



WCF 14.3 (TPH p927–8)

III. This faith is different in degrees, weak or strong;(k) may be often and many ways assailed, and weakened, but gets the victory;(l) growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ,(m) **who is both the author and finisher of our faith.(n)**

(k) Heb. 5:13, 14; Rom. 4:19, 20; Matt. 6:30; Matt. 8:10.

(l) Luke 22:31, 32; Eph. 6:16; I John 5:4, 5.

(m) Heb. 6:11, 12; Heb. 10:22; Col. 2:2.

**(n) Heb. 12:2.**

Hebrews 11:39 **And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,** <sup>40</sup> **God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.**

<sup>12:1</sup> **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, <sup>2</sup> 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.**

<sup>3</sup> **For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. <sup>4</sup> You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.**

What did “all these” (from v39) obtain?

Through what?

Therefore, Who really obtained it?

What have they not received?

Is it uncertain that they will receive it?

Who are still looking forward to something better (v40)?

Who has provided this?

When/who will receive the fullness/perfection?

What are the obstacles (12:1) that stand between now and then? What shall we do?

How is this done (12:2)?

Where did our faith come from?

How will it attain its ultimate goal?

What was Jesus willing to do to make it possible?

Where is He now?

What is He willing to do to make it perfect/finished/full?

**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)**

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Our father in heaven how we thank you that you?Have determined.That we should enjoy not just the start of faith, which you have given us from your son.But it's fullness that's completion it's perfection.Which you also give us from your son.So we thank you and we ask for the help of your spirit.

Whom you have given him he has poured out.That we might not only understand but that you would produce in us that confidence that desire that hostility towards what hinders us that endurance as we press forward, but especially that dependence upon and delight in the Lord Jesus as we do these things.

We ask in his name. Amen.

So in speaking about saving faith, the third paragraph of chapter 14 reads as a whole.This faith is different in degrees weaker strong.And we have seen that from the scriptures maybe often and many ways a sailed and weakened.We've seen that but gets the victory. Praise God, we've seen that.

Last week, we considered how it grows up in many to the attainment of a full assurance through Christ.In which he makes us not only sure about what Jesus has done for us outside of us but as we observe him doing that in us which none but he can do we become confident in him in the work that he is doing even in us.

And that confidence is ultimately at the last in him and that's the part that we are on this morning who that is Christ who is both the author and finisher of our faith.And since they have taken that language directly from Hebrews 12 verse 2, that is the proof text that they have given us.

And we're just gonna place it in its local context.In the book of Hebrews this morning.Although you really could do a wonderful. Bible study on Union with Christ and all of its benefits and commend to you for instance. Dr. Ferguson's book the whole Christ for studying those things.

But Hebrews 11 verse 39 through chapter 12 and verse 4, these are the words of God.And all these having obtained a good testimony.Through faith.Did not receive the promise. God having provided something better for us.That they should not be made perfect apart from us.Therefore we also.

Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses.Let us let aside every weight.And the sin which so easily ensnares us.And let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.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.For consider him who endured such hostility from sinners against himself lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.You have not yet resisted to bloodshed striving against sin.Reading of God's word.So is just described all of those in what many of us have come to call and he was chapter 11 in the hall of faith those who had been prizing Christ about anything and everything in this world the way we are seeing the apostle.

Paul talk in full in the section that we are in in Philippians chapter 3 and he's described them all or just described a list of them and then he says and all these having obtained a good testimony, so,Have their obtained.A good testimony the testimony that the Lord is faithful the Lord is worth whatever the cost is to have him and that the Lord preserves those who have faith in him.

All these having obtained a good testimony through faith. So through what have they obtained the good testimony?Through faith. So what does that mean?Who has obtained the good testimony?

Christ is the one. So all of these they say the apostle says are the receivers of the good testimony, but they're not receivers through earning or through wages or through achievement, they are receivers through faith. Jesus has earned Jesus has achieved and because they rest upon him they obtain what he has earned and achieved for them.

So this good testimony is received through faith. And yet there's something that they have not yet received and all these having obtained a good testimony through faith did not receive the promise God having provided something better for us that they should not be made perfect apart from us. So, what does this promise thing that they have not yet received?

