

Hebrews

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Preacher: Dawson, Herbert (1890-1969)

- [0 : 00] As the Lord shall be pleased to help me, I shall call your attention to a subject you will find in the epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 12 and verse 1, and the first three words in verse 2.
- Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus.
- Chapter 12, the epistle to the Hebrews, verse 1, and the first three words in verse 2.
- Your interest, my interest, in this subject, which is one of unspeakable importance, hinges upon one word in it, the word seeing.
- As the apostle Paul brings before us in this injunction to the godly Hebrews of old.
- [2 : 00] Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.
- And now the epistle to the Hebrews was penned to the church of Christ in Judea. And that church was a great church, you will find in the Acts of the Apostles, records of it.
- And the church was a great church of the church of the church of the church of the church of Christ in Judea. And the church was passing through a very solemn testing point.
- Persecution had arisen. Many in the church were being hard put to it to endure in the profession which they had made.
- Some who had their names on the church roll, alas, did not endure, but they fell back.
- [3 : 11] The apostle Paul refers to such characters in a preceding chapter. Now the just shall live by faith, whereby you look unto Jesus.
- But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. And then he comes to this beautiful and blessed declaration.
- May it be the truth about you and the preacher too. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul, a very solemn thing, to set out in a profession of the name of Jesus and then to go back upon it.
- You remember in the Saviour's time, there were those who purported to be disciples. But when Jesus Christ declared the truth as he alone could declare it, when he said, it is the spirit that quickened it, the flesh profiteth nothing, from that, having heard that declaration, from that many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him.
- And now the apostle Paul was inspired by the Spirit of God to pen this epistle to the Hebrews and show them that the way they were going along was no new way, and that down through the ages, heretofore, all who were pilgrims to Cairn and Baal had found the way to be through much tribulation.
- [5 : 09] And by the grace of God, they had endured unto the end therein. And in the preceding chapter, the apostle Paul gives illustrations of the Old Testament worthies who lived by faith, and he says in beautiful language, these all died in faith.
- And he goes on enumerating, varied Old Testament worthies, and then he gives it up, for he says the time would fail to tell of all that could be told.

But, by the grace of God, long before you godly Hebrews were living the life of the righteous, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of people, taught of God, lived right, and died right.

And as you sometimes see, the point he was making was this. Thy grace sufficed saints of old.

It made them strong. It made them bold. And it suffices still. And he works out his argument, and then he says, wherefore, see this, we also were compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.

[6 : 55] Let us take courage. Let us lay aside every weight. And the sin which doth so easily beset us, which tempts us to give up and go back.

Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus. And now that is just the setting of the subject.

And I would as the Lord to help me look at it from three or four viewpoints, and it might be a seasonable word to you dear people in this course of truth.

As you think of those who have worshipped God of right herein, going back over the long years, there must be very, very many redeemed spirits in the realms of bliss, who when they dwelt on earth, used to worship God of right in this course of truth.

And the great thing you and I should be living for is to be followers of them who, through faith and patience, have inherited the promises.

[8 : 12] We are compassed about, says the Apostle Paul, with so great a cloud of witnesses. And you think, dear friends, some of you, you dear greyheads and others not so great.

You go back in your mind and think of those whom you have known and loved and esteemed as people taught of God.

You will be surprised how many you can look back along life's way and remember. But they are gone, the way of all the earth.

All that is mortal of them has been well laid in the grave, ensuring certain hope of a joyful resurrection to the life everlasting. And you are saying, with them numbered I would be, now and in eternity.

See it. You do see it. The eyes of the blind have been opened in your case. You cannot say much. It may be.

[9 : 22] But you can venture to say, one thing I know, whereas I was blind. Now I can see. I can see that on this earth, God has a people in which he takes a specific interest and he runs the world on their behalf, that they might be witnesses for him and his truth.

And he says of them, this people have I formed for myself and they shall show forth my praise. And you say, so do I.

Let me among thy saints be found. Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people. O visit me with thy salvation.

Let us look first of all at this word witnesses. I like that word. I like it much better than the word Protestant.

