and Him alone in order to persevere and endure during our toughest times in life. He is our greatest example of one who suffered and finished well! (12:3)

Heb. 12:3 “Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.”

**Questions for Personal Reflection/
Small Group Discussion:**

- (1) What is God calling you to lay aside today in order that you might run the race in way that is *best*? Is it outright sin or just “unnecessary weight?”
- (2) Oftentimes life leaves us sweaty, panting, ready to pass out, and it seems as if we’re nowhere near the finish line. There’s so much race left to run! Is God calling you to confess and repent from looking to someone/something other than Christ for strength?
- (3) How are you challenged, convicted, encouraged, etc. when you read that Jesus endured the cross with joy according to Heb. 12:2?