



Christians, Run!

Hebrews 12:12-17

As the author is coming to the end of his book, he reveals his desire for this struggling church in Rome. In facing persecution, don't give up. Instead, recognize how you've drifted from Jesus and then look to him and run with greater grit than ever before! From chapter to chapter, the author motivates, challenges, encourages, warns and exhorts us as Christians to realize that because Jesus is superior to everything, then we *must* live lives of holy, zealous grit for God's glory in *everything*.

Now, after he's spoken of the people who followed Christ before us, he then states that we must let their lives and deaths speak to us and exhort us. Their lives were a race to the finish line. At their deaths, they handed the baton to the next round of God's children. Throughout the ages, the baton has been passed, and it has been extended to our day. Now, we are in a race. What are we doing? Like the Hebrew Christians, some of us here have drifted from Jesus. We have become lazy in our pursuit of the Lord and we have neglected the need for the other believers in this race.

So, what do we do? The author starts off chapter 12 saying, **"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. . ."**¹ The feelings of exhaustion in moving forward in godliness can tempt us to give up. Or, they can cause us to justify walking or taking a break. We can justify our behavior and say, "Well, I'm not committing any sin by doing this or that thing," but the questions we should ask are, am I looking to Jesus and seeking to give him glory in what I'm doing? Am I clinging to him in this race? Am I actively looking away to Jesus or am I letting the things around me distract me from him? If I'm not actively looking to the One who gave me faith and perfects my faith, I will never make it through the finish line. And, making it through the finish line is what a Christ-follower longs for. It's through the finish line that we actually then make it into eternity with God and experience the fullness of peace and life with the Lord forever!

Are you living today in light of the finish line? In emphasizing this idea of a race, the author continues the illustration of a race in the text we're studying this morning. And in verses 12-13, he says this: **¹² Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, ¹³ and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.**²

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Heb 12:1-2.

² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Heb 12:12-13.

Now, you notice that verse 12 starts off with a “Therefore.” That means that we have to remember last week’s text. And in our study last week, we saw that this life involves difficulty. And this difficulty is not wasted by God. Even Emperor Nero’s persecution is used by God in order to train his children to grow in holiness. And this is the case with all scenarios of life for a disciple of Jesus. So, the author motivates the Hebrew church (and us as well) by revealing to us the blessings of God’s discipline of his children. God’s discipline of his children affirms their adoption, increases humility, grants a sharing in God’s holiness and produces righteousness and peace.

Well, if this is what God gives through the painful discipline of life, then let’s not make excuses for giving up. Let’s not turn away from the race. Let’s run! And, this is what I think the big idea of these verses are, one word: **Run!** Verses 12-13 are the continuation and introduction to the following verses. Run! But what does that mean? We are going to see more of what he means practically, in our daily living, when he says we are to run.

Now, the specific wording in verses 12-13 are referring to the end of a race where you experience the types of physical pains that scream to give up. So, the statement here isn’t saying, “Get back in the race” or “Prepare for the race.” Instead, the author is saying that we *are in* the race and we need to focus on Jesus and *run well all the way to the finish line* despite the discipline, pain and hardships. Since Jesus is supremely glorious, run with endurance the race set before us – and don’t let up towards the end of the race. It’s very easy to let up when we’re nearing the end. Maybe it’s physical age or physical ailments. Maybe there are spiritual pains or emotional and mental traumas. Maybe family hardships. Whatever we face, don’t let up as you get closer to the finish line. Run!

