

How to Stay in the Race

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[0 : 00] You can be turning to Hebrews chapter 12. Hebrews chapter 12. We will read our text in just a moment.

If you follow along as we have gone through the book of Hebrews, you know that my approach has been throughout our look at the book of Hebrews is take these big flyover passages, trying to make sure that we connect the dots for the argument going through it.

And we have come kind of to a critical point. Strike that. I don't want to say that any part of God's word is more important.

We've come to a summary point. We've already began the summary point. And so possibly just for today, I'm going to slow down and my text will only be two verses today.

From the book of Hebrews. Before we do that, I want to remind you of where we've been because I speak much less frequently.

[1 : 17] I'm just going to run through a summary of where we have been. First of all, I want to remind you that the book of Hebrews was written to Jewish Christians who were suffering and were tempted to return to the old covenant ways.

They were trying to find relief from their sufferings. The book of Hebrews was a sermon written to show that the old covenant was not effective.

It was good, but it was not effective and was only a shadow that pointed forward to the real work done by Jesus Christ. Up to this point, we've seen the writer of the book of Hebrews build a case for how Christ and his work in the new covenant is better than the old covenant and what these suffering Christians were tempted to go back to.

So the new covenant is better than what the Hebrew Christians were tempted to go back to. Third, broadly, we could say that Hebrews 1 through 7 have told us who Christ is and that Hebrews 8 and 9 have told us what Christ has done.

As we've gotten to chapter 10, chapter 10 was a culmination of what the writer of the book of Hebrews has been sharing about the work of Christ. That passage summarized and shared with us how Christ is the perfect sacrifice and the only sacrifice God was pleased with.

[2 : 47] In the last part of chapter 10, we looked at how the writer began to give us the proper response to all that he's been teaching us about Christ in the new covenant. We were exhorted to hold fast the confession of our hope and consider and we're to consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.

The proper response is not to turn away from Christ because we're going through. The proper response is to turn to Christ because of what we're going through. And then last time I spoke, we looked together at what we saw.

I'm sorry. Last time we looked together at this, we saw how the old covenant saints were commended by God because they trusted in God and his promises.

They trusted in God and his promises to be assured of the things they hoped for and to be convicted or convinced of the things that they have seen.

Hebrews chapter 12. Let me read verses 1 and 2. Follow along with me, please.

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 that is set before us, 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.

[4 : 29] Let's pray together. Father, we come today thankful for the work of Christ and as we talk about it in our sermons from all places in scripture and as we remark about it, even as we sing about it, we glory, we rejoice in the work of Christ.

And so, Father, as we come to this passage today and this passage lays out a course for us in relation to how life is difficult and how this wonder of the work of Christ is there, it provides salvation for us but also it is an encouragement to us and I pray that your spirit would be with us and help us to see the wonder of what Christ has done and to continue to run the race though life is not easy.

I pray that you would be with us, that you would make your word clear, you would make my voice clear this morning and I pray that you would be with us in Jesus' name. Amen.

Our goal today is to take what we've learned from the great cloud of witnesses and to see that we are to stay in our race. Last time, we spent time talking about this great cloud of witnesses and we talked about how it's not a cloud of witnesses to say, hold up Moses as the great Christian, just be like Moses, hold up Abraham as the great Christian, just be like Abraham.

We said it was not that, it was to see how that they were people who trusted God in relation to what God had told him and the promises that he gave and they trusted God and were able to continue in their race and God commended them, he showed his favor upon them for their trust in him.

[6 : 16] Now it was not a cause and reward or work and reward situation. He was simply saying that their faith was the reason that they trusted in God.

They saw things they couldn't see and they had evidence of things that they couldn't see. As we start chapter 7, there's a scene, an illustration that's painted for us.

The scene is that the writer of Hebrews is using the situation of an Olympic race for an illustration and of course you can think about the Olympic games but maybe you can think more in the line of the original Olympic games.

He's using that kind of situation to illustrate what he has taught and apply it to our lives as Christians. He's first of all and in our thinking, firstly he's applying it to these Hebrew Christians who are suffering and thinking I don't know if I can keep going.

I didn't suffer so much as a person under the old covenant. Maybe I'll go back to the old covenant. It was almost as good wasn't it? Or it was just as good. And of course he's made the argument that it is not and that that whole covenant didn't save it simply pointed to Christ and the work that he would do.