That they should not be.Made perfect apart from us.Jesus is completion of the faith of Old Testament believers and New Testament believers up until the time that Hebrews was written and New Testament believers from the time that Hebrews was written until you were sitting here at in the fellowship hall of the Hopewell congregation studying this passage none of those believers have had received in final fullness and that perfection that is described when it says looking into Jesus the author and finish over of our faith, none of them have received it.

In its fullness. So this is one reason why and God in God's Providence we've just come through several passages. I think at the end of Genesis that underlined to us how important and central the resurrection has been to biblical faith from wrong before long before the New Testament and especially the Apostolic message and the Jews who had not understood their Bibles well.

Many of them many of whom when they heard about the resurrection they were they were offended. The list of saints in Hebrews chapter 11 the list of Saints from then until now they still have not in the way that is promised according to Hebrews 11:39 been made perfect in the way that Hebrews 11:40 is describing.

Now is it uncertain that they will receive it?No he's not saying that they have not been made perfect as if that is in doubt he is saying that they have not made bit men made perfect apart from whom.Apart from us it's a very encouraging thing, sometimes people read the book of Hebrews and they come across the warning

passages in especially chapter 6 in chapter 10 and even though he says in both places but we are confident a better things concerning you in chapter 6 and but we are not of those who who slide back in or destroyed or turned back under destroyed and chapter 10, but they're really impressed by the warning passages in Hebrews.

Hebrews is a very confirming and, Affirming book unto unto those who are believing in Jesus, so when he says God having provided something better for us that they should not be made perfect apart from us he's not saying that there is doubt as to what they will receive they already have the good testimony right he's saying that there isn't doubt that those who have that same Christ by faith there isn't doubt that you will be perfected.

That if you have the Jesus who has started your faith, you have the Jesus who will finish your faith as well. So it's again important I think to read and context and sometimes very important to you know, blast forward or backward through some of those chapter divisions that we feel like when we have at least in my case I want projected on anyone else in my case when I grew up reading and you would stop at a chapter and then you'd pick up at the next chapter the next time it'd be like yeah Hebrews 11 is in the rear view mirror, especially when you come to the beginning of chapter 12.

Therefore. We also since we are so rounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, so who are these this great cloud of witnesses? The ones from chapter 11 and what are they watching now? Or watching for. Us. We're surrounded by them they're watching us we're running a race let's the the following versus go and as they watch us run the race how does that relate to them according to the end of Hebrews chapter?

11? Why is it well would it be important to them that we would run our race what benefit do they have in it? I'll show you. Yes, they will not receive the perfection until we are done running our race and we are all perfected together. So there isn't just they are witnesses testifying that Christ is faithful and will be faithful in our lives on earth the way that he has been faithful in their lives when they were on earth.

They're not just witnesses in terms of encouraging and desiring that we would receive the the work of Christ that would. Keep us faithful and produce in us that holiness with which the the next several verses after our passage this morning our concern. There are also witnesses observing that which is necessary for them and us and all who are yet to be converted all of the elect that which is necessary for all of us to come into the final and and full perfection.

There's something there's something similar here between this passage and revelation 6. And the fifth seal and the soles under the altar and the soles under the ultra crying outlet. How long and what's the answer? Till the number of your brothers the witnesses. That's what the word martyrs literally means is completed.

So there's a theological and even vocabulary connection between these two passages. So, yes, we should be eager for Christ to be glorified as the author and finish over our faith. Yes, we should be confident that that Christ's work in us will be finished and eager for ourselves to come even into the, Perfection and fullness that we will have in the last day the day of the resurrection when we have not just glorified souls but also glorified bodies like unto Christ but we're also eager and running our race because it's a prerequisite for all those other believers whom we love and whom we esteem Abraham is waiting for you to finish your race.

Moses is waiting for you to finish your race. All of those in Hebrews chapter 11 are waiting for you to finish your race. And what we see when we when we turn to verse 2 is that this means there's this stirs us up not to self-determination but to Christ dependence.

So he says, therefore we also since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses let us lay aside every way. And the sin which so easily ensnares us and let us run with endurance the waste that is set before so most I think explanations of this passage present to or maybe one obstacle they'll say well the weight and the sin are the same thing.

I think reading verse one carefully we actually see three obstacles so let us lay aside every way. Where does a wait come from?

Okay, sorry is this weight something that is inside you or outside of you is outside he's not saying go to the gym, although that's not a bad idea and lay aside the weight that is in you he's talking about things that way upon you these are providential hindrances and we are to wisely and skillfully manage those things that providentially hinders us but from where is the sin that's how easily entangles us.

