

# A Greater Endurance

JESUS IS GREATER #22 - Pastor Gary Combs - October 26, 2025 - Hebrews 12:1-13

**INTRO:** Good morning church! We're continuing our series entitled, "JESUS IS GREATER: An Exposition of Hebrews." Our theme verse is:

Hebrews 1:4 (NLT) This shows that the Son is far **greater than** the angels, just as the name God gave him is **greater than** their names.

Today's message is entitled: **A GREATER ENDURANCE**. Because Jesus is greater, His endurance is also greater and as a result we are able to rely on Him for greater endurance too.

**Need:** Many believers start the race of faith well, but grow weary when trials come. We lose focus, stumble under the weight of sin, or misunderstand the Father's discipline. Sometimes we feel exhausted, discouraged, or even tempted to give up. We see others running seemingly effortlessly, while we struggle to put one foot in front of the other. What we need is not more grit and self-effort, but a greater endurance. What can help us endure life's challenges?

**Trans:** The truth is, without Jesus, endurance is impossible. Our strength fails, our resolve falters, and our hearts grow weary. We need more than motivation, more than willpower—we need a source of endurance greater than ourselves, a strength that does not run out. Hebrews reminds us that the heroes of faith endured, not in their own power, but by looking to Jesus. If we are to finish our own race, we must learn to do the same: to look to Him for endurance when life presses hard against us.

**BODY:** In the book of Hebrews chapter 12, after portraying the heroes of faith in chapter 11, who by faith endured hardship, the author of Hebrews exhorted weary believers to run their own race of faith with endurance—fixing their eyes on Jesus as their example and source of strength. We can look to Jesus for endurance to run life's race. How can we look to Jesus for endurance to run life's race? The text gives **three ways** we can look to Jesus for endurance to run life's race.

**Read text:** Hebrews 12:1-13 (ESV) <sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup> Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. <sup>4</sup> In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. <sup>5</sup> And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. <sup>6</sup> For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." <sup>7</sup> It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? <sup>8</sup> If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. <sup>9</sup> Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? <sup>10</sup> For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. <sup>11</sup> For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. <sup>12</sup> Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, <sup>13</sup> and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.

## WE CAN LOOK TO JESUS FOR ENDURANCE TO RUN LIFE'S RACE...

### 1. By considering His example.

**EXP:** (1-4) Look at v.3 and circle "consider Him." Consider Jesus. Consider how He ran His race.

**"Cloud of witnesses" (1)** (μάρτυς, *martus*) - Points back to the faithful saints of chapter 11.

**"Lay aside every weight" (1)** (ἀποτίθημι, *apotithēmi*) - to put off or aside or away. "In the first century AD, runners ran in the stadium virtually naked. They would enter wearing long flowing, colorful robes. At the start of the race, these would be discarded" (David L. Allen, *NAC Hebrews*, 573).

**"Sin which clings" (1)** (ἐυπερίστατος, *euperistatos*) - surrounding a competitor; thwarting (a racer) in every direction; figuratively, of sin, which so easily besets.

**"Let us run" (1)** (τρέχω, *trechō*) (Present, active, subjunctive) - to run; in a race course.

**"Endurance/endure" (1,2,3,7 - 4x)** (ὑπομονή, *hupomonē*) - lit., to remain or abide under; steadfastness, constancy, endurance, perseverance; patience.

**"Race" (1)** (ἀγών, *agōn*) - conflict, fight, contention, struggle, race. Root for the English word "agony." In its original sense it carries the idea of *effortful struggle toward victory*, not necessarily suffering in itself. This race isn't a sprint. It's an ultra marathon!

**"Looking to" (2)** - to turn the eyes from other things and fix them on something; to consider attentively.

**"Founder" (2)** (ἀρχηγός, *archēgos*) - one that takes the lead in any thing and thus affords an example, a predecessor in a matter, pioneer, the author. Jesus started the faith.

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**“Perfecter” (2)** (τελειωτής, *teleiōtēs*) - a completer, consummator, finisher. Jesus also completed the faith.

**“Joy” (2)** (χαρά, *chara*) - joy, gladness, delight.

**“Despising the shame” (2)** (καταφρονέω, *kataphroneō*) - to despise, disdain. Jesus endured the shame and the curse of the cross. He determined to think little of it in order to save us.

**“Consider Him” (3)** (ἀναλογίζομαι, *analogizomai*) (Aorist, Middle, Imperative) - to think over, consider, ponder; contemplate. To consider by weighing, comparing.

**“Endured ...hostility” (3)** (ἀντιλογία, *antilogia*) - again same word (ὑπομονή). Gainsaying, contradiction, opposition, rebellion; hostility.

**“Weary or fainthearted” (3)** (κάμνω, *kamnō*) - to tire (figuratively, faint, sicken); faint, sick, be wearied.

**“Struggle against sin” (4)** (ἀνταγωνίζομαι, *antagōnizomai*) - to struggle against.

**“Not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood” (4)** (ἀντικαθίστημι, *antikathistēmi*) - to put in place of another; to place in opposition, to resist. “You have not yet been called in your Christian struggles to the highest kind of sufferings and sacrifices. Great as your trials may seem to have been, yet your faith has not yet been put to the severest test.” (*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*)

**ARG:** We are to endure looking to Christ as our example.

1 Peter 2:20-21 (NLT) ... if you suffer for doing good and endure it patiently, God is pleased with you. For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you. He is your example, and you must follow in his steps.