[7 : 29] So now he's brought us into this picture. He's planted us in a coliseum if you want and he's bringing before us the illustration of racers on different races during a whole day of competition in a coliseum.

at least some part of the race and the race that is spoken of here is not 100 yard dashes. It's not long jumps.

It's not the 400 yard race. This he's using the illustration of marathons. And so at least some part of the race took place in something like a stadium and there were many spectators.

People gathered to watch. Races were run all day. Race would run a winner to be declared and I don't know if they gave second and third and fourth places.

That doesn't really matter to the illustration. But the race was run and the winners at the end were then seated. Say there was an 8 o'clock race. The race was run and the winners from the 8 o'clock race were placed in a certain spot in the Coliseum.

[8 : 46] They don't do like necessarily they do today in the Olympic Games where once a race is complete completely complete they would have the aware ceremony where they'd have the different stands and people on different levels.

That didn't take place. Rather those people were seated and they waited and then the second race was run and the winners went up to that same kind of area and sat in the stadium watching the rest of the races and that would go on all day and racers would accumulate and winners would accumulate in the stands and they would wait until the evening for their prize and of course their prize was just a laurel wreath that was plaited for them and so they were given that at the end of the day.

People who were in the race could remove anything that would hinder their ability to run and many of you are probably sitting there inside snickering now thinking I know about those old Olympic games those people run naked and of course they did and their thought was I am going to take off everything anything that hinders me from running and I would imagine also because of the way the illustration runs here and it just makes sense because that's the way it is I remember this is an offshoot of the illustration I remember as a kid hearing about Olympic games and swimmers and that they would shave their head to become more aerodynamic and if they were a man with a lot of body hair they would shave the hair off their body to be I said aerodynamic I meant aqua dynamic they would do whatever it took to get that little bit more speed and these people also they would do whatever it took not only would they run naked but they would they would diet and exercise they wouldn't go around with my six pack to be able to run that would hinder them they would work to shed all the weight that was necessary so that they could run to the best of their ability and so this is the scene that the writer of the book of Hebrews is painting this coliseum with runners and winners and gathered in areas and people who have prepped for the race both who have prepped in the past and diet and exercise and prepped at the moment at the present moment in removing every stitch of clothes so they could run to their absolute fastest that's the scene and so he starts in verse 1 of chapter 12 therefore since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses before he talks about runners he talks about people in the stands this cloud of witnesses a great cloud of witnesses this cloud of witnesses points back to chapter 11 all of chapter 11 the list of people who are there that are commended by God he's saying okay I've painted this picture of these people who have trusted God for things they couldn't see and were convicted of things they couldn't touch and so they trusted

God and they followed God in the race and God commended them okay you come up here and sit you're going to be rewarded you wait your reward is coming remember we anyway you wait I was going to explain another verse but that would go too far you wait your reward is coming there was this great crowd of witnesses that are now accumulated and these witnesses are drawn forth as a way to illustrate and a way to encourage these people concerning their race that's to be run these people were commended for running their race these are the ones who have run earlier in the day these are the ones who have won their races and are now sitting in the stands waiting till the end of the day to receive their reward and the writer is making the connection that since these have run their race and been commended by God for trusting his promises we should look to them for encouragement we should transfer how they have done it and let that be an encouragement to us so he starts right out by saying remember I've just talked about all these witnesses there are great cloud of witnesses he's saying let me use that as an example so he says therefore since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses he goes on to say let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely he's saying just like these people who we've looked at we've looked at we've looked at

Elijah we've looked at Moses we've looked at Abraham we've looked at Abel we've looked at a whole host of people he's saying let's do what they did let's lay aside every weight and let's lay aside the sin which clings closely apparently those who are part of the great cloud of witnesses had been people who laid aside every weight and sin which clung closely now I said every weight they were not sinless what one of us can't think of Abraham lying to about his wife what one of us can't think of Jacob being a deceiver what one of us can't think of Isaac lying about his wife or some of the other people what one of us can't think of Rahab what was her life she was a harlot they weren't sinless they didn't lay aside every sin now this is not saying oh that excuses you it's saying in the race they came to points where they had to deal with things this is speaking of how they had to deal with their sin to be able to run their race it is speaking of how they had to shed the weight of some of the things around them even good things to be able to run the race the writer is arguing that we are to lay aside every weight and sin that clings close to us just as those who have already run had to lay aside sin and weight to win and so what I'm going to do for just a couple minutes is take us back into the Coliseum we're taking our microphone we're not but we're thinking about Abraham and we're going to think about