This past week, I came across a writing from a man named Art Carey, who is a speaker, writer and sometimes marathoner. He writes of his experience running the Boston Marathon. Now, in case you are not aware, this is a marathon that many runners *want* to participate in. It’s something you have to qualify for and something that is an achievement merely to be in it and to finish. In commenting about his experience towards the end of the race, he writes the following:

Six miles away [from the finish line (that means he’s already ran around 20 miles by this point)], Bill Rodgers has won again. His ordeal is done; the most intense of my own is about to begin. “Heartbreak Hill” – the last, the longest and the steepest, a half-mile struggle against gravity designed to finish off the faint and faltering. Hundreds of people stand along the hill, watching . . . [urging] the walkers to job, the joggers to run, the runners to speed on to Boston. . . . Slowly, ever so slowly, the grade begins to level out. . . . The last four miles are seemingly endless. Some runners, their eyes riveted catatonically to the ground, trudge alone in their bare feet, holding in their hands the shoes that have blistered and bloodied their feet. Others team up to help each other, limping along, arm-in-arm, like maimed and battle-weary soldiers returning from the front. Finally, the distinctive profile of the Prudential Building looms on the horizon. I begin to step up my pace. Faster, faster . . . smoothers, smoother. Suppress the pain. Finish up strong. Careful – not too fast. Don’t cramp. . . . I can see the yellow stripe 50 yards ahead. I run faster, pumping my arms, pushing off my toes, defying clutching leg cramps to mount a glorious, last-gasp kick . . . 40 yards, 30 yards, 20 yards . . . cheers and clapping . . . 10 yards . . . finish line . . . an explosion of euphoria . . . I am clocked in at two hours 50 minutes and 49 seconds . . . I have run the best marathon of my life. While times and places are important, and

breaking a personal record is thrilling (especially as you grow older), the real joy of the Boston Marathon is just finishing . . . doing what you have set out to do. (as quot. in R.K. Hughes, pp. 405-06).

This type of pain expressed here echoes verses 12-13. “Lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet. . .” The idea of drooping hands and weak knees is like that of a runner towards the end of the race and he’s flopping around. Legs feel like they’re just about ready to give up. But in the midst of your own body opposing you and telling you to give up, don’t do it! The verse goes on and says we are to make straight paths for our feet. And the idea is to keep on the path. Don’t get off into the unsteady soil that’s going to damage your body even more. This is the point of the ending of verse 13: so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.³ I actually prefer the King James that says, “lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.”⁴ I think the point is that a Christian can become severely pained in their race, but the Christian can’t get out and turn around. To turn away from Jesus, who is life, is to experience death. But to focus on Jesus means there will be healing. So, why get off the path of Jesus to gain the world, but then lose your soul?

So, the author says we are to straighten up, run, stay on the path so that you don’t find destruction but instead healing. What a tremendous encouragement to us. There are clearly times in our race where we feel like giving up and giving in. Our own bodies say, “What’s the point?” But instead of giving into the pain, God has promised, through Jesus (the founder and perfecter of our faith) that we can keep moving forward. How can we know this? Interestingly, the author of Hebrews is quoting from Isaiah 35:3. Listen to the prophet’s words: ³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say to those who have an anxious heart, “Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.”⁵ Isaiah 35 provides a wonderful context for the Hebrew church. They were fearful. They were doubting Jesus. But don’t give up! God saves!

Because you know God saves, straighten up and tell your body what to do. Endure. And, again, this isn’t simply pure “grit,” but all of this is in acknowledgement that you are looking to Jesus and trusting him to do this. By God’s grace, endure and someday you will make it through the finish line. And, let me say this, if there is euphoria in making through the end of the Boston Marathon, how much more euphoria when we enter Heaven and see our Savior? You know, we sing of this many times. If you look at hymns, many end by talking about the heavenly finish line. We say, “When I see him face to face, what glory that will be.” Or, we sing “When we’ve been there ten thousand years.” Or, “When He comes, our glorious King, All His ransomed home to bring, Then anew this song we’ll sing: Hallelujah, what a Savior!” It is worth enduring through this life for God’s praise because we will be in the presence of the Superior One and his Superior Glory in his Superior home.

You may agree with this statement, but what does it practically look like to “lift drooping hands” and “strengthen weak knees.” We can have ideas of what it means to endure and to keep moving forward in our Christian walk, but the question is if that’s what God thinks. Thankfully, God has shown us here in

³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Heb 12:13.

⁴ [The Holy Bible: King James Version](#), Electronic Edition of the 1900 Authorized Version. (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 2009), Heb 12:13.