**ILL:** Like a marathon runner who locks eyes on the finish line to push through pain, we fix our eyes on Jesus—the goal and source of our strength.

Corrie ten Boom said, “If you look at the world, you’ll be distressed. If you look within, you’ll be depressed. But if you look at Christ, you’ll be at rest.”

**APP:** When you grow weary in life’s race, look up. Fix your gaze on Jesus. Draw strength from His example and grace from His Spirit. He endured for you—now He endures in you!

## 2. By submitting to His discipline.

**EXP:** (5-11) The writer reminds his readers of Prov. 3:11–12, “God disciplines those He loves” (6). Discipline is not punishment but preparation. The Father trains His children that they might “share His holiness” (10). Though painful in the moment, it “yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness” in those trained by it (11).

**“Have you forgotten” (5)** (ἐκλανθάνομαι, *eklanthanomai*) - to cause to forget; to be utterly oblivious of.

**“Do not regard lightly” (5)** (ὀλιγωρέω, *oligōreō*) (Present, active, imperative) - to care little for, regard lightly,

**“Discipline” (5) (9x)** (παιδεία, *paideia*) - Lit., the whole training and education of children. Discipline teaches endurance: It stretches us to keep going under hardship.

**“Reproved” (5)** (ἐλέγχω, *elegchō*) - to convict, refute, confute; to find fault with, correct

**“The Lord disciplines the one he loves” (6)** (ἀγαπάω, *agapaō*) - to love dearly

**“Chastises” (6)** (μαστιγώω, *mastigoō*) - to flog (literally or figuratively); scourge.

**“Earthly fathers” (9)** (σαρκὸς ἡμῶν πατέρας, *sarkos hēmōn pateras*) - literally fathers of our flesh.

**“Be subject” (9)** (ὑποτάσσω, *hupotassō*) - This word was a Greek military term meaning “to arrange [troop divisions] in a military fashion under the command of a leader.” In non-military use, it was “a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden.”

**“Father of spirits” (9)** (πνεῦμα, *pneuma*) - breath, spirit. An argument from lesser to greater: If we obey our earthly fathers, how much more our heavenly or spiritual Father.

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“He disciplines us for our good” (10) (συνφέρω, *sumpherō*) - to help, be profitable; be better for, good.

“We may share his holiness” (10) (ἁγιότης, *hagiotēs*) - sanctity; consecrated, set apart; holiness

“All discipline seems painful” (11) (λύπη, *lypē*) - sorrow, pain, grief, annoyance, affliction.

“Righteousness” (11) (δικαιοσύνη, *dikaïosunē*) - integrity, virtue, purity of life, rightness with God.

“Trained” (11) (γυμνάζω, *gumnazō*) - root word for gymnasium: to exercise, body or the mind, to train.

**ARG:** Endurance grows in the soil of discipline. God allows trials not to break us, but to build us.

James 1:2-4 (NLT) <sup>2</sup> Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. <sup>3</sup> For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. <sup>4</sup> So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

**ILL:** No pain, no gain. As an aspiring guitarist, I had to endure the pain of blisters on my fingers until I had callouses, then I could play pain free. Even a fruit tree must be pruned to bear more fruit (John 15).

“God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world” (CS Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, 93).

**APP:** When hardship comes, don’t despise it or grow weary under it. Trust your Father’s hand. Say, “Lord, train me through this, not just deliver me from it.” His discipline is shaping your endurance for the race ahead

## 3. By relying on His strength.

**EXP:** (12-13) Having endured and been trained, the exhortation now turns to renewal: “Lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees” (12). This echoes Isaiah:

Isaiah 35:3 (ESV) Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.

“Lift your drooping hands” (12) (ἀνορθόω, *anorthōō*) (Aorist, Active, Imperative) - to straighten up; lift (set) up.

“Weak knees” (12) (παραλύω, *paralūō*) - paralyzed or enfeebled; sick of the (taken with) palsy.

“Make straight paths for your feet” (13) (ὀρθός, *orthos*) (Aorist, Active, Imperative) - straight, not crooked.

“So that what is lame” (13) (χωλός, *chōlos*) - lame; deprived of a foot, maimed, crippled.

“Be healed” (13) (ἰάομαι, *iaomai*) - to cure, heal; to make whole; to free from errors and sins.

**ARG:** After discipline comes empowerment. God doesn’t leave us drained—He renews our strength by His Spirit. Endurance is sustained not by willpower but by the resurrection power of Christ working in us.

Isaiah 40:29-31 (ESV) <sup>29</sup> He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. <sup>30</sup> Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; <sup>31</sup> but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

**ILL:** Like a runner catching a second wind, or Elijah being strengthened by the angel’s bread, the believer who waits on the Lord finds fresh power to keep running.

**APP:** When you feel too weak to go on, remember—you’re not running alone. The same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you. Rely on His power, walk in His path, and you’ll finish your race strong!

**CONCLUSION:** Endurance is not the absence of weariness—it’s faith that keeps running through it. Jesus endured the cross for the joy set before Him. Because He endured, we can endure too— (1) by considering His example, (2) submitting to His discipline, and (3) relying on His strength. Let’s fix our eyes on Jesus and keep running the race of faith with greater endurance, until we see Him face to face.

Let’s pray.