Because the word Protestant sometimes has got a political interpretation. And you will find that as you read church history, that sometimes it was more political than it was to do with sound doctrine and the things of God.

[10 : 47] God. And now this word, witnesses, God says in the book of Isaiah, ye are my witnesses.

God uses that word. Witnesses comes from an old Anglo-Saxon word, Witan, W-I-T-A-N.

One who has knowledge. Knowledge of the things of God. And out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth, speak it.

Put it in scripture language. We speak that which we do know. That which we have tasted, handled and felt of the good word of life.

Declare we unto you, witnesses. But then, here is a wondrous thing. You find throughout the word of God, as you examine these witnesses, whoever they are, be they witnesses, they all witness to the same truth.

[11 : 59] Without any deviation. And so it will be, till time shall be no more. There cannot be any modernizing of the things of God and bringing them up to date.

Because they are always up to date. And never out of date. Remember that. And the word of God says, And oh, that you and I may lay it to heart.

And they shall be all taught of God. And now it does not matter which of these witnesses you may question. Any whom you know who were taught of God, you will find they all witness to the self-same truth.

Everyone will witness to this truth as he appears before God. From the sole of the foot even to the head.

There is no soundness in it. Wounds and bruises. Putri-trying strings. Behold, I am vile.

[13 : 15] Which you know, every man, the plague of his own heart. Everyone will witness to this great truth. By grace are ye saved.

Through faith. And that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God. Not of works. Lest any man should boast.

And they will all witness to this great declaration. Salvation is of the Lord. And they will all join together.

In singing. If ever my poor soul is saved. This Christ. Must be the way. And ask any of these witnesses.

What think ye of Christ? And they will tell you. Neither is there salvation. In any other. There is given unto heaven among men.

[14 : 19] None other name. Whereby we can be saved. Witnesses. And in a right mind. They will all speak well of God.

With whom they have to do. And declare. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood. So is my beloved among the sons.

I sat down under his shadow with great delight. And his fruit was sweet to mine. Much might be said. Along that line of thought.

But there is a great word which says. Unto him shall the gathering of the people be. Witnesses. And then.

It says in this subject. I like to look at it from this viewpoint. The race. That is set before us.

[15 : 21] It is a very simple illustration. The Holy Spirit in the word of his Christ. Was condescending to use illustrations.

That are familiar. Simple. Especially remembering. The word of God is to do with the land of promise. And round about. And the Apostle Paul said to the.

Corinthian. So love. That you may obtain. And now here is a race. And it is a wonderful race.

Because. As a rule. Says the Apostle Paul. Know ye not that they which run in a race. Run all. But one. Obtaineth the prize.

But in this race. If God sets you going in it. You will have a prize. Yes. The prize of the high calling of the gospel.

- [16 : 20] In Christ Jesus. Every one. Will win. In this race. The people his soul shall win the day. Though earth and hell have struck the way.
- Yes. But it is declared here. The race. That is set before us. And now the emphasis. Is on that word set.
- The word set. Brings before us. The great doctrine. Of the sovereignty of God.
- God. The lot is cast into the last. But the whole disposing thereof. Is of the Lord. Yes.
- The steps of a good man. Are ordered by the Lord. And he delighteth in his way. Therefore. If God. Should set you going.
- [17 : 17] In this wondrous race. Turning your back on. Earth. And setting out for heaven. That you might win Christ.
- And be found in him. You will have to run in a race. That God has ordained for you. Lined out as a track.
- As it were. Remember that. The race that is set before us. And we might ask.
- In what way. Is this race. Set before us. First of all. It is set before us.
- In eternal purposes. I like that word. To the godly Romans. We know. That all things work together for good. To them that love God.
- [18 : 13] To them who are the called. According to his purpose. And now the things that come into your life. Oh they may be things.
- Hard to be. Understood. Sometimes you may think. And think rightly. That they are things. They ought not to have come in. According to the revealed will of God.
- But they are permitted to come. And you have to learn. The fictitious power of chance and fortune. I defy.
- My life's minutest circumstance. Is subject to. God's eye. And the things that come upon you and yours.
- There is underneath. A purpose. And that purpose will be. Revealed. As you run the race. That is set. Before you.
- [19 : 12] Then you will find. Out of the eater. Should come forth meat. Out of the strong. Should come forth. Sweetness. You will learn.
- As you run a right. Who so is wise. And will observe these things. Even they shall understand. The loving kindness.
- Of the Lord. There is. An underlying. Purpose. In the dealings of God. With his dear people. As they run in this race.
- But then. It might be said. That the race is set before us. In the word of God itself. So it is.
- Because there you get. As it were. Speaking with great reverence. The rules. Whereby you run. In the word of God. There are not only exceeding.
- [20 : 11] Great and precious promises. But. I would have you to believe this. And think on it prayerfully. There are exceeding. Great and precious. Precepts.
- And you know. Dear friends. Those of us. Who try to preach. Especially pastors. You find that. If you are being helped. To preach from the promises.
- Which bespeak comfort. Something. Which you. Receive. From him. Who is the. Mighty. Promiser.
- Oh you like that line of things. But then. Those of us. Who have to preach the word. Have to preach it. In its entirety. As grace is given.

