**A Runner in the Christian Race**

Text

**Hebrews 12:1-2**

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **2**[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+12%3A1-2&version=NASB#fen-NASB-30215a)]fixing our eyes on Jesus, the [[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+12%3A1-2&version=NASB#fen-NASB-30215b)]author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

**Overview**

God likens the Christian life to a marathon race. You are a runner) and He is your coach. A successful race is possible for every child of God who submits to the Coach's instructions and runs with patience until he crosses the finish line.

**Lesson Theme**

As a Christian runner, we have the privilege of running the course Christ has designed for each of us. With a prize before us and our weights behind us, we must strive every day to throw every ounce of our energy into winning the race. When obstacles come, we must meet them with patience; when we are wearied or wounded, we must run to Christ. But if we continue running, we will one day have the joy of crossing the finish line and hearing our Coach and Friend say, "Well done."

**Lesson Objectives**

At the conclusion of the lesson, each student should:

1. Understand that each Christian has a course set by God on which to run for God's glory.

2. Identify weights that are restricting them from the most effective service for the Lord.

3. Commit to staying in their race until they cross the finish line.

**Teaching Outline**

**I. Why to Run**

A. Run because of the witness of heroic runners.

B. Run to win the prize.

**II. How to Run**

A. Run with all you have.

B. Run within the rules.

C. Run without weights.

D. Run with patience.

**III. Where to Run**

A. Run to Christ.

B. Run to the finish line. Conclusion

Notice the common denominator in the race these heroes ran.

Able offered a blood sacrifice by faith.

Enoch pleased God by faith.

Noah built the ark by faith.

Abraham obeyed God and moved to Canaan by faith.

Sarah delivered Isaac as a ninety-year-old woman by faith.

Abraham offered up Isaac by faith.

Isaac and Jacob blessed their sons by faith.

Joseph encouraged Israel to return to the Promised Land by faith.

Moses' parents hid Moses by faith.

Moses chose to suffer affliction with his people rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin by faith.

Moses led the Israelites through the wilderness and instructed them to keep the Passover by faith.

Rahab spared the lives of the Israelite spies by faith.

**1 Corinthians 9:24-25 -** Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but *only* one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then *do it* to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.

**2 Corinthians 11:24-28 -** Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine *lashes*. **25**Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. **26***I have been* on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from *my* countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; **27***I have been* in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. **28**Apart from *such* external things, there is the daily pressure on me *of* concern for all the churches.

**Philippians 3:14** I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus..

**Hebrews 12:2 -** fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

**Colossians 3:23** Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men

**John 3:36 -** He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

**Philippians 2:13** for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.

**Hebrews 12:1** "... let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,"

**Philippians 3:13-14** Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead, **14**I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

**Hebrews 10:35-36** Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. **36**For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.

**James 1:3-4 -** knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. **4**And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

**James 5:11 -** We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and *is* merciful

**Mark 5:6 -** Seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran up and bowed down before Him;

**Mark 6:33 -** *The people* saw them going, and many recognized *them* and ran there together on foot from all the cities, and got there ahead of them.

**MARK 6:55-56 -** and ran about that whole country and began to carry here and there on their pallets those who were sick, to the place they heard He was. **56**Wherever He entered villages, or cities, or countryside, they were laying the sick in the market places, and imploring Him that they might just touch the fringe of His cloak; and as many as touched it were being cured.

**Proverbs 6:18 -** A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that run rapidly to evil

**2 Timothy 4:7-8 -** "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; **8**in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

**Galatians 6:9 -** Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.

**Acts 20:24 -** But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.

**Study Questions**

1. What are two reasons given in this lesson to run the Christian race?

2. How does it affect other Christian's lives when you run your Christian race by faith?

3. What gives the runner patience to continue his race? How does this relate to running the Christian race?

4. What is the one goal of the runner?

5. Describe a time when you wanted to quit, but you kept your eyes on the Lord and pressed on? If you have already seen the rewards from this endurance, list them.

6. What in your life may be restricting you from the greatest efficiency in serving the Lord? What steps should you take to lay aside these "weights"?

7. How does patience relate to racing? What are the benefits of patience for the Christian runner?

8. Have you ever made a commitment to finish your race strong to the glory of God? If not, make one today. What promises can you claim to help you remain faithful until the finish line?

**Memory Verse**

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

**Philippians 3:14**