

## How Jesus Responds to Adversity: A Heavenly Perspective

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*Hebrews 12:1–2*

*[1] Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, [2] looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*

We have need for endurance

- Life is not a sprint, but a marathon
- Vs. 1 "run with endurance the race that is set before us"
- Story: the beep test
- Hard work, hardship, desire to quit, no shortcuts

### **1. The experience of endurance**

- What is it like to experience endurance? Answer: It's HARD!
- Bible doesn't gloss over the pain
- Vs. 2 Jesus "endured the cross, despising the shame"
- Despise is a strong word!
  - Doesn't say he "didn't like it" or "preferred not to"
- The cross was extreme suffering
  - Physical suffering & Spiritual suffering
  - Wrath of God
  - Romans 5:9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.
  - Gethsemane - "let this cup pass from me"
- It's ok to not want hardship
- Like Jesus, the pain of our suffering is real

## 2. The source of endurance

- The temptation to quit is often very real!
  - “The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak”
- The only way to endure hardship and persevere in faith is to look forward to the reward MORE than you hate the pain itself
  - Vs. 2 “for the joy that was set before him endured the cross”
  - Joy was the fuel for endurance
    - Obedience to his calling
    - The redemption of mankind
    - Reward and reunion with his heavenly Father
      - Vs. 2 Jesus is “seated at the right hand of the throne of God”
- Jesus was not fixated on his circumstances - he saw the cross but looked through it
  - Change in perspective = what we focus on
  - 2 Corinthians 4:17–18 [17] For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, [18] as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. (ESV)

## 3. The certainty of endurance

- Vs. 2 “the founder and perfecter of our faith”
  - He started it and he will finish it
- Philippians 1:6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. (ESV)
  - In your race, you’re not alone!
  - God will provide the strength we need to keep going
  - We don’t run this race with our own abilities

### Conclude

- We need to follow Jesus’s example
  - Change our focus from an earthly perspective to a heavenly one