And that means. Sometimes. You have got to set. For. The precepts. Of the gospel.
Which means. Something that God. Is looking for you.

- [21 : 08] To do. Do for his. Name's sake. To show. Whose you are. And whom. You serve.
And that kind of preaching. Is often. Very searching. And you go. On your way. It may be.
Feeling guilty. Before God. Because you come so short. In all that you would be. And do.
In living the life. Of the righteous. But there it is.
In the sacred pages. The race. That is set. Before us. Wherefore. What you should be.
Especially if your name is on a church rule.
What you should do. Where you should go. The company alone that you. Should keep.
And what. You say.

- [22 : 07] Yes. And the spirit that you should exhibit. The race that is set. Before us. Wherefore.
By their proof. She shall know that. But then. There is another side to this. Which is very
encouraging. The race. That is set before us.
And now. It is set before us. Not only. In the word of God. But in the lives of people.
Taught of God.
As they are recorded. And now. As you read the word of God. And the lives that the godly
live. There you see.
The race. That is set before you. Answerable to this word. We must. Through much
tribulation. Enter into the kingdom of God.

- [23 : 04] And I would. Counsel you. Dear people. I ask you to remember. Remember. That when
you look on your cross. And maybe.
You have self-pity in thought. And you think your cross. Seems to be one unusual. You
might even think. It is an outsized cross.
Speaking with great reverence. You might feel with Jeremiah. I am the man. I am the man.
That has seen affliction. As though no one else. Round about. Had seen such affliction.
That God had allotted. To you. And now. You will see the race. That is set before you.
God has laid on you.
Such a cross. As is most of all. Suitable. For you to be disciplined. According to what you
are. By nature. And whatever you do. Don't you ask God.

- [24 : 04] To change you across. You will be very sorry. If you do ask God. To do it. And he should
answer your petition. And you will find.
If you look on other people. Thought of God. That you would not like. To have the cross.
That God has ordained. Many of them.
To bear. When all is said and done. Regarding your cross. Be still. And know that I am
God. But I want to come to this point.
The race that is set before us. And it fits in here. Let us run with patience. The race that is
set before us. Looking unto Jesus.
And then it is amplified. The author and finisher of our faith. Who for the joy that was set
before him. Endured the cross.

- [25 : 05] Despising the shame. And is set down at the right hand. Of the throne of God. When all is
said and done. The race that is set before us.
Is set before us. In the life that Jesus lived. When he dwelt on earth. As Emmanuel. God.
With us.
And when he allots. Suffering to you. Whatever its nature. Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is
saying to you. Follow me.

Follow me. Did Christ my Lord suffer? And shall I reply? His way was much rougher. And darker.

Than mine. It is enough for the disciple. That he be as his Lord. Looking unto Jesus.