⁵ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Is 35:3–4.

these verses what it means to run. So, if you haven't turned in your Bibles yet, go to Hebrews 12, and I'm going to continue to read this text by looking at verses 14-17. Before I read, let's pray together:

*¹⁴ Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵ See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; ¹⁶ that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. ¹⁷ For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears.*⁶

1. Christian, run! (v. 14).

Verse 14 emphasizes our personal and individual responsibility in the race. No human can make us finish the race. No human can give us the strength we need to endure. I can't make you want Jesus. You, by God's grace, must trust him. And, you are responsible to follow you. You can't blame someone else for not enduring. You can't take explanations of why things are hard and then turn them into excuses.

So, we come to verse 14, and the author gives two general positive and personal commands: Strive for peace with everyone, and strive for holiness. As I preach right now, please hear these words to you specifically. Don't think about "so-and-so" who needs to hear this. Don't listen to this as "Christians generally" need to hear this. The actual commands here are geared toward each individual listener. I say this because I know our tendency. I've been involved in ministry leadership roles for about, or more than, 15 years. One thing I've learned is that when asking people to help, you generally don't get help when you make *general* appeals. So, when you say, "We need help in Children's Ministry" or "We need help with building needs." Now, there's are those people who jump up on those occasions. But more often, more people respond when you personally talk to them and you say, "Will *you* help me with this?" Now, each individual person has to answer a personal call for them to consider.

Well, here, the author of Hebrews isn't saying, "Would you consider this." But, he is saying, "YOU, individual, strive for these two things." That means, this isn't a request. This isn't a wish. This isn't a would-be-nice-if-you-get-around-to-it kind of thing. This is a command to each one of us. Focus forward. Focus on the finish line, and *run*.

Now, the terms he uses to describe the Christian's life race is "strive for peace with everyone and for holiness." Let's first take the term "strive for." The word for "strive" is what what commentator calls a "uniquely aggressive word" (R.K. Hughes, p. 408). It fits with a race picture. We are to make every effort. We are to pursue after these things.

I hope we understand the strength of this word. Some people evaluate their Christian lives simply on the basis of what they're *not* doing. So, as long as you're *not* mean, *not* overtly wicked, *not* unkind to people, *not* culpable of doing anything people would consider bad; well then, you're ok. I've had scenarios with my children where they've said things like that before. So, imagine something's gone wrong between two children. One child is sad and then I talk to the other child. That child quickly defends themselves and says, "I didn't do anything wrong!" And then I say, "But were you *trying to be*

⁶ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Heb 12:14–17.

kind?” At that point, the child looks at me as though I was speaking a foreign language. “What?” they say. “Were you trying to be kind?” “I wasn’t doing anything wrong?!” they respond. “Trying to be kind and not doing anything wrong are different things.” You could have done nothing wrong except for the fact that you weren’t trying to love and care for those around you.

I think many adults have carried the childish mindset into adulthood. So, we read “Strive for peace with everyone,” and you may translate it as “just have no issues with people.” No! Strive for peace. Work for peace. Pursue peace. But what does that word “peace” mean? Well, last week, I mentioned that this word connects even with the Old Testament idea of peace, which refers to mending what is broken and making something whole. Between individuals, it means to seek to have nothing between you and them. So, the apostle Paul writes in Romans 12:18 says, “¹⁸If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.”⁷ This is the Christian way of life. Think of Matthew 5:9 where Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” This fits the context of this chapter in Hebrews, where the author has just been talking about how Christians are children of God. Well, if you’re a child of God, you seek to bring wholeness to relationships with people.

This would include your own family unit. If you live with your family, how are you striving for peace with one another? Showing love and concern for the wholeness and wellbeing of each other? But this verse goes on and doesn’t simply say, “Live at peace with the closest people in your life.” It says, “with everyone.” So, think of the world around you. Think of the Hebrew Christians being persecuted in Rome. If I was under persecution, I’d want to hide. Yet, as much as possible, the author calls them to not run from them. Strive for peace. How do you relate to people you disagree with or people who might mock you? Do you seek to show love and compassion or do you exhibit hatred? Strive for peace. What about the people who aren’t mean, but you just never talk to? Shouldn’t we want to know our neighbors? Strive for peace!