[15 : 32] Moses and think about that phrase let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings closely and think about their situation and use those as examples just like the writer of Hebrews wanted for us so let's ask what did Abraham have to lay aside well first of all Abraham had to lay aside a comfortable home in Ur of Chaldees he had it nice from every indication he was part of a wealthy family for every indication he had a nice home in the Ur of now it doesn't describe it or anything like that but as he is described he is a man of means and then of course he left Ur and ended up in Haran for a while and God called him out of that and he had to leave aside the life of comfort in the land of Haran it wasn't a sin to live in a nice house it wasn't a sin to be a man with means but it was a weight that hindered him because God said I'm going to give you something

I'm going to give you a land that is yours and I'm going to give it to you and I'm going to give it to your posterity I'm going to give you a land that is as far and as wide high and long and wide or however you want to say it as you can walk yours and to get that he had to lay aside the weight of living in Ur living in Haran and go and he did was it a struggle doesn't talk about it we do get a hint he took his dad with him from Ur to Haran got stuck there for a while God said to him again I want you to leave this place and your father go to the place he had to make the decision again he had to put off that weight so he left a comfortable home in Haran secondly he established I'm sorry he left an established home and property in Haran to live in a tent he went from living in a house to living in a house light just a mini home some of you have talked and looked at those pictures of those houses that are like on a travel trailer that's not what he had he had a tent and he lived in a tent all his life to follow the promises of God so he had to lay aside a permanent structure never ever did he live in a permanent structure once he lived thirdly he had to shed the sin of unbelief he was being weighed down by unbelief he doubted that he and his wife could have a child

God came to him a couple of times I'm gonna give you a child it's gonna be by her but God I'm 75 how about Ishmael God says no it's gonna be by her so he had to shed the weight of sin and trusting and working things out on his own trust God and go forward and eventually at 100 or 99 quivils over a year God gave him that child he had to lay aside the lack of understanding when God says I'm gonna give you a son and he finally gave him a son and in the course of having that son and that son growing up God comes to him and says now Abraham I want you to take your son up to Mount Moriah and I want you to offer him in sacrifice to me I don't understand God it doesn't compute and he had to lay that aside and say

God has promised me this son and he promised me posterity through this son he's given me the son he's telling me to take the son away I've got to throw this sin off I don't know how not to trust God I've got to trust God in this situation I don't understand and so Abraham had to lay aside his inability to understand to be able to run the race didn't mean that he went on nothing he had the promise of God that he would have a son and he had the command of God to kill him and so he trusted God said I don't see how it can work out but since you have said both I'm going forward I'm running the race what about Moses what did Moses have to lay aside well we can go into a lot of things but through the course of events that

God orchestrated he became the son of Pharaoh's daughter and lived in the palace and grew up in the palace and received the education in the palace and was able to drink from cups that the palace provided and eat food and wine that the palace provided and had the daily life events that the palace provided wore nice clothes if there was coolness of Egypt he had it who knows but he had all that God said I want you to go and to give it all up he went from being part of the privileged cast and say I'm going to go be part of God's people who in the eyes of the people he had just came from were the despised class to run his race he had to be willing to shed the weight it wasn't anything wrong with being part of royalty it wasn't anything wrong with having these nice life events but

[21 : 49] God called him to run a race and he had to shed that weight to be able to follow the Lord God called him into that situation he had to deal with the insecurity of being part of God's people Moses also had a situation you remember how he left because he killed these people he thought he was doing God's work right and God found out runs for his life and he's in the desert God meets him at the flaming fiery burning bush rather and sends him back what was Moses his response I can't speak in a sense you can see not only is there his fear speak there's his fear of going back I don't like this situation

God I ran from there because people didn't like me I was in danger it might cost me something he had to lay that aside to run his race the weight of fear that came from seeing Pharaoh not the same Pharaoh but seeing a Pharaoh again I heard about you it's good you're back we can deal with you had to leave that all to the Lord scripture even mentions here the weight of the fear that came from crossing Pharaoh or crossing the Red Sea and going through and trusting the Lord through that put that aside trust the Lord I don't know how God holds up walls of water but he said to do it I'm going forward well those are two you can actually go through the whole list of those in the Colosseum who are listed in chapter 11 and see that these are people who had to lay aside weight and sin to be able to follow the