As inside us right? James chapter 1, you're not allowed to say that God has tempted me. God cannot be tempted nor does he tempt anyone the circumstances you are in are not bringing sin to you that are exposing that the sin the sin that is in you as it comes out of you so laying aside weight that is outside of us.

And the sin which is from inside of us that also that so easily and snares us and then the third hindrance is something that we don't have and let us run with endurance okay, so setting aside sin that easily entangles you there's a sin issue but the need for endurance comes because we are what?

Not just sinful but weak right so there's really three hindrances or three categories of hindrance for us to run our race in this life one is those things in our in our circumstances at Providence has given us the ability by wisdom to manage and avoid. You know, it's one thing to have a wonderful doctrine to sovereign providence it's another thing to throw up our hands and say well it's providence when God's word is actually full of instruction about how to walk wisely with him and all sorts of warnings about about foolishness right so there's things there outside of us as there's the sin that is in us and there's the weakness which is there is not strength in us and it's probably it's probably.

In that order intentionally to go with the beginning of verse 2. So those are the obstacles and we are to run but how do you run? Let us assess every weight and the sin which is easily ensnares us and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us looking unto Jesus.

Okay, so that is both. Goal and method or ability. Jesus is the goal big parallel here again with our passage in our passages in Philippians 3 right now and I think we probably don't get to Jesus says the goal so much this Lord's day afternoon as we hope by God's help to get to next Lord's day afternoon.

But if, We have to lay aside every weight and and the sandwich so easily and snares us but we don't have it in us because we're weak and therefore we need to be commanded to run with endurance looking into Jesus is not only goal but also power but also power.

So it's done by faith. Now you could just say looking into Jesus the finisher of our faith, that's not what he says is it? Looking into Jesus, what has Jesus done already for us?

He's given us the faith to begin with. That if you are looking to Christ, and if you can't the Old Testament believers who counted the Lord Himself as more valuable than this whole world that didn't come from you. Because you don't have looking to Jesus and goodness the goodness from which to look to Jesus in you to begin with.

He's the one who gave looking to him to begin with. And if he's given looking to him to begin with then he's also going to perfect the faith. So you don't just have the beginning of your faith, you have the one who began your faith. But he's not just a beginner of faith, he's also a perfecter of faith.

So if you have faith you have Jesus and if you have Jesus the finishing of your faith is as sure as the beginning. Yes, Dave.

Yes, I mean, I mean, the marvelous thing is if we if we're taking the whole book together, he is the end of it. So is it possible that you could have him already who himself is the end of it and not have him do the work that will take you from where you are to the end, which is himself?

It really is it really is all about Christ, you know, when you're discussing doctrines of grace with people who have grown up and kind of like an anti-calvinism church atmosphere and you just have to keep coming back to how completely it is about Christ and you know for this one perseverance of the saints it's impossible to have a partial Jesus or to be partially had by Jesus there's not just.

A. Logical connection between all of the parts of your salvation, there is a personal identity that is that all of them are found in Christ and if you're thinking mathematically they all have that I identical location in Jesus himself so our faith came from Jesus we're going to get there by Jesus now, what was he willing to do?

Yes who for the joy was set before him endured the cross despising the shame, that's what he was willing to do and what was his outcome. He sat down. At the right hand of the throne of God now we're starting to look forward to that perfection there is a glorified man.

In a glorified resurrected body sitting on the throne of glory. And the saints who worship him in disembodied souls are still eagerly looking forward to when not only their souls refract and reflect and praise his glory but to when they too have obtained these resurrected glorified bodies that reflect reflect and refract and praise his glory and in which they can continue to serve and honor and glorify him for unending ages in.

A new heavens and a new earth there is a sense in which what is set before us here in the end of Hebrews 11 and the beginning of Hebrews 12 puts upon the the lips or the mind of the saints in glory what we see in Philippians chapter 3 from the Apostle Paul forgetting what is behind.

I strained forward to what is ahead. They don't have any sin left. And yet what is in front of them is so much greater than that which they have already obtained. Have this this hope that that I grew up maybe mishearing about maybe I was just a bad learner we'll give our instructors the benefit of the doubt where I I thought of and felt the goal of Christianity as this kind of disembodied spiritual enjoyment of Jesus for.