But this isn’t only strive for peace with the world around you. This would also include fellow believers. Or, as Paul says to the Galatians: let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.⁸ With *everyone!* Strive for peace. One man writes of striving for peace within the church and he said, **“Conflict in the church brings glory to Satan and disgraces our God. Few things will grieve God more and impede the great race more than conflict in the Body of Christ. In fact, conflict in the church – and the failure to pursue peace – is the most public reason so many never finish. Satan too often infiltrates committees and elders’ homes and parsonages, paralyzing those who ought to be setting the pace for others”** (R.K. Hughes, p. 408). Now, you hear this and say a hearty “Amen,” but how do we keep from sinful conflict? We have to proactively pursue peace with one another. It’s not enough to say, “We have no issues with one another.” We must be able to say that we love and seek for wholeness with one another.

So, strive for peace with everyone. The ideas brought ought here help us to really realize why the author of Hebrews is using a running illustration. This is hard and can be painful! But don’t only strive for peace. He says we are to strive for “the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.” There is a certain kind of holiness you must have in order to see the Lord. I think this refers back to verse 10 where the author says that God “disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.”⁹ The holiness here is talking about God’s unique character. That as God trains us and grows us, we get to know him more and rejoice

⁷ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Ro 12:18.

⁸ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Ga 6:10.

⁹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Heb 12:10.

in who he is. We get to savor who he is. As a result, verse 11 goes on to say that there will be righteous and peace flowing from our lives. That word “righteousness” relates to holy living in that holiness is a behavior that is set apart for God’s glory. So, it’s not simply that you do nice things or moral things. But instead, you’re doing *right things* for the *right motive*. And the motive is Jesus’ glory. Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith! All because of who Jesus is and what he has given to you in reconciling you to God, forgiving you of your sins, giving you his righteousness – now, strive to live in a holy way.

Some could hear this and say, “Well, why should I? If Jesus died for me, then I don’t need to worry about my behavior.” But the author says, “without which no one will see the Lord.” In other words, if you don’t have this holiness, you’re not even a Christian. And that should make sense to us because the author said that we behold his holiness and therefore living in a holy way. Well, if we don’t live in a holy way, we’ve not beheld God’s glory. And if we haven’t embraced God’s glory, we won’t in the future.

This statement is a wake-up call. And, maybe to some of you here, you need to hear this because you have simply been faking faith. Do you want God? Do you partake of God’s holiness and desire to grow in his grace? If you do not have any desires for him, I pray that God would awaken in you those desires and that you would call out to him for rescue and eternal hope in God.

But if you are a Christian, and you do desire God (or even desire to desire him), then let me give you some encouragement in these phrases here. When you hear “strive,” you might feel exhausted. Does this sound difficult to do? Yes. Does it sound almost impossible if you’re nearing the finish line? Absolutely. But remember, this race isn’t about how much you can handle. This race is about how much Jesus has promised. He is the perfecter of your faith. So, Christian, depend on him and, by faith in him, run: strive for peace and the holiness.

These are the two positive commands. But there are also things to be aware of in the race. At this point, the author gives three warnings, and these warnings cause us to be reminded of the fact that we’re running this race with others. So, in verses 15-17, we see another general exhortation:

2. Christians, run *together!* (vv. 15-17).

Verse 15 starts off by saying, “¹⁵See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God. . .”¹⁰ The first three words in the English, “see to it,” are very important words here. We don’t see the importance in English. In the Greek, the word is related to the word from which we get the English word “overseer.” Now, why is that important to know? Well, the word “overseer” refers to the church leaders (i.e. – the pastors and elders). They’re responsible to know needs within the church family. But they’re not simply to know the general needs. They are to know where people are at spiritually and how to best help. But here, the word is used of each of us. In one sense, we are all ministers and we are to know people well.