[26 : 00] Jesus. And godly. Dr. Owen says it means in the original. Looking up all beside. And now. That is the race that is set before us. And now. I look at the subject. From another viewpoint. Says the apostle Paul.

To these godly Hebrews. Wherefore. Wherefore. Seeing we also. Are compassed about. With so great. A cloud of witnesses. Let us lay aside.

Every weight. And you know. According to. The customs of the east. They were dressed. In flowing robes. And therefore.

They needed. To be prepared. To run. In a race. And there. Were those garments. That needed. To be laid aside. And here.

[27 : 01] The apostle Paul. Uses the illustration. Of. Being. Waiting. And you know. If you are a sinner. Born again.

You will know. What it is. To be waited. There will be. Things within. Things without. That will weigh you down. And sometimes.

You will say. With courage. Small. Riddance. In. Laying aside. Every weight. He means. Small riddance.

In the race. I make. Yet. Pump for breath. Each step. I take. But there are. These weights. There is the weight. Of what you are.

By nature. And sometimes. That weighs you down. And you know. Dear friends. You might go forth. In the morning. In the morning. And you have.

[27 : 55] Quietness. Of mind. Maybe you have felt. Just a little. Nearness. To God. And you go forth. Desiring. To endure. In your profession.

Of Jesus. Name. And to serve. Your generation. In accordance. With the will of God. In your sphere. Of beauty. And then you find.

There is something. That begins. To churn you up. Just a word or two. Arise. A wrong spirit. Engendered.

And you are weighed down. With what you are. By nature. And it makes you say. With Rutherford. All that I had not.

Of myself. But then this word. And joins upon us. Let us lay aside. Every weight. How are you to do it?

[28 : 53] There are two or three scriptures. Which will help you. First of all. When you are weighed down. As it were. By what you are by nature. In dwelling sin.

If we confess our sin. He is faithful and just. To forgive us our sin. Than to cleanse us. From all unrighteousness. You lay aside. The weight of indwelling sin.

When you are helped. To go to Jesus. Like a woman in the gospel. Falling down at Jesus' feet. He told him all the truth. A little talk with Jesus.

How it smooths life's rugged road. How it cheers and helps me onward. When I faith beneath my Lord. Then there is the weight.

Of having to do with the world. Not so much the world. As to the realm of nature. But the people in it. The spirit of it.

[29 : 57] Then that will weigh you down. And you know my friends. I'm not fitting caps on. But you do need to pray. A prayer of good John Clavel.

And he says. Oh may mine eyes. Kept closed be. To what concerns me. Not.

To see. And you know. You might be in quite a good frame of mind. And you might have had help from God.

And then you go out into the world. You go around the shops. And your eyes look on this and that. And your mind begins to go out.

After this and that. And ere you know. Where you are. What you are. You are of the earth. Earthy.

[30 : 57] And you need. A deadlift. To bring you back to where you were. Before God. You were weighed down by the world and the spirit of it.

You can get weighed down. By giving too much attention to the daily news. The world. Is full of commotion and conflict.

And there are many matters nowadays. That seem. Tremendous matters. For mortal minds. To contemplate with the things that. Men are doing in the world.

At large. But when all is said and done. It is well. It is well if you and I can realize. We are just poor sinners. With never dying souls.

Journey into eternity. I would like to live like this. Jesus. Jesus. Engrave it. On my heart. That thou the one thing.

[32 : 00] Needful heart. I would from all things parted be. But never. Never. Nor. From thee. Let us lay aside.

Every weight. Whether it be within. Or without. It might be sometimes. You are weighed down. By being in heaviness.

Through manifold temptations. And that is a very painful line of things. To endure. And you may say.

How is it possible then. For a poor sinner to lay aside. What the devil lays on. To terrify and tempt. And harass.

Deject and dismay. Listen. Satan trembles when he sees. The weakest side. Upon his knees.

[32 : 56] And thus you lay aside. Many full temptations. The remedy. Lies before thee. Pray. Yes. Trust in him. Ye tempted saints. Tell him all your sad complaints. He at present help will be. Give you strength. And victory. Sometimes you weigh down.

