

Hebrews 12:1-3



Hebrews 12:1 - 3 (NIV) ¹Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. ²Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

A day when we remember and honor the Christian men and women who went before us. Those who by their dedication to the Lord were examples for our lives.

Who do you remember this day?



**This is also a day
when we ask
ourselves, if we are
being good examples
of what it means to
follow Christ. Will
someone be
remembering us on
some future “All
Saints Day?”**



The Witnesses

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us,^{NRS}

Hebrews 12:1



Who Are These Witnesses?

The faithful who have gone before. Those who have already finished the race.

The writer of Hebrews points to Abraham, Moses and the faithful of old Israel in chapter 11

Who are our witnesses?

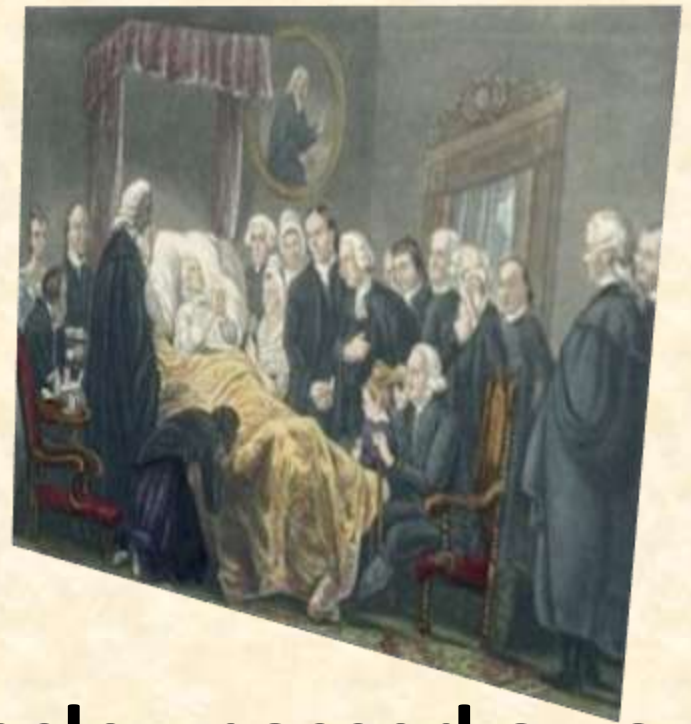
What is Their Witness?

They have put aside anything that weighed them down, in the race, and any sin with which they were personally struggling.



**They steadfastly
persevered.**

**John Wesley's Last
Words...**



**At 88 years of age, John Wesley passed away
on Wednesday, March 2, 1791. His last
words were spoken twice, with great
fervour, "The best of all is, God is with us."
He lifted his arms and said again, "The best
of all is, God is with us."**

What Are the Witnesses Doing?

Passing on the baton



**Urging new runners
along the way**



**The witnesses are present with
(surrounding) the runners**



We are Urged to Heed the Faithful Witnesses Who Have Gone Before Us

...let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us,



What is This Race?

It is the race that began when we were born and ends when we pass away. A race into the arms of Jesus, into eternity with the Lord, and the faithful who have gone before us.

How Do We Find the Finish Line?



We Look to Jesus

Looking to Jesus

...looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart. ^{NRS} Hebrews 12:2-3

Jesus, the Pioneer and Perfecter of (our) Faith.

Faith, that Jesus has redeemed through His mighty acts of salvation. As such, Christ pioneered and perfected the new creation. A creation that is made right with God, and can therefore enter into God's presence, for all eternity.

A New Creation

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

^{NRS} 2 Corinthians 5:17

But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ^{NRS} John 1:12-13

The Joy of Jesus

...who for the sake of
the joy that was set
before him
endured the cross,
disregarding its
shame,

10

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Perfection

← The Joy
← Sin
of Jesus

x

Pure Sin

Jesus Exalted

**...has taken his seat at the right hand
of the throne of God.**



Consider Him

**Consider him who endured such hostility
against himself from sinners,**



So that...

**...you may not grow weary
or lose heart.**



Today We Have an Amazing Opportunity

To know, we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, who have finished the race and now rest with the Lord.

They show us, we can throw aside the things that weigh us down, and be who God calls us to be.

They are counting on us to continue the race, as those to whom the baton has been passed. They are counting on us, to look to Christ, to look to the finish line.

We must look to Christ, who joyfully endured the cross, that we might be saved, and enter into His joy, along with all those who have gone before us.

A New Creation, Born of God!

**A people walking in the presence of
God Almighty.**

**Nourished by our participation in
Holy Communion, as the body of
Christ, celebrating the joy of the
Lord this morning, along with all the
saints who have gone before us.**