But this dives in deeper. The three warnings that the author brings up here cannot relate to human race in general. This has to be talking more specifically about our relationship with our local church family. An unbeliever isn’t in the Christian race; therefore, we don’t help them to run. We want them to get in the race. But here, the illustration is of helping those *in the race*. And, more specifically, those who are within our church family – like the Hebrew Christians relating to their struggling church family.

¹⁰ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Heb 12:15.

All of this emphasizes something very important. You know, in certain cultures and churches, some people think that they pay the pastors to do the jobs they don't want to do. So, you can just go to church, listen to some preaching and then go home. Pastors are to care, counsel, serve, sacrifice. Not so! Instead, everyone has a responsibility to one another.

Get the implications of this passage. In running our race, the author says we are to strive for peace with everyone and to live a holy way of life! If you're a peace-filled, holy person *then* you are going to care for your church family. That's how the author is funneling his logic. Another man by the name of Philip Hughes writes of this, **"The Christian community, then, should be a living example of harmony and holiness. Where disharmony and disaffection appear it is a sure sign of the presence of unholiness within the fraternity. Our author is concerned that the integrity of the fellowship should be preserved. . ."** (P.E. Hughes, p. 538).

It's another powerful statement here. See to it! Each one of us has a responsibility to care for each other in this race. It reminds me of Art Carey saying that as the race was coming to an end, people took each others arms to help each other continue to go forward. As we're in this race together, we shouldn't be putting in our earbuds and silencing everyone else out because "I need to finish." No! WE need to finish. Have we forgotten that the author of Hebrews says that we will all win *together*?

So, if you're a member of this church, you've made a commitment to *see to* one another. Are you relating to each other? Are you in intentional relationships to know others within this church body? Now, at this point, you could say, "OK, see to it, but what is "it" that we are to see to?" There are three things we are be on high alert for.

The first is **Be on alert for apostacy**. Verse 15 says, ¹⁵"See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God. . ."¹¹ At first glance you could think that we can earn grace, but that's not what's being said here. To obtain here refers to arriving at something. And, in the context, it's all about the finish line. See to it that no one fails to make it to grace. And, I believe it's talking about the final state of grace. This is what the author talked about earlier in 4:1 – "while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it."¹² Failed to reach what? Failed to enter God's rest.

How do we enter God's rest? By faith in Jesus. Hebrews has taught us that Jesus is the one whose sacrifice satisfied God's demands. Where we are sinners and deserved eternal punishment, Jesus stepped in and took the punishment we deserved so that for all who trust in Jesus are given Jesus' righteousness and then set free from punishment and then reconciled to God! But that faith doesn't just come at the moment we trust Jesus to rescue us. Genuine faith continues on forever. We live by dependence on Jesus. Therefore, someone who turns away from Jesus (apostacizes) is someone who never turned to Jesus in the first place. They just appeared to have done that.

That said, even as Christians, we can be tempted to turn completely from Jesus. There are seasons and times where we, like the Hebrew Christians, think going back to old ways may be better. Listen, Ventura, do you know *anyone* here who is tempted that way? If not, you may not know people well enough here. We all drift.

¹¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Heb 12:15.

¹² [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Heb 4:1.

But some of you, when you hear “apostacize,” might think of someone turning into these horrifically noticeable sins. But apostacize doesn’t have to mean that. It simply means a drifting away from Jesus. People can apostacize into morality. There are so many people who say, “I don’t need Jesus to be moral,” and they walk away from Christ. And that can happen practically in our lives. Are you on alert for other believers here who are drifting in prayer, drifting in time in the Word, drifting from regularly gathering in the corporate worship of God, drifting from regularly exhorting believers as long as it’s called today? Whatever direction they’re going, the most important point is, “Are they moving away from Jesus?”

