

NORMAL CHRISTIAN LIVING

Hebrews 12:1-13

1. **There is the encouragement of those who have run the same race.** (1)
 - * "Therefore...great cloud of witnesses"
 2. **Before we begin to run, we must decide what we are going to wear.** (1)
 - * "Throw off" "everything that hinders"
 - * "the sin that so easily entangles" (
 3. **There is a means for running.** (1)
 - "with perseverance"
 4. **There is a goal.**
 - "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus"
 5. **There is an example to follow.** (2-4)
 - "Consider him"
 - What should you consider about Jesus?
 - * Consider how he endured opposition from sinful men (3).
 - * Consider his approach to the cross (2).
 - "joy set before him"
 - "scorning its shame"
 - * Compare his suffering to your own (4)
 6. **There is a struggle with sin.** (4)
 7. **There is a relationship to remember.**(5-6)
 8. **There is an attitude to obtain.** (7-8)
 - "do not lose heart"
 - "Endure hardships as discipline; God is treating you as sons".

Improper attitudes people have toward difficulties:

 - 1) a defeated acceptance - stoic
 - hang on - ride it out
 - 2) a grim sense of getting it over as soon as possible.
 - 3) self-pity - nobody has it as bad as I do.
 - 4) a punishment - God's mad at me.
 9. **There is a purpose to understand.** (9-11).
 - * "but God disciplines us for our good" (10).
 - * God is producing holiness (10), righteousness, and peace in our lives (11).
 10. **There is a response we must make.** (12-13)
 - * .strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. * Make level path for your feet..."
 11. **There are results to our response.** (13)
 - * "lame may not be disabled but rather healed"
 - * people will either be hurt or healed by our response.
 12. **There are actions we must take.** (14-15)
 - * "live in peace with all men and be holy"
 - * Protect against bitter roots
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- Normal Christian living is...
- Receiving encouragement from other faith followers, we live in the awareness of the presence of God, running as in a race with perseverance untangled from worldly hindrances as we focus on Jesus who is both our goal and our example, while He leads us to the perfection of our faith, as we trust in God's love toward us as His children enduring His discipline through hardships, and thereby preventing other runners from stumbling while helping them to flourish as they run the race alongside of us to reach our common goal of righteousness, peace, and holiness in the grace of God.
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- MEDITATION:**
- Am I living the average Christian life or what God sees as normal?
- Do I see my life as running a race or just out for a slow walk?
- Do I have the right attitude regarding the difficulties in my life?
- Do I believe God loves me and will only discipline me for my good?
- Am I causing others to be tripped up?
- Do I need to restrengthen my spiritual muscles so that I can benefit others?