And yet that I would go to the moment that I died. It is a great hope but it is not the great hope of the Christian the great hope includes the perfection of the resurrection and that is what is guaranteed for those who have Jesus already as the author of our faith well if you like to be comfortable and pain free and trouble free.

Then the good news about what lies ahead is bad news for your present. Because Jesus who is willing to go to his cross despising the shame for what lay before him the joy that lay before him is also willing to put you through your cross cross says your daily cross isn't that where he's going now for consider him who endured such hostility from sinners against himself lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls you have not yet resisted to bloodshed striving against sin.

I probably should have. Included the next few verses as well you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as sons my son do not despise the chastening of your way nor be discouraged or do not be despise a chastening of the Lord sorry the New King James pulled that in from the Old Testament origin nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by him for whom the Lord loves he chastens and scourges every son whom he receives.

So Jesus who is so intent on you coming to that resurrection day that he was willing to go to his cross for it. Is as intent for you to come to that resurrection day, if you're a believer in him to put you through anything that is necessary in order to produce in you that holiness without which you will not see the Lord in order to produce in you the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

Which is both something you get because of peace with God and because of being at peace of God in Jesus Christ and also something that you get in order to be able to be in the presence of God without holiness

you can't see him so even if you have a declared peace with God, you can't come into his presence in the way that is promised us until you are actually made to be like the Jesus who is your righteousness before God so.

One of the big answers for why do Christians suffer because Jesus is as determined in their lives that they would come into the fullness of what he has earned as he was determined in his own life. That we would come into the fullness of what he has earned for us.

He is the author and the finisher and the everything else in between her and that's the point that you're in the in between part now and you do this part looking unto Jesus as well. It's not like he start with you guys start here. It's not like he started it and he's gonna finish it and the middle parts on you know, you're in the middle part and the middle part because he's the start and the beginning.

And everything in the middle you do looking unto him who is the author and finisher of your faith? Yeah, Dave.

Not we think of it as just a dumb or whatever but but for their for their benefit for their. Multiplication and walk completely walk with Christ. Yeah, the godly sorrow that produces repentance and the mercy of God that makes us sorrowful, right? Jeff. Is from Christ but he's said that they could afford three faith that that Facebook was the faith of Christ and ultimately is that I can I be wrong that I thought that.

When he goes to this litany of witnesses. I've always understood that to be. Cataloging the evidence of their faith, it kind of goes hand in hand with. James 2:18 where it says that you know, he says they man say thou has to pay and I have work showed me like faith without thy works and I will show you my faith by my work.

Not works to salvation but the fact is that they endure like Moses by hate Moses when he was coming years refused to be called the son of the wine and he do that. I mean, he had everything given me he did that because he believed. In I arrived alone.

I think you're giving me too much credit because the point that you're that you took me is making is maybe in some ways different than or better than the point that I was making. When I talk when I was when we were talking about three faith there, I was talking about through imparted faith not imputed faith.

But both are true. Right it's Christ's faith that has counted for them but it's also Christ who by his spirit gives them their own faith by which to walk and which produced that fruit and it was you know, I hadn't thought through thoroughly enough in my preparation to be thinking or talking about the former like you understood but I actually did mean primarily the latter like you were just now asking about.

So Jesus believing is the believing that is counted for us when we believe in Jesus so you get credited with perfect believing even in your currently weakened imperfect believing because you get credited with Jesus's believing but he's the one who has given you your current weak believing and he will continue to strengthen it until that work is done and yours is perfect like his.

That's what mr Brewer and I were just talking about. All right, let's pray. How we thank you our God that you have given us your son our Lord Jesus. To be our God and to be our Savior. To be the one who gives us by creation. That faith that we lack.

And to be the one who is the last Adam the first of a new humanity so that. He is our representative and you are making us to be like him by your spirit we thank you for this portion of your word which sets him before us as the hope of every part of our salvation beginning and and where we are in the middle and we pray that your spirit would use what we have understood from these scriptures and that you would increase our understanding of these scriptures and that he would use them to stir up our dependence upon the Lord Jesus so that we would be able to endure that we have.

No power in ourselves so that we would be able to lay aside sin by the His righteousness that you work in us and so that we would walk even wisely considering our circumstances and those weights that you have given us the opportunity to lay aside as well so grant us faith with him faith in him we ask in Jesus name amen.