

Hebrews 12:1-3

Cloud of Witnesses

The race of faith ...

I. Our Founder

- A. The Perfecter
- B. The Pacesetter

II. Our Forerunners

- A. Their Inspiration
- B. Our Example

III. Our Focus

- A. Fixed on Jesus
- B. Fervent Racers

... and the finish line.

Children, Listen ...

1. How is the Christian life like a race?
2. Is pushing ahead in faith always easy? Why or why not?
3. How do the lives of believers who have gone before us encourage us in our race of faith?
4. Why is it important to keep focused on the fact that Jesus has gone before us into heaven?

In the Race

The saints who have gone before us are living proof that we too can be victorious in the race of faith. But they were not in it on their own. They kept their focus on the Messiah to come and were empowered for endurance by the presence of God in their lives. They had to strive and struggle, they had to resolve to press on in the face of sometimes tortuous challenges. Through it all God was their strength and the unseen Christ was their inspiration. They could not see exactly what Jesus would endure to pave the way for our victory, but we have the full picture laid out for us in the Gospel. Above all the great inspiration that we receive from the saints who have gone before us, we look to Jesus Christ Himself. The suffering saints and martyrs are a true encouragement to us – in a way they cheer us on in our face of faith - but our focus is not on them but the One who faced hostility, suffering and even death by crucifixion for them and for us. He blazed the way to victory for us by rising from the dead and ascending to the right hand of glory – and then sharing that victory with us. Be inspired by our forerunners in the faith, and get your strength to endure from the one Who has conquered sin, the devil and death. whatever comes to pass keep your eyes fixed on Jesus so that you might not grow weary of faint-hearted.