

Hebrews 12:1-4

Committing to the Race

vs.1- "Wherefore"- this points us back to what has just been said and forms a conclusion to ch.11
(The word is used here to say "since all these I have mentioned lived by faith, you should too")

- "cloud"- (nephos) a large dense multitude, a throng

- "witnesses"- (martus) this word has the same root meaning of the phrase "good report" in 11:39
- it means one who has proved the strength and genuineness of their faith, possibly by
means of dying violently

*a few things we must consider on this verse in concerning "the race"

1- the word "race" (agon) is the same Greek word for "conflict" in Phil.1:30

- it means a trial or struggle (its where we derive the word "agony" in English)

2- all believers including the author are participants ("let us")

3- it stresses preparation- "weight and sin"

*the weight is anything that would hinder our progress

Truth- weight isn't necessarily something evil- it could be something harmless

(The problem is not what the weight is, but what it does- it holds one down)

- the sin is the definite evil as any and all sin are a hindrance to Christian living

*Notice the singular use of this word- we all have that one sin that keeps us weighed down

*however, within the context, the writer is most definitely talking about the sin of
doubt or unbelief to his readers

4- "with patience"- this is steadfastness or endurance

*it is a determination to finish in spite of pressures, problems, or people

Truth- its not a 100 yd. dash, it's a marathon that begins at conversion and finishes when
one leaves this world

5- it is "set before us"- every believer has their own race (trials) and no two are alike

*this phrase implies that God already knows what we will encounter and endure

vs.2- "Looking unto Jesus"- this term means to turn the eyes away from other things and
fix them on one particular thing

Truth- He is our hope in the race and the prize at the end- Phil.3:8

*Biblical hope is not based on wishful thinking but is a settled conviction based on eternal truth
(The assurance of the future fuels endurance for the present)

- "Author"- (archegos) chief leader, one who takes the lead and gives the example, a pioneer

- "Finisher"- (teleiotes) perfecter, one who is set before to be the highest example

(This phrase means Christ has blazed the trail for us and has completed the course)

- "joy"- this is gladness of what a work accomplishes

(It accomplished the Father's Will and made redemption possible for fallen man)

- "set before Him"- Jesus had His trials set before Him as the Cross was the reason He came

*but He, being the Perfecter, gave us redemption and a race to run

- "endured"- (hupomeno) to remain or abide, to receding or fleeing

- "despising the shame"- shame means a public disgrace or dishonor

- "set down"- an indication of a completed task or work that has been finished

vs.3- "consider"- meaning to take a close look or to give careful attention to

*the "contradiction of sinners" was the speaking out against Him on the Cross as He endured
vocal ridicule against His integrity and redemptive intention- I Pet.2:21-24

- "wearied"- this consideration should lead the readers to encouragement and would strengthen
against mental discouragement they are receiving at that point

- *Remember- these readers are new Jewish converts that being heavily persuaded to renounce “The Way” and revert back to Judaism
- they would most likely be outcasted by friends, family, and all religious affiliates
- *keep in mind that Judaism and the Levitical system has been deep-rooted for 1500 years
- vs.4- as they would have to sacrifice a lot to follow Christ, the writer compares what they will endure to what Christ endured for them- and there’s no comparison
- *this is a part of the “agony” that is the race
- “resisted unto blood”- this means to be beaten or even die for what you believe in
- “striving against sin”- the main sin referenced here would be the sin of unbelief which just so happens to be unpardonable- Matt.12:31
- *they have not had to pay with their lives in their opposition
- *Notice the word “yet”- this means that it is always a possibility but they haven’t gone that far at that point