

Endure Like Jesus

Ponder: What are we to endure? What did Jesus endure?

Scripture: "Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1b, NKJV).

As you read this devotional, please open your Bible to Hebrews 12. I want you to see from the first three verses how the inspired writer applies two key expressions to us and to Jesus. Those key expressions are "endurance" and "set before."

What is "set before" us? A race! (v. 1). In multiple places God's word likens our life of serving Him to a race (e.g. 1 Cor. 9:24-26). It's not a sprint, mind you – it's a marathon! Therefore, we must run with "endurance." The previous chapter showcased great Old Testament examples of faithful endurance. That "cloud of witnesses" (Heb. 12:1a) proves that we, too, can serve faithfully over the long haul.

But an infinitely greater example is Jesus. What did Jesus "endure"? The cross! (v. 2). Not only did He suffer unspeakable pain but, as the writer notes, crucifixion involved immense shame. Being crucified meant you were regarded as the worst of the worst criminals. You deserved not even the least hint of dignity or respect. Verse 3 says Jesus "endured" the hostility of sinners against Himself.

Why would He willingly "endure" such shameful treatment? For the joy that was "set before" Him! (v. 2). Obeying the Father's will by going to the cross to save us gave Jesus joy. With that in mind, how could we ever doubt His love?

In summary, then, Jesus "endured" the cross because of the joy "set before" Him. We must "endure" as Jesus did. A race, a marathon, is "set before" us. Verse 3 exhorts us not to become weary and discouraged, even as verse 1 urges us to run that marathon with "endurance."

If Jesus could endure for us (and He did), then we surely can and must endure for Him!

Hymn: "A Charge To Keep I Have"

Prayer: Father, we are humbled to think that Your precious Son would find joy in going to the cross to save us. Help us, we pray, to run with endurance the race set before us.