

Fact Sheet for **“Run with Endurance”**  
**Hebrews 12:1-17**

Pastor Bob Singer  
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**ESV <sup>1</sup> ¶ 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 (ἀγών) that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> 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.**

I'm going to rearrange and re translate the words of these two verses a little to show you their grammatical structure.

“Therefore, we also... let us run with endurance the race that is set before us... 1) having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us... 2) putting aside every impediment and the sin which so easily entangles us... and 3) fixing our eyes on the founder and perfecter of faith... Jesus... who endured the cross for the joy that was set before him, disregarding the shame... and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Notice every thought in these two verses.

let us run with endurance the race that is set before us...

*This is not a sprint but a long-distance race*

1) having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us...

*Those heroes of the faith in chapter 11*

2) putting aside every impediment and the sin which so easily entangles us...

*Both flab and gear*

3) fixing our eyes on the founder and perfecter of faith... Jesus

*There must be nothing to divide our attention*

who endured the cross for the joy that was set before him, disregarding the shame... and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

*Jesus had the long-term view*

**<sup>3</sup> ¶ Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.**

The recipients of this letter had endured hostility from those who were not Christians (10:32-34). Likewise we are encouraged not to grow weary or fainthearted.

**<sup>4</sup> In your struggle (ἀνταγωνίζομαι) against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.**

“to the point of shedding your blood” = martyrdom

By “sin” the author likely had in mind the sinners who opposed them as they did Jesus (12:3), but also their personal sin (12:1).

**<sup>5</sup> And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR BE WEARY WHEN REPROVED BY HIM. <sup>6</sup> FOR THE LORD DISCIPLINES THE ONE HE LOVES, AND CHASTISES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES."**<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Proverbs 3:11-12.

This verse is phrased with the masculine “son” but applies equally as well to “daughters”. Think of it. God’s discipline of us is evidence of his love for us. If he didn’t discipline us it would be evidence that he really didn’t love us. *Think about your disciplining of your own children. Our discipline should flow primarily from our love for our children, not anger over their actions.* This discipline in this passage is for the two goals of 1) helping us stand strong when opposed in our faith and 2) training us to live righteously.

**<sup>7</sup> It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? <sup>8</sup> If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.**

NET **Hebrews 12:8** But if you do not experience discipline, something all sons have shared in, then you are illegitimate and are not sons.

**<sup>9</sup> Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live?**

Respect of children for their fathers is not built if fathers choose not to discipline their children, if their discipline is exceedingly harsh and not in love, or if their discipline is in reality no discipline at all.

**<sup>10</sup> For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.**

Remember the saying... “Cleanliness is next to godliness”? That’s not exactly biblical, unless you are talking about cleanliness from sin. A better saying is “Holiness is next to godliness”. God’s has a perfect goal in his discipline of us... holiness.

**<sup>11</sup> For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.**

Ouch! But discipline is for training.

**<sup>12</sup> ¶ Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, <sup>13</sup> and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.**

...hands and knees that don’t work right...

Compare verse 13 with Proverbs 3:5-6 and 4:6.

**<sup>14</sup> Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. <sup>15</sup> See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; <sup>16</sup> that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal.**

All means all, not just with Christians.

This “root of bitterness” does not mean that I become bitter at someone. It is instead a reference to something said in Deuteronomy 29:18-19.

Esau was not spiritually minded, but instead he was concerned with the here and now.

**<sup>17</sup> For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.**

In other words... don’t yield to what you feel at the moment. There is finality in what we do.