

DEVOTION OF THE DAY

*fixing our
eyes on
Jesus*



worldwide
day of prayer

OCTOBER 7, 2025

— CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CHRIST INTERNATIONAL —

PERSONAL DEVOTION

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Hebrews 12:1-2 NASB95

“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”



In the old Roman races, there was always a large crowd cheering on the runners. The Bible tells us that there are always those watching us, whether they are humans or angels. In the letter to the Hebrews, the writer tells us that we are surrounded by this crowd, not only the eighteen heroes mentioned in chapter 11, but many more people who are watching us. These are our witnesses, from whom we learn how to live our faith as true heroes.

There are many people watching us, but there are many people who are witnesses for us. We watch them and learn how they lived their lives of faith as true heroes.

In the first verse, the writer is telling us we have a cloud of witnesses we look up to. In the second verse, I think the writer is saying, do not look only to them.

If you want to be victorious, you need to look to someone who sets a better standard; a superior example. You must look to the Lord Jesus Christ. Even though we have a cloud of witnesses, we look to one person in this cloud of witnesses who is there to encourage us, to teach us, to look up to. The Bible says in this verse, "since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us," it is referring to the people in chapter 11, the heroes of faith who lived sanctified lives.

They did not live easy lives but lives full of dangers, challenges, and difficulties. These people did not live an easy life paved with roses, but a strong life, a steadfast life, a life of great faith. We are surrounded by this cloud of faithful people who testify to us these days that faith can be lived, and we can finish our calling by faith.





A CALL TO LAY DOWN SIN AND EVERYTHING THAT HINDERS US

In verse 1, the writer of Hebrews encourages us to lay down all the burdens and anything that hinders us and sins that easily surround us and to persevere with patience in the race that is before us. - Running a race presents a challenge, demanding effort and determination.

We face challenges in the task at hand, and we will ultimately prevail and continue in victory.

The writer reminds us that the first thing we have is a cloud of witnesses who testify for us, not just watch us. We watch their lives and learn from them how to run and win the race. We must cast off and abandon all the weight and sin that easily surrounds us. The cloud of witnesses surrounds us, and the other thing that surrounds us with ease is sin. He tells us to lay down all our burdens, to cast off everything that weighs us down, to let go of anything that weakens our resolve.

In the ancient Roman Olympics running races¹, competitors held nothing and wore the minimal. They must discard anything that slows them down or hinders their start and finish. The author encourages us to leave anything that dampens our resolve or slows us down.

To lay aside and cast aside anything we need to give up in this life, to give it up so that we may win, so that we may be first in this race and win the prize. That weight can be good things in life, important things according to the world or to us, but he tells us to throw them away, to give them up, because they hinder our progress.

Lay down the sins that surround us, which we often love and cling to, and overcome us. Leave the harmful things to our race that we love, or the sins that dominate us. To abandon them, to leave them behind. He exhorts us to true repentance, to abandon everything that does not please the Lord Jesus, to renounce it. Let our souls not be attached to these sins. The Lord gives us true freedom from these sins, true freedom from the things of the world.

1 John 2:15, **“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them.”** Do not love sin. Do not love the burdens that weigh us down and prevent us from moving forward with strength.

But we need to think differently about sin. Sin surrounds us everywhere. Sin is in our old self and we even can reach it on our phones or computers that we use in our daily life. It is so close to us and it easily helps us to commit sin. Sin is easy and subtle, in things you look at, in love of money and self-love. It could be good things and useful but I can use them in a wrong way.



¹ Article by Toni Minichiello- Long-time coach to London 2012 Olympic Games gold medal-winning British heptathlete, Jessica Ennis-Hillsited <https://www.olympics.com/ioc/ancient-olympic-games/running> sited on August 26, 2025 at 1:00pm.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

- How is this section talking to me personally?

- Am I living with the goal of the race in mind or do I feel that I am in a mouse wheel?

EXTRA QUESTIONS TO PONDER

- What is my perspective on the race?

- What is the Lord pointing at and encouraging me to leave completely and never return to?

- What do I need to confess and repent of?

PERSEVERANCE WITH PATIENCE IN OUR RACE

The writer is encouraging patience with perseverance in the race which is our journey. Our challenge that is before us is to faithfully finish the race and the calling the Lord gave us. To live keeping our eyes with the end in sight. We look up to heaven and say, "O Lord, we want to get there victoriously." We want to be like the Apostle Paul, who said in 2Timothy 4:7 -8 "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing".

We look at this challenge and persevere in our faith journey, in our struggles, in our ministry, and everything we do until we finish the race before us. The struggle for this cause is exhausting. It requires training like an athlete. It requires us to be alert to continuously lay down every weight, abandon every sin, repent of every sin, forsake sin, forsake everything that weighs us down, and strive with patience to finish the race. And remind ourselves of the witnesses and how they persevered in faith to live a faithful life.. We persevere to finish the race like Paul and fight the good fight. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, encourages us to finish well and honorably.

