

## Hebrews 12:1-4 Let Us Run!

**INTRO: There are many METAPHORS that the Bible likens the Christian life to;**

A) **Soldiers in a Battle** / **Farmers sowing seed** / **Boxers Boxing** **Students in a school** -

B) But the one of the **most common METAPHORS** & Probably **the easiest to relate to** is that we are **RUNNERS IN A RACE**

1) All of us have had some experience in running / racing / jogging / We have all done some type of running

C) **Personally I have always hated running** – especially distance runs /

1) but I know some pp really enjoy it – others do it out of necessity.

**One morning – driving to work down OCSD BLVD – saw 3 different runners**

A) First guy – **gray T-shirt – grey gym shorts** – regular tennis shoes- **trudging along in agony** – looked like it / **pain on face** /

B) This guy was hating every minute of it **why did I eat that extra piece of cake last night / should have said no to that 8th piece of Pizza**

C) 2<sup>nd</sup> was this lady – **sweat pants sweat shirt – also regular tennis shoes – she was doing one of those walk run kind of things –**

1) where – she was moving head like this / Arms were moving like running – **legs were bent** – but the speed was – mild walk

D) **I Thought – God bless her – at least she is out here / HONK**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Guy: WELL He was a runner: JUST TELL**

A) **nylon shorts / tank top / expensive light weight running shoes – Bounce in his step –**

B) His whole appearance, the **pace/ the bounce** Portrayed the attitude ***I LIVE TO RUN – I enjoy running – I am out here – because I want to be***

C) Which person describe your life as a **Christian Runner in the Race Set before us ?**

1) Hating it ? But doing it? – **Trudging along – not quite running yet**

2) Or running strong & enjoying it

**How is the race going ?**

D) / Now some of you here today are **NOT IN THE RACE** of faith / haven't started – Haven't received Christ as your Savior & Lord

1) Today is your day to begin

**The passage we are looking at today is about Running the Race of faith –**

**12 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.**

**Notice that first line: 12 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses**

**A) Now this connects us back to chapter 11 where we took a look at those in the Hall of faith – running the race of faith. Examples – now faith applied.**

**B) Cloud of Witnesses? – Some think grandstands – cheering – Ok**

**1) Witnesses is not really used in that way in the NT**

**C) More likely – Those who give testimony – their testimony is that this race of faith is possible to run.**

**1) Yes there will be times when you falter – stumble – but you regroup and keep going.**

**D) Their testimonies are meant to inspire is to Run well!**

**So the Writer of Hebrews declares: Let us run the race that is set before us.**

**A) Let's make a few observations about the Race -**

**B) #1 Not running against each other – not racing each other. –**

**C) The word race speaks of a course – we are running a course – The races in Roman times – not on an Oval track like today –**

**1) It was a course that they ran –**

**D) We each have a course that we are running tailor made by God – so my course is going to differ from your course –**

**1) Yours from your neighbors –**

**The course is designed by God to grow us – stretch us – mold us and challenge us to make us more like Christ.**

**A) The course is also divinely designed by your heavenly Father – to put you in contact with pp along the way – Influence you. –**

**B) But also those who you will have the unique ability to influence and impact for the cause of Christ – for the sake of the Kingdom.**

**C) So we each have a course that we are running on and there are similarities**

**We are all running the race of faith.**

A) We all will encounter trials, hills to climb and times where there is lousy weather.

B)) But aside from our similarities – Our course is unique to us! Designed for us.

**#2 The Race or the course is not a sprint! But it is a marathon.**

A) When I was in track I hated the long distance runs – { All I could think about was how miserable I was and that I wasn't close to finishing.

B) **Sprint was great** – I will give it all I've got for 12 seconds or a few minutes and then I am done – kick back

C) The Christian race is not a sprint or even a series of sprints! **But that is the way some believers run** –  
1) Run real hard for a week or two or three – then they rest – take a break – go back to the old life.

