

Discussion Guide: Hall of Fame of Faith, Part 18 (Final sermon)

"...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." ~ Hebrews 12:2 (ESV)

November 30, 2003: "Hall of Fame of Faith – Part 18" by Kimber Kauffman, Senior Pastor College Park Church. Today pastor reviewed and concluded our series on Hebrews 11 and 12:1-3. At the beginning of the service, we heard from [Ben Comen](#)¹ via phone. Also of note: Kimber was in the 8 AM service but physically unable to preach second (and third?) service(s), which were shown the video of the 8 AM sermon.

Kimber reviewed the last three sermons-

1. The Christian life is very much like a marathon (1 Cor. 9:24ff is another example)
2. In order to run this race well, we should:
 - A.) Remember the example of that great cloud of witnesses.
 - B.) Focus on the reward that awaits, not the challenge of the race itself.
 - C.) Look to Jesus;
 - i.) As the example of how to run.
 - ii.) Because He can sympathize with and help us with the race.
 - iii.) Specifically, to His suffering, and take heart.
3. We must persevere in this race because of our responsibility to;
 - A.) our fellow Saints.
 - B.) Jesus.

Question 1: What most impacted you from Hebrews 12:1-4 and why?

The phrase "looking to Jesus" has a tense of "constantly" or "continually." Also of note, the word for "look" means to purposefully take your attention off of one thing and choose to place it on another. In this case, we are to take our attention off of "weights" and "sins" and place them on Jesus. Why? Because Jesus was truly human and therefore can sympathize with us. Plus He endured hardships both equal to and unfathomable in comparison with our own struggles against sin.

Question 2: What are some of the things or people you compare yourself to other than Jesus?

The Greek word translated "founder"² means "chief leader", "prince" or "pioneer". The Greek word translated "perfecter"³ means "finisher" or "one who carries something out completely."

Question 3: Which idea is more meaningful to you: that God gave you faith, or that He will not let go of you and will perfect that faith?

Kimber talked about how, until recently, his view of how Jesus approached the cross was mostly negative: He agonized over it, He longed for it to go away, etc. But now Kimber sees that Jesus had joy about the Cross, because He was able to look past it to see that it would mean doing His Father's will and that He would get to again be at one with the Father. Also, the phrase "despised the shame"⁴ means to think little of.

Question 4: So often we tend to react in the flesh to our situations. How can Jesus' example of "joyful anticipation of future rewards" and "thinking little of the shame" help prepare us to react in a godly way?

Jesus endured much more than we do or could: He not only struggled with the same temptations we do, but he also underwent the worst physical death one can imagine. But the worst of all was that He was made into Sin, and was separated from the Holy Trinity.

Spend a silent moment meditating on these things which Jesus endured.

Final Question: Most of the time, *who* are you thinking of (concerned about)? Put another way: When presented with a decision, what is the *first* thing you weigh? What is given *primary* weight?

If we don't do what we just did (meditate on or "look to" Jesus) then we will tend to be Christians who either don't finish the race, or run so poorly as to be unavailable to have people see God in us. We will seek to avoid discomfort instead of willfully participating in the rigors of the marathon to which Jesus has called us.

Possible Take-Home Applications:

- Compare your holiness to Jesus'
- Visualize Jesus greeting you in heaven
- Bring up Jesus' humanity as a topic of conversation at your next Christian social event
- Set aside a time to meditate on Jesus' victory over sin and the implications for you, given that you are in Christ and God has given you His righteousness!

Notes:

1. See <http://hanna.anderson5.net/athletics/xcountry/benindex.htm>.
2. See also Heb. 2:10
3. Same word rendered "It is finished" in John 19:30
4. Same word rendered "hate" in Matthew 6:24 and "show contempt for" in Romans 2:4