

“Therefore”

Hebrews 12:1-2

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Key Words: Therefore, Goal, Jesus

“The nice thing about apathy is you don't have to exert yourself to show you're sincere about it.”

Unknown

“Did you hear about the company that makes blank bumper stickers? They're for people who don't want to get involved.”

Unknown

What motivates you each day to get out of bed and live?

- If you live for the weekend, your life will be gauged by how much ‘fun’ you had.
- If you live your life for sports, your life will be gauged by how well you play.
 - What if you break your leg? What will your life be then?
- If you live your life to provide for your family, your life will be gauged by how well you do that.

Enjoying the weekend, liking sports or getting good grades in and of themselves isn't a problem, but living for those things is something entirely different

Christianity isn't a spectator sport!

- You don't go to church on Sunday to watch the Pastor ‘do it’
 - You go Pastor! Get the Devil!!!! Preach it!!!

Church on Sunday is “**CROSSfit**” for the Christian!

- Get it? The Cross (Where Jesus died) fit.
 - CROSSfit!
 - **1 Timothy 4:7** “...exercise yourself toward godliness.”
- The Church is our Spiritual Gym
 - It's also a hospital etc.

Therefore – emphatic markers of result, often associated with exhortation

- We are exhorted by the Apostle Paul to do three things in this verse
 1. Lay Aside!
 2. Lay a Course!
 3. Look unto Jesus!

Our Example

Hebrews 12:1-2 “*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, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith...”

- Paul has laid out some pretty amazing examples of believers in chapter 11
- *The Good*
 - **Hebrews 11:30-40** ³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days. ³¹ By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace. ³² And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: ³³ who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. ³⁵ Women received their dead raised to life again...”
- *The Bad that was used for good.* (Romans 8:28)
 - **Hebrews 11:35-38** “...Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— ³⁸ *of whom the world was not worthy.* They wandered in deserts and mountains, *in dens and caves of the earth.*”
 - **Side Note:** What a good reason to read the Old Testament! We can get such encouragement!

With what we are about to read, keep in mind that those that have gone before us did and so can we!

They are set forth as an example of how God can use ordinary people to do extraordinary things!!!

To be like them we MUST

(first) **Lay Aside**

Hebrews 12:1 "...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us ..."

- *Weight* – that which serves to hinder or prevent someone from doing something
 - *"What are the "weights" that we should remove so that we might win the race? Everything that hinders our progress. They might even be "good things" in the eyes of others. A winning athlete does not choose between the good and the bad; he chooses between the better and the best."*
Weirsbe
 - **2 Timothy 2:4** "No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of *this* life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier."
- *Sin* – to act contrary to the will and law of God—'to sin, to engage in wrongdoing, sin.'
 - **Romans 13:12-13** "¹² The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. ¹³ Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts."
 - **Ephesians 4:22-24** "...put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, ²³ and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴ and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness."
 - **Colossians 3:8-10** "⁸ But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, ¹⁰ and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him"
 - **James 1:21-22** "²¹ Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. ²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."
 - *"Put off" "Lay aside" –*

(second) **Lay a Course**

Hebrews 12:1 "...let us run with endurance the race that is set before us..."

- *Run* – JUST DO IT!
 - If you are going to run, you will choose a direction to run!
 - As we'll see in a minute, Jesus is the direction.

Notice what we must run with

- **Endurance** – capacity to continue to bear up under difficult circumstances
 - We must run WITH endurance!
 - The Christian’s race isn’t a sprint! It isn’t a 100-yard dash, it’s more like a marathon!
 - You need endurance!
 - **Luke 21:10-19** “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹ And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. ¹² But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute *you*, delivering *you* up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name’s sake. ¹³ But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. ¹⁴ Therefore settle *it* in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; ¹⁵ for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. ¹⁶ You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put *some* of you to death. ¹⁷ And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. ¹⁸ But not a hair of your head shall be lost. ¹⁹ By your *patience* possess your souls.”
 - Patience is the exact same Greek word Paul used in Hebrews for endurance.
- **Race** –
 - **Agon** – a race involving competition and struggle
 - **1 Timothy 6:12** “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.”
 - Like those in chapter 11 of Hebrews, some of us will have the awesome glory filled stuff in this life, and some of us will be destitute, afflicted, etc.
 - Will you choose to trust God’s plan?

(last) **Look Unto Jesus**

Hebrews 12:2 “...looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith...”

- **Looking unto** – literally ‘from afar’
 - Like a runner starting his race with the finish line in mind.
 - “**Looking unto Jesus**” describes an attitude of faith and not just a single act.”
 - Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 2, p. 323). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.
- **Author** – Originator, or founder, the hero of a city, who founded it, often gave it his name and became its guardian.

- *Finisher* – The one who completes it.
 - **Philippians 1:6** “He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ.”
 - **Hebrews 13:20** “²⁰ Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, ²¹ make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.”
- *Paul’s Valedictory*
 - **2 Timothy 4:6-8** “⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”
- **Titus 2:11-13** “¹¹ For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, ¹² teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, ¹³ *looking* for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.”
- **2 Peter 3:11-12** “¹¹ **Therefore**, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² *looking* for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?”
- **Jude 20-21** “²⁰ But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, *looking* for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”

“The teenager lost a contact lens while playing basketball in his driveway. After a fruitless search, he told his mother the lens was nowhere to be found. Undaunted, she went outside and in a few minutes returned with the lens in her hand. “I really looked hard for that, Mom,” said the youth. “How’d you manage to find it?” “We weren’t looking for the same thing,” she replied. “You were looking for a small piece of plastic. I was looking for \$150.”

Source Unknown.

- If you have been caught up or tripped up in any sin or weights then...
 - **1 John 1:9** “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness...”

- **Philippians3:12-14** ^{“12} Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. ¹³ Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”