Lord let me ask you this what weight and sin clings closely to you that you have to lay aside what kind of things tempt you to look back from following Christ what are the things that you say in your life I hope this never happens because I don't know if I would continue to walk with the Lord if that happens those are weights and sins you need now God will deal with them in order and as necessary I'm not trying to get you to fear every possible fear in your life but God will deal with them as necessary let me just give you some suggestions you might be afraid that your trials may cause you to lose everything boss falsely accuses you of work at work of doing something wrong you lose your job because you have no job you lose your pay because you lose your pay you lose your house because you lose your house where will we live you say that you don't know if you can live poor or even destitute what do we do in those kinds of things now again

I'm throwing this at you and I don't want you to think at all coming at you at once God has built it just like Abraham's situation progressed slowly and he dealt with the things as God brought them to his life but because he was a man who said this is God's promise I will trust him in it when a situation came up he struggled with it by God's grace the places that he needed to the weight was put aside yes I'll go to Canaan yes I'll live in a tent yes I'll wait yes I'll wait yes I'll wait until he's 99 it came and each one had to be dealt with as it came another situation you may say that your

Christianity makes your marriage difficult you don't know if you can live with your mate at odds with you I don't know if I want to continue to be a Christian trust the promises look to Christ as we'll talk about in just a minute you may say I'm afraid biblical convictions will cost me my job or it will cost me peace in my neighborhood or it will cost me persecution do those things tempt you and pull at you to say I don't know if I want to keep following Christ those are the kind of things you need to put aside those are the kind of things you need to address if you're going to run with endurance the race that's set before you what kind of things might cling close to you that are not sinful but weigh you down and keep you

[27 : 36] I've sort of already intermixed these but what kind of things might cling close to you that might that are not sinful but might weigh you down and keep you from effectively running for Christ do you have such a strong desire for settled and quiet home that you're not willing to run for Christ as you ought do you have a desire to live where you're where you've always wanted I'm thinking of Abraham and Ur I never thought I'd move away from my parents never had desire to move away from my parents but I don't live with my parents or anywhere near my parents and that was sort of hard to begin with do those kind of things keep you from following the Lord in the race that he's laid before you what are the sins what sins do you have that you do not want to give up that drag you down and tempt you to quit the race please don't think

I'm confusing this or trying to confuse you with the sins that you struggle with that you want gone and you're seeking the Lord's help what what kind of things rather are you dealing with that are sins that you say I don't want gone I want to be like this I do not want to give these things up those kind of things will hinder you in a race now actually there we're touching into things that you know a Christian's going to want to seek the Lord we'll struggle and we'll go through seasons where that but we're called to lay aside the sins that weigh us down what are you called to do now let's turn that phrase around and say what are you called to do maybe you're sitting here and saying David you've been speaking about some things that I'm struggling with you know some of these things

I can see where I fit that category what do we do what do I do how do I approach this well scripture here he says and we've said the statement many times today let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely so the first thing that we do lay aside that weight examine yourself for the weight and the sin that clings close what kind of things are discouraging me from running for the Lord what kind of things are keeping me from walking in a way that's true and in accordance with God's commands and promises Abraham and Moses had to lay aside great situations to run their lives when situations come up that cause us to wonder about our ability to endure we need to see if there is extra weight or sin if we're in a situation where

Lord I'm discouraged in the Christian life that's the time when you examine yourself and say is there something there am I carrying unnecessary spiritual baggage that's causing me to not want to go on if I'm discouraged in the Christian life it's the time time to ask are there things in me that sins in me that I need to lay aside and and lest I leave a foothold for the devil you can be discouraged in the Lord and there not be weight and there not be sin that you need to lay aside because in the Christian life there are times when we as Christians do struggle we have cause for oh Lord I want to be and I'm not that's not what I'm talking about I'm talking about the idea where you're wondering if you don't want to go on if you're losing your desire to go on

I'm not talking about the person who wants to go on and feels a cold I'm talking about the person who doesn't want to go on and you're starting to see that you're getting scared thinking I don't know if I want to continue in this Christian life I read an article this morning that just floored me I won't give his name or the circumstances but a popular former Christian author has given up and said that he is no longer a Christian and I think it is partly because he has been unwilling to shed the weight of discouragement and accepting things he shouldn't have said he's been unwilling to turn and to say okay Lord I did wrong here's where I need to go in those times of discouragement examine yourself if you come to the point where you're questioning whether you want to go on examine yourself lay aside the sin that clings close those things that you see and ask the

