



Hebrews 11 is a well-known section in Scripture; it is what many pastors call the great “Hall of Faith” chapter. With no disrespect to the canonical order, one could introduce that great chapter with 12:1-2, which tell believers to “run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith.” ***When a person trusts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, he or she is set on a “racetrack,” which is an analogy used several places in Scripture for the Christian life.*** What is most important is how to run that race for it is not a stroll, or without a goal; rather, the belief is to run with endurance like a pilgrim set on a path to cross the finish line. God’s people are to be different from those without faith (i.e. those who conform themselves to the world in general). Believers are to heed the Word of God, the Bible, and to seek strength and power from the risen Lord to run the race.

Reading and studying the Bible should not be an academic exercise alone; rather the goal is to apply what is read and studied. Hebrews 12:1 begins with an encouraging note: “therefore . . . with a cloud of witnesses surrounding us.” The encouragers are those in the “Hall of Faith” of chapter 11. They were not perfect individuals, yet they still ran the race before them by faith. Meeting someone who is today running the race (like those described in Heb 11) can be an encouragement to persevere when discouraged. ***Everyone can run the race by following the example of others whose faith is evident in how they live.***

Faith is intensely practical from Hebrews 11. Faith in the Bible is not being “so heavenly minded that you are no earthly good” (and it certainly is not being so earthly minded that you are no heavenly good). ***Faith is intensely practical; there is a goal and thus intentionality.*** There are people who have run previously, which means no believer is alone in the race. Hebrews 11 is an overview of the racetrack and the runners who have done well by faith. The examples provide encouragement. Believers are in good company, which is appreciated because motivation is a good thing; it is easy to be encouraged and motivated when someone else accomplishes a specific goal. Read the “by faith” people in Hebrews 11. Their example is to stimulate perseverance. Faith guided them, and they motivate all believers to continue “with endurance the race that is set before us.”

All those mentioned in Hebrews 11 trusted God. Some verses indicate the basis of that trust, yet it is good to remember that they lived “by faith” prior to God fulfilling any of his promises to them. Verse 13

says, “All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.” The word “witnesses” in Hebrews 12:1 is the Greek word *marturōn*, from which the word “martyr” is derived. Some “witnesses” ran the race with endurance, even if it meant death (11:35-39). Anyone can say he or she is a runner, yet that affirmation is proved by actually running, knowing the costs involved. ***Positive actions and decisions sometime require sacrifice, yet if done “by faith” (in agreement with God’s Word, the Holy Bible) it will be worthwhile in light of eternity (for that is the life that truly matters).***

The witnesses in Hebrews 11 should encourage and inspire endurance by faith. Encouragement arises from knowing there is a “cloud of witnesses” who did “not grow weary and lose heart.” They provide an example in living for the Lord Jesus. The Apostle Paul could say, “Follow me as I follow Christ” (1 Cor 11:1). ***Be encouraged by the example of others and also be an example and source of encouragement to “run the race [live the life of faith in Christ Jesus] with endurance.”*** There is much denigrating and vilifying today rather than being edifying and encouraging. Be an example of faith and trust in the Lord for your good, and so you can encourage others in like manner.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ron'.

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REMINDER: [Capitol Commission Bible Study](#) is meeting every 1st and 3rd Tuesday during the legislative interim

**Meeting via Zoom *and* in 318 CLOB (Senate Committee Room)
at 12 Noon
Lunch is provided for those attending.**