By a consciousness. Of what a failure you are. You do want to be a real Christian. But when you think of your life as you live it.

When you think of what you ought to be. And you know what you are. You know there is such a distinction between the two.

That you are weighed down. With many searchings of heart. And a consciousness. That as regards being a real Christian.

[33 : 58] It is so high. I cannot attain to it. And yet you have it in your heart. To be a real Christian. And I do like that word.

Which says. As a man thinketh in his heart. So is he. I the Lord. Search. The heart.

And to illustrate that thought. It comes to my mind. Think of David. When he said. To Nathan the prophet. Nathan. I am going to build a house for God.

Go forward David. The Lord bless you. Go forward. With all your heart. But in the night time. The Lord appeared to Nathan.

And said. Nathan. Go and tell David. It is not my will. That he should build a house for me. By purpose.

[34 : 56] His son. Should do that. Who is a man of peace. David has been a man of war. But Nathan. When you tell David.

What I have told you. Tell him this. Thou doest well to have it in thy heart. David. To build a house for me. As though God said.

I accept it. And thou doest well. To have it in thy heart. To be a real Christian. However much you feel to come short.

In all that you would be. And do. What does this say here. Let us lay aside every weight. How are you and I to do it.

Looking unto Jesus. Looking up all beside. Maybe you would do it like this. A guilty. A guilty. Weak and helpless.

[35 : 54] Worm. On thy kind arms I fall. Be thou my strength. My righteousness. My Jesus. And. My all.

Let us lay aside. Every. Weight. Then there is the weight of life's responsibilities. Arising. As a rule. From life's relationships.

You see what a weighty thing. It is to be a godly father. A godly mother. A godly master. A godly servant.

As the case may be. Oh you do need divine aid. There are life's responsibilities.

Parental responsibilities. It may be. And they are very heavy. At times. You see your children. God has given you. In your family's circle.

[36 : 50] Oh. Aye. But you want to see them. To be God's children. As well as you. And that will weigh you down.

You will say. Let thy work appear. Unto thy servants. And thy glory. Unto their children. Yes.

Wonderful it is. When you can get a little help. To lay your children. Before God. Some of us have to lay. Our grandchildren.

Before God. Also. Beginning to lay. Our great grandchildren. At the throne of grace. That they might. Be born into this world.

Because they are to be born again. Yes. Much might be said. Along that line of thought. Let us lay aside.

[37 : 47] Every. Way. This will weigh you down. At least. I hope it does. Not only things to do with you and yours. But you may be weighed down.

By what you see in the church of Christ. And you know. I'm not putting any caps on. You see a great deal nowadays. In the church of Christ.

It ought not to be. There are many things. Of which it can be said. My brethren. These things. Ought not so to be. But they are.

And as you come to the knowledge of these things. That they are. You are weighed down. Yes. And you would lay aside that way.

How. Do you do it. Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion. Build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

[38 : 48] Return in mercies unto Zion. Pour out thy spirit from on high. Looking unto Jesus. As the church's living head.

And how much you see. In the land you live in. That weighs you down. When you see the pleasure living. Pleasure loving.

The godlessness. From land's end. To John of growth. The Sabbath breaking. The house of God. Forsaken to a great degree.

And England. So evidently departing. From God who has been our help in ages past. Who is our only hope.

For years to come. It weighs you down. You want to be amongst them. That Zion cry for the iniquities. Done in the land.

[39 : 46] Let us lay aside. Every way. And the word of God is. I will be inquired of. By you. O house of Israel. To do these things. And to do it aright.

It must be. Looking unto Jesus. Yes. It is well for England as a nation. That there must be still. Many hundreds.

Many thousands. Who are like those people of whom the Lord told Elijah. I have seven thousands. Who have not yet bowed to me to Baal.

And by my grace. Never will do. And there are those characters in England. As a nation. Blessed be God. You remember.

God promised Abraham. That he would. Have saved Sodom and Gomorrah. If he could find ten righteous. There are more than ten righteous.