[33 : 01] Lord to show you confess and repent from those lay aside the weights that hinder God has been calling you to do something and you say but God I don't want to be poor or God I don't want to live in Arizona it's a hot place that's why I picked it for whatever the case when you find yourself in that situation where you don't know if you want to go on with the Lord that's a time to ask am I holding on to wait am I dealing with sin that isn't being dealt with you need then to lay those things aside it involves confession and repentance of the sin that lays so close Lord you know I'm struggling with this and it is wrong and I confess it is wrong and

I choose to turn from it Lord help me to turn from it and you may struggle with that and you may see yourself back at that same step several times but in that moment where you're struggling whether you want to go on and you see that there's sin in your life you need to confess and repent and turn trust the Lord and of course by God's grace did he have to convince Sarah Abraham to go I'm not saying you know I'm not trying to make her as the or did Sarah hear the thing and she say Abraham this sounds great and Abraham lay aside those weights trust the promises that's what chapter 11 is pointed out among other things these were people who in the midst of their circumstances some of them had to deal with sin some of them had to lay aside weights but they all come back to the point where when

God had promised when God had commanded they said that's what we're going to do and they stood on those they stood not only on this is what God said to do they stood on God said he'll be with you or he will give you that or he will strengthen you they trusted those promises so so when you find yourself in that point where you don't know if you want to go on first of all examine yourself for the weight and sin that clings close secondly verse two goes on to speak about run with endurance the race that is set before us kind of focus on that idea of endurance I was a runner once college I weighed a whole lot less than I do I kind of enjoyed it a little bit when I made myself do it I am not an experienced runner so

I'm going to throw out terms that I felt a little bit but not like many of you like all long distance races there are many reasons to quit if you're running you may hit the wall I think they call it you feel like you're just absolutely spent there's nothing else to do you can do you feel weak or maybe you have pain or you've injured your foot or your leg or your knee or maybe your shoulder is hurting or your back is cramping and you go I don't know if I can continue or you're running bad you're getting tired you think you may be able to make it and you turn the corner oh I gotta run the ravine hill that's up 81 six miles and you think how am I ever going to make it

I don't know if I can keep going these things happen to long races and the Christian race is filled with many circumstances that may do the same thing to you cause you to want to quit you've lived your life with the Lord for X amount of years things have been difficult but the Lord has brought you through and you come to that trial that you never thought you'd face and you come to that trial and you think I don't know if I can face that I don't know if I can go up that hill you've run your Christian race and it's gotten to the point where it feels like a drudgery you're tired you wish you could be with Christ and it be done how do I keep going you don't or maybe you've dealt with the same sin a thousand times and you're discouraged Lord how can I I don't know if I even want to keep going I have come to you and

[38 : 12] I have confessed this sin if I done it once I have done it 6,000 times literally I don't know how to be done with this sin and you say I don't know how to keep going or trial after trial keeps coming and you don't understand what God is doing God how could this happen to me and you're getting weary in your race and you're getting to the point where you say I don't know if I can keep going now hold on this is not a bootstrap statement but let me say this you are called to run with endurance even at those points and please don't think that it's a bootstrap statement because he gives us how to do it there is nothing that comes into the Christian life that God says okay I'll let you off the hook you don't have to be a

Christian that's too hard never comes to that he calls his people to run with endurance and look back through chapter 11 in your mind remember the phrase sawn in two that was probably Isaiah Jeremiah thrown in a mud pit almost starved to death and abandoned where to keep going and they did how do we keep going when we want to quit well it just so happens that the writer of Hebrews knows that we're thinking about asking that question and so he answers it he says let us lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely and let us run with endurance that is set before us looking to Jesus the founder and perfecter of our faith for the joy that was set before him endured the cross despising the shame and is seated at the right hand of

God now I'm only going to touch at the beginning of this because next time we look at this we go on into the rest of the chapter and talk about more things but let me give you some of what's here how do we keep going when we want to quit first off I want to point out that it says looking to Jesus I want you to notice it doesn't say look to it's not in our Christian life that we are going along and things are all right and they start to get a little hard and you know we make it through and we struggle and then every once in a while we get a little discouraged and we take a quick glance at Jesus and oh okay and we keep going it is this idea that we as believers are people who set our eyes on Jesus we look to Jesus we keep our eyes on him continually in looking to