D) Life reflects constant – starts and stops – ups and downs – times going real well – other times not going at all.

**That is not how we are to run – the Christian life is not a series of sprints but it is a Marathon – long distance race. Constant – involves consistency.**

A) Now here is what a lot of Christians think when they hear that- they say “.. **I need to pace myself.**”

**B) Shouldn't run too hard all at once – this is a long race – so I am not going to get all radical.**

C) That is not the idea the Lord wants us to take from the analogy that this life is a marathon.

D) See Paul declared in 1 Corinthians 9:24  
**24 Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win!**

**We are to run the RACE IN ORDER TO WIN!**

A) This year's Boston Marathon was won by a guy from Kenya – The Boston Marathon is 26.2 miles – He won in record time – 2 hrs/ 2min/ 2 secs

B) He ran at a clip of an average of 4 min and 41 seconds per mile.

1) **THAT IS MOVING!**

C) My point? If we are going to run the race to win – it means that we are going to have to keep up a steady pace –

1) That is why he says to run with endurance.

**Endurance: speaks of a steady determination to keep going. It means continuing even when everything in you wants to slow down or give up.**

A) Christian life is filled w/ Mt. Tops & Valleys go from one to the other – sometimes the valleys can seem sooo long –

**Aa) Everything inside of us wants to stop- GIVE UP !**

**B) Run w/ endurance means *we keep on going* / Many of the Hebrew Christians to whom this letter was written *had started well***

**C) But the newness began to wear off, problems began to develop and they began to lose their enthusiasm and their confidence**

1) They began to backslide / I see that happen time and time again!

**D) There is a lack of endurance in the Christian Church today / *We are soft too many people quitting walks / marriages/ ministries***

1) **We are Called to Run W/ ENDURANCE**

**E) It is not about pacing ourselves and cruising – We run hard and strong the whole way, if we are going to win.**

**But what does it mean to Win? –**

**A) Winning simply involves Finishing well – finishing strong – the race, the course that is set before you.**

2 Timothy 4:6-8 “The time of my death is near. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. 8 And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his appearing.”

**Now in the rest of our text the writer gives us three key things to consider if we are going to be those who are running in order to win.**

**A) If we are going to be those who finish well?**

**B) We are to lay aside the weights and the sin that so easily ensnares us or entangles us – or attaches itself to us.**

**1) Weights and Sin ?**

**C) 1<sup>st</sup> consider weights: One of the greatest problems runners face is weight.**

1) Several years ago the winner of a recent Olympic gold medal for the 100 meters came to our country for an invitational track meet.

**D) He was considered the world’s fastest human being. But when he ran the preliminary heat, he did not even qualify.**

1) In an interview afterward he said the reason was simple. He was overweight. He had trained too little and eaten too much.

**D) What was interesting was He had not gained a great amount of weight, but it was enough to keep him from winning—even from qualifying.**

**What about you? Have you gained some weight spiritually that is hindering you from running like once did younger in your walk?**

**A)Weights are things that we can add to our lives that hold us down / things that impede our progress or burden down our hearts**

**B) Weights are things that are not necessarily sins / nothing in the Bible that says don't do this or have that – **But they can become sin for us.****

1)Our weights will differ from person to person – some of the things that are weights for me. Not yours and vice versa

**C)We understand this physically – Doc. Tired /less energy/ less alert ?**

1)Your problem is the same as mine you need to lose – about – 30 lbs

**D)Now every time I say – that pp say – Pastor Rob – you don't look over weight ? – **I just know how to buy the right clothes.****

1)Trust me –

**Question: Have you gained weight spiritually – speaking – are you carrying around some unnecessary baggage.**

**A)Heart burdened down ? Are there things in your life that the Lord has convicted you about – weights – impeding your spiritual progress?**

**B)You are never going to run well until you lay those aside! – Do it today!**

**C)Many of us are at the age physically where we have resolved I am never going to look like I did when I was 25 –**

1)What is the use/ Nothing to prove/ I have pictures I can pull up of when I was once in shape. – **NO TIME NOW for that!**

