

Hebrews 12 The Endurance of Faith

12/8/2019

The examples of the faithful O.T. saints in the last chapter were an encouragement to these new Hebrew believers. They were going through many trials both publicly and personally which often tempted them to give up on their new faith. Paul reminds them that 'endurance' (v 2, 3, 7, 20) is an essential ingredient to a strong faith. He gives them three encouragements to keep going and growing: the example of Jesus, the assurance of God's love and the power of God's grace.

I. The Example of Jesus's Life

v 1 - 4

v 1 *cloud of witnesses* - the saints of chap. 11 left all of us an enduring witness
(not that they are watching us from heaven)

lay aside weight = excess 'baggage' e.g. harmless hobbies that occupy our time
" *sin* = harmful activities

let us run...the race - Paul often likens our faith to an athletic event
1 Cor 9:24-27 Phil 2:16

patience - is the essence of a mature spirit. Ecc 7:8

We need it for problems and people. Rom 12:12 1 Thes 5:14
(childish spirits are impatient, i.e. hasty Pro 28:20)

v 2 *Looking unto Jesus* - 1 Pet 2:21

author and finisher = alpha and omega (4x) Rev 1:8, 11; 21:6, 22:13

joy was set before him - The Gospels document that Jesus went thru many trials during his ministry. What kept him going on to victory? The answer is His goal : i.e. the *joy* of presenting His church to His Father in heaven when all is *finished*. Jude 24

endured = chapter's key word. definition: to last, to continue, to abide

v 3 *contradiction* - definition: a contrary declaration

consider - that the Holy One *endured sinners* Matt 10:24-25

v 4 doct: Christ shed his blood on Calvary's cross

hist: Many saints have been martyred, e.g. Heb 11:35-37

e.g. Stephen - Acts 7:59, James - Acts 12:2

cf : *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* pg v, vii, 6-7, 9

spir: This represents the crucified life for us Gal 5:24

II. The Assurance of God's Love

v 5 - 13

God manifests his love to his children thru chastening. Paul quotes Solomon in Proverbs 3:11-12 as proof. God has used chastening as a child rearing technique from the founding of the nation Israel; cf Deuteronomy 8:5. God allows trials to grow his children to maturity. God uses church leaders to instruct his children how to understand and endure the circumstances of our 'wilderness journey'; Psalm 94:12, 1 Thessalonians 2:10-12.

Our earthly *fathers chastened us after their own pleasure*; our heavenly Father does it *for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness*. Sadly, many Christians quit on God and become bitter when things don't go their way. True faith understands trials are the assurance of God's love. The endurance of faith enables us to submit to God's will and way. This brings glory to his name!

III. God's Continuing Grace

v 14 - 29

references:

Foxe's Book of Martyrs, John Foxe 16th century, publ: Baker Books, 1978

Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament, publ: Victor Books, 1992