Jesus we realize that this is the one as this phrase speaks of he's the one who's created us created in us faith to believe he's the one who's constantly working to make our faith to grow and to mature to make it complete things are discouraging what do we do first of all we've talked about this idea of dealing with sin and dealing with the weight but we look to Jesus and we look at him and realize that he's the one who brought us to this point he enables to believe and he is the one who will continue to enable us to believe he is working to make our faith mature he is working to make our moments where we cry out and say Lord I need your help help me to keep my eyes fixed on you help me to remember the promises help me to remember that you promised to be there he's the one who enables us it is by the grace that he supplies that we're enabled to endure and so we are to be constantly desiring from him the grace to endure going back to the illustration of the

Olympic stadium the people who ran the races earlier often people later in the day would pick someone who ran before and been a long race would think about what they went through and how they made it as they ran and again this is you know we're not trying to puff up in our own strength but they would keep their eyes on that one now we don't keep our eyes on Jesus as just an inspiration we keep our eyes on him because he's the one who's going to minister to us the things that we need he's the one who enables us we're looking to Jesus he's our example the passage goes on and we're only going to be able to get into a bit of it but the passage goes on to see to show that our founder and perfecter of our faith has run the race already and he completed it because he looked toward the joy that he would receive the joy that was set before him he now this is not just a

[44 : 15] Jesus did it so can I this is a Jesus did it he knows what he's been what I am going through he has worked to provide the grace the position for me to be able to receive help from the Lord I'm looking to him and thinking he's done it all he's run it his race was harder and that's some of the things we'll get into when we look into the next time his race was harder we have never competed in a race as difficult as his he knows what it takes he has provided what it takes to get through look to this one stand in his promises stand in his grace beholding our savior and his work for us strengthens us we need to be looking to Jesus to strengthen our faith we need to be looking to Jesus as the object of the faith he's the one we're running for you're going out life's getting discouraging because your neighbors are not liking you because your boss is making things difficult for you keep your eyes on

Jesus I'm not running to please my neighbors keep your eyes on Jesus I'm not running to please my boss by God's grace I'm running for Jesus I'm not earning anything for him or anything my life is set on doing what he's called me to do we are looking to Jesus because he's the source of our faith he's the one who's given us faith he's the one who's perfecting it he's the one we are to cry out to that our strength will be strengthened so we we've since just begun some of the things that he's going to talk to but brothers and sisters there are in our lives things that may cause us to get to the point where we say like the Hebrew Christians because of suffering I don't know if I can keep going

I don't know if I can put another foot forward in my walk with the Lord what do we do we look to Jesus we lay aside the sin and the weight brothers and sisters if we're going to run this race with success we're going to have to be putting off that weight and sin and we're going to have to be looking to Christ if you're here without Christ you may be saying that it seems to cost an awful lot to be a Christian not trying to cover anything over you're right it costs everything it costs Christ an infinite cost serving Christ brings trial and hardship sometimes it's discouraging but is it not worth it to be delivered from

God's wrath against your sin to be delivered from eternity in hell now I say that statement please don't think that I'm saying oh a little bit of suffering earns for you no in God's work these things come Christ has done it but there is a salvation out there provided by Christ that's free life's not fun but it's worth it because Jesus came and ran that race and his race was to live the perfect life and to die in your place suffering God's wrath to provide salvation for you turn to that trust it let's pray father I pray that you would be with us help us father to be people who when we see discouragement and the question of whether we want to keep going help us be people who examine ourselves choose to put off the weight that hinders choose to put off the sin that drags us down go to

Christ for forgiveness confess repent help us be people then who are looking to Christ Lord not just when discouragement comes help us be people who are looking to Christ throughout our race help us be people are quick to say I'm paying attention to Jesus because I'm serving him I pray that you would be with those who are here we've not painted a very easy picture of Christianity today but hopefully there is a beautiful picture there to those who don't know Christ because I like everyone born in this world was born dead in sin and I was a rebel to God and the only thing I deserved was God's wrath and yet Jesus has come to die for us he's paid the price of our sin provided access into the very fellowship of God so Lord I pray that you would draw many to yourself this morning in

[49 : 46] Jesus name amen