The author describes this as having a root of bitterness that can defile many. This phrase comes from Deuteronomy 29, where there was idolatry in Israel. That idolatry can spread. And, it can spread in the church as well. People can move away from Jesus into immorality or mere morality, and if we’re not committed to the Christ and the Word, we can drift with them. Are you “overseeing” and seeing to it that no one here apostacizes? It’s our mutual responsibility to this end, and I pray that we would heed this!

So, in the race, watch out for apostacy. We are committed that everyone runs with endurance. But we also need to **Be on alert for sinful appetites**. Verse 16 says, “¹⁶ that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal.”¹³ If you have read the story of Esau, you might be confused by the author’s statement here about him being any more sexually immoral. That part of his life isn’t highlighted about Esau. Yet, Rabbinical tradition speaks of Esau being a sensual man. And, under inspiration of God, the author of Hebrews follows that tradition. Esau was a slave to his sensual drive. Therefore, he was unholy. If you are a slave to sin, the apostle Paul says in Romans, then you have not been set free. You are either a slave to sin or a slave to righteousness. Now, being a slave to righteousness doesn’t mean that you are sinless or that you do not fight against intense temptations. But being a slave to righteousness means that you want God and you want to increase in hating sin. It means that you actually grow in obedience to God as well.

Esau wasn’t that man. He was unholy and sensual. As a result, the text says that he sold his birthright for a single meal. What’s a birthright? The birthright is the highest privileges one receives in the family, usually because of being the oldest child. To give up these privileges would be utterly foolish. Now, with Esau, you may remember the story. He was extremely hungry after being out hunting. Jacob had some lentil soup. Esau, the man’s man, comes home to his brother Jacob, the cook, and Jacob says “give me your birthright, and I’ll give you the soup.” Esau says, “What good is my birthright if I’m dead. Give me the soup!” Could he have been that bad off? Wasn’t there *something* he could have eaten raw?

Now, even more than privilege, the birthright in the Abrahamic family spoke of the covenant blessing of God. Through Abraham all the nations would be blessed. Esau forfeited his lineage in being active participants in that blessing! He didn’t care about God whatsoever. So, here we have a man who was sensual and uncaring about God. And, by the way, sexual sin has a unique way of blinding people to reality – and particularly, the reality of God.

Therefore, the author of Hebrews says to this church, “In your church, sensual temptations are going to come on the rise! Don’t give up on God for sex!” But he doesn’t just say that. He says to each other to be on watch for one another! Listen, if you’re a part of this church, you need to be watching out for brothers and sisters in this. And, by the way, I’m saying sisters, too, because studies are increasingly

¹³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Heb 12:16.

stating that porn addiction is amongst both men and women. And, we should be concerned about each other in this arena! Are we helping each other, confronting each other, strengthening each other so that we don't give up in the race?

If we aren't, beware of what can happen. The author says that Esau lost his birthright over a single meal. And, the point is that we could do the very same thing. For fleeting pleasure, for drifting away from Jesus and embracing a life of ease, we can forfeit all that matters: Jesus. Ventura, we cannot let this happen *ever*. And we must be concerned about one another in this. To drive home the point, the author says, "¹⁷For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears. ¹⁴

Later on, Esau wanted the blessing. When the author says that he found no chance to repent even though he sought it with tears. The "it" refers to the blessing. And the idea is that, he would have done anything to get it, but it was too late. The big idea is something like this: **Those who deny Jesus will eternally regret doing so.** Think of it regarding a race. If there's no greater euphoria than winning the Boston Marathon and that simply points to the greater exhilaration of finishing our race and being face-to-face with God. Then how much greater dread could there be than not entering the Christian race and hence never finishing – yet you will die and then face the judgment? How great the regret. If you do not trust in Jesus, who is life, you will experience the reality of death. Ventura, this should cause us to shudder – not only for ourselves, but for one another.

So, run! And let's run together! We believe we will not shirk away and that we will make it through the finish line. We also believe that God has ordained his church to help us get to the finish line; so, "see to it" that we run together in holiness and peace, pursuing the Lord (the founder and perfecter of our faith) until we see him face to face!

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¹⁴ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2016), Heb 12:17.