[40 : 47] In this cause of truth. At this evening hour. And that number. Would have saved Sodom and Gomorrah. Being reduced to ashes. But they were not to be found.

Eh. But they can be found. In England as a nation. When I was a lad at school. We used to learn a great deal of Cowper's poetry. And I remember this couplet.

That salt. Oh England. Well it is for thee. That salt. Preserves thee. Yes. But what did the Saviour say? If the salt should lose.

His. Not its. His. Saviour. Wherewith. Shall it. Be salted. Salt is good.

And now. That should be. A weighty matter to you. And me. Preacher and people alike. That in our profession of Jesus name.

[41 : 47] And in all that is to do. With the worship of God. As we engage in it. That the salt. May not lose. His. Saviour.

But that you and I might so live. That men may take knowledge of us. That we have been with Jesus. Yes. Let us lay aside every weight.

And says the apostle Paul. The sin. Which. Doth. So easily beset us. And now he tells us. Earlier in the epistle.

To the Hebrews. What that sin. Is. And he says. Take heed brethren. Lest there be in any of you.

An evil heart. Of unbelief. In departing. From the living God. You know you dear people. Sometimes sing.

[42 : 44] I've sometimes thought about the hymn writer. What he felt like. When he composed it. And he starts off like this. Be gone unbelief. Be gone unbelief. My saviour is near.

And for my relief. Will surely appear. But I can tell you this dear friends. It needs much more than. You and I to say. Be gone unbelief.

And for it to be gone. It is not easy to believe. You do need divine aid. You see unbelief is ingrained in our nature as we were born.

So that the attitude of everyone is. Depart from us. We desire not the knowledge of thee. Or thy ways. And there is always that tendency in us as we were born.

To think of what. Satan said in the Garden of Eden. Hath God said. You and I know that he hath said. And by his grace. We want to live according to it.

[43 : 49] We do want to run. The race that is set before us. To his honour. And glory. But oh you do need divine aid.

To lay aside. The sin. Which doth so easily beset us. Lord increase our faith. Faith in Jesus can repel.

The darts of sin and death. Faith gives victory over hell. Who can give us faith. The times come to the Amen. Let us lay aside every weight.

And the sin which doth so easily beset us. Let us run with patience the race. That is set before us. Looking unto Jesus.

There is something very beautiful I feel. About how this is worthy. Looking. You know you might have seen. Races being run.

[44 : 52] I mean. I mean. Great races. Famous races. But one thing you never did see. With those who were running in such a race.

For earthly times. You never saw them. Talking. As they ran. But they want all their breath.

To run. And their eyes. Are looking. For the winning part. And they are outstretched in their attempts.

To reach it. And be the winner. Yes. You see. It means. It means that our whole heart must be engaged in it.

Our eye must be single. And just one word here. Let us run with patience. And now this word patience.

[45 : 52] You must understand it means. That you have much to endure. He that shall endure to the end. The same shall be saved. You see dear friends.

Speaking with great reverence. This is no hundred yards race. Where the man goes all out. And makes a mighty spurt.

And nearly dies. In his attempt to be first at the winning boat. This is a life long race. It may be to run. 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 years.

And keep running. And not give up. Or go back. You see what you really need in such a race. A long race. Is stamina.

You need. Divine aid. You need strength. Yes. I like what the Selmy says in one place.

[46 : 56] And that word will help you to think on this word patience. I have stuck unto thy testimonies. Oh Lord.

Put me not to shame. And it means sometimes that as you run this race. You will only move. Thank.

Yet. Pursuing. But at no time. Will you have any concern in your mind to give up.

A go back. If God by his grace. Has set you going. In this race. Which has got heaven at the end of it.

And it means. Looking. Unto Jesus. You cannot always put into words. What you feel. In laying aside.

[47 : 53] Every way. But. There is life in this. Looking. Unto Jesus. The heart. Looks out through. The eye. And this will sum it all up.

As it comes to my mind. Ever on thy captain calling. Make thy worst condition known. He shall hold thee up when falling. Or shall lift thee up.

When down. Amen. Amen.