**D)We make excuses – so much easier to put on weight than it is to get rid of it.**

**Can I encourage you Bros/sisters – Don't use that argument Spiritually!**

**A)Well I was once on fire for Jesus! – I was once spiritually in shape!**

**B)Physically we wait for the doctor to say: If you don't change – heart attack or you are going to be ill**

1)**Do that spiritually**

**C)Finish strong – get rid of the weights!**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Lay aside the sin!**

**A)Those are the things that we know are wrong! Secret sins – **little compromises** that turn into big problems.**

**B)Not really talking about the big sins – blatant – but those little things hidden in our hearts. –**

1)**Lay them aside – turn from them{ Don't give them place in your heart.**

**C) Bitterness & unforgiveness at the foot of the cross.**

1) Lust/ pride/ selfishness

D) Lay it aside – they are only traps of the devil to trip you up and keep you from running well. –

E) What would you think – Olympic runner showed up track – in weights on ankle wrist – weight belt – and a ball and chain?

1) **Crazy – stupid – can't run like that!** – Why do we try!

**So let us run 1<sup>st</sup> laying aside weights / 2<sup>nd</sup> laying aside the sin / 3<sup>rd</sup> Let us run Looking unto Jesus!**

A) Let us Run **2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.**

B) Now the exhortation to keep our eyes on Jesus is **not because Jesus is our example.**

1) There is no encouragement in that – I am not Jesus! – No delusion here – I am not Jesus.

C) So the point is not Jesus did it – so can you! But Jesus did it – **SO YOU COULD!**

**Telling us to run keeping our eyes on Jesus is meant to Encourage us and to strengthen us.**

A) That is why he says Run looking unto to Jesus the author and the finisher of your faith.

B) Jesus has already ran the race and won! – He is the author of our faith and He is the finisher!

C) He is our source of strength so that we can run and finish!

1) Jesus **did not leave us orphans** – sent the HS – to help us. Doesn't leave us to run this race alone or in our own strength.

D) He doesn't **just call us to run – not a Coach** – but He gives us the strength to do it and to do it well.

**Lets us run Looking unto Jesus .... Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.**

A) This is meant to be our inspiration for Running! Remember how much you are loved.

B) Remember why you are running – because of what Jesus did for you.

1) **Joy set before Him** – two things – hearing the Father say well done.

C) But also – seeing you in the presence of God!

**The fact that He left heaven – came to this earth – man /shoes/ sorrow/ took my punishment – inspires me to Run for Him.**

A) Love of Christ compels me – Not his love for Jesus – but Jesus' love for him – He loved me – when I was far/ enemy/ doing my own thing.

B) His love is unfailing – that is why the writer says **3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. 4 You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.**

C) He is not saying: Look to Jesus and what He went through – press on

D) No He is saying – Consider run – always remembering the hostility that Jesus took on Himself for you –

1) Or else you are going to become weary and discouraged.

E) Remember how much you are loved – He took on more for us than we will ever take on for Him!

**I love how v. 2 carries the essence of the gospel – Jesus was the one who initiated Salvation. – Author – He found us!**

A) He is the one that sees it to completion – He is the Finisher!

**B) He died for us/ but He also Rose- and ascended to heaven – seated at the right hand of the Father.**

1) The Cross with no REZ IS USELESS – He died / He Rose/ He lives

C) His Joy is to present us to the Father one day!

D) Precious Church – let that be your motivation for Running!

**Now all of us are running! –How well are you running?**

A) Some of you are not running in the right race! The Jesus Race is the only one that gives a prize.

B) **Two roads – two races** – Broad road or race – a lot of pp are running in that race – leads to destruction – 1) Easier race to run – Everyone else.

C) Narrow race – Leads to life!

D) Get in the race – Turn from sin/ self / Embrace what Jesus did on Calvary for you. – Give your heart to Him today.