Perhaps one of the challenges or burdens is a mediocre faith or too much self confidence. We might lack trust amid the difficult challenges of these days, such as the wars happening around us, the life we live, economic crisis, and the chaos in the world. In other words the Lord is telling us through vv 1 and 2, "I want you to persevere with patience in your walk with me in the midst of the struggle of the journey before you and to let go of what hinders you."

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

- What comes to mind when I hear patience and endurance?
- What are my burdens or hindrances that slow me down in the race set before me?
- Take some time to ask the Lord in which area I need patience and perseverance?

EXTRA QUESTIONS TO PONDER

- What are my challenges in being able to endure with patience and perseverance?
- What helps me personally, to endure the race?



THE IMPORTANCE OF FOCUSING ON THE LORD JESUS

The letter to the Hebrews focuses on the greatness of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is superior to all people and the rituals of the law because they point to Him. The writer refers to a "cloud of witnesses" surrounding us, but in the second verse he emphasizes the need to focus on the Lord Jesus Christ as our example. Despite the presence of these witnesses, our focus must be on one person, the Lord Jesus.

In our race, which is our challenging journey, if you want to be encouraged by someone who will be the ultimate source of encouragement to you, to any hero above all heroes of faith, if there is anyone who is worthy of your gaze, you should look to the Lord Jesus Christ. Fix your eyes on Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith. In other translations, Christ is the leader, the pioneer, and the finisher of our faith. The writer encourages us to turn our eyes away from being fixed on things that distract us, which could be good sometimes, to focus and look to Jesus because He is the subject of our faith. He is the leader of our faith. The one who established and laid down all the rules of the faith, true faith. The faith which is trust and confidence in God. Trust in Jesus Christ in the midst of trials, in the midst of challenges, in the midst of our journey in this world, in the midst of the ministry and vision that God has given us. We trust Him that He will fulfill the great commission not us but Him. The distractions could be good like ministry which He called us to, but sometimes it could be the idol that takes our eyes off Jesus.

We all look at someone or something. Here we are spurred to look at the Lord Jesus Christ. Look at the one who established and perfected the faith to the end. Why did Jesus have to persevere and endure the cross? For what? For the joy set before Him. Of course, the cross was not joy for the Lord Jesus. The cross He endured is the cross of shame and the cross of humiliation.

He endured for the joy set before Him. His joy is you and me, yes, us believers. He invests and He conforms us into His likeness. When He looks at us, He would say, yes, you are my joy. He wants to say to each one of us, I am pleased with you. I am pleased that I have completed the work for the sake of the goal.

For it is the Lord Jesus Christ who bore the cross, despising the shame, of course despising the disgrace. Shame was one of the difficult challenges for the Lord Jesus Christ, despising the cross, despising the wounding, the spitting, the cursing. What the Lord Jesus felt, lived and struggled through with difficulty, He despised. He despised the shame that was inflicted on Him when they placed a crown of thorns on His head, when they dressed Him in a scarlet robe, when they beat Him, when they struck Him, when they crucified Him on the cross. He despised all this shame, as if the Lord Jesus Christ was saying to us about Himself, I am the greatest example for you. and the writer of Hebrews is telling us, "Look to Him in all your ways. The Lord is present from the beginning of your journey. He is present throughout the journey, and till the end. Look to Him, like the Apostle Paul, who says, in everything I do, I strive to be like Christ." Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ." (1 Cor 11:1)

Here, the Apostle wants to tell us to look at the Lord Jesus Christ, who after He finished, sat at the right hand of the throne of God v. 2. From the beginning, He came down from God's throne to Bethlehem and lived a holy life, perfect in every thing He did, perfect in His humbleness, in humiliation on the cross, and in shame for my salvation and yours. He endured all this. Therefore we are encouraged to look to our Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit encourages us to look to the Lord Jesus. The Holy Spirit encourages us to cast away all the weight and sin that surrounds us with ease.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

- What distracts me from fixing my eyes on Jesus?
- Sometimes our lens needs polishing to be cleaned or a surgery like the cataract surgery where the patient gets new lenses so we can focus. How focused am I on Christ? Where is my focus?
- I could be focused so much on the ministry that I forget the one who called me.
- I could be focused on the mistakes of others (Matthew 7:3-4)
- What else?
- What is specifically encouraging to you when you remember that Jesus bore the cross for us?

EXTRA QUESTIONS TO PONDER

- What would it practically look like to “look to the Lord Jesus Christ” every day?
- Take time to worship the Lord (extra scripture to read is Philippians 2: 5-11)

In Summary, The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews exhorts us in these 2 verses to do three things:

1. Learn from the heroes of faith, those who came before us.
2. Lay aside or cast away every weight that hinders our progress in spiritual growth, renounce all sin and to repent always. The Lord is opening His hands for you to come.
3. We must always and continually look to the Lord Jesus, who is the foundation and fulfillment of our faith, and imitate Him with strength and confidence. He has left us an example and we have his Spirit to follow in His footsteps.

