

# The Text to Which We Must Ever Return

by Ian Paisley

---

*The sermon calls Christians to return to Hebrews 11 and 12 for encouragement and guidance in running their faith journey with perseverance and focus on Jesus.*

**Duration:** 35:33

**Scripture:** Hebrews 11:32-38, Hebrews 12:1-3, Hebrews 12:11-13

**Topics:** "Faith And Trust", "Perseverance In Christ"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of believing in God as a miracle worker. He encourages the audience to have faith and not be discouraged by the opinions of others. The preacher also highlights the example of Jesus, who started and finished the race of faith successfully. He urges the listeners to run the race with patience and focus, looking to Jesus as the author and finisher of their faith. The sermon concludes with the reminder that Jesus endured the cross for the joy set before Him and is now seated at the right hand of God.

---

## Transcript

epistle to the Hebrews. We're reading from the chapter 11 and the chapter 12, page 254 in the Bible that you find in front of the Hebrews chapter 12. And we're reading from verse 32 on to the third verse in chapter 12, the 11th chapter of Hebrews.

And we're commencing our reading now at verse 32. We all read together of the Lord's Day morning, taking your time from me, please. And what shall I more say? For the time would feel me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, of Jephthah, of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets, who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, wax valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

Women received their dead, raised to life again. And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. And others at trial of cruel mocking and scourging, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment.

They were stoned, they were sawed asunder, were tempted, were slain with a sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dams, and caves of the earth.

These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, but having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed above with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every wish of the sin which does so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. For the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despised the shame, and is sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. God will stamp his words red this morning with his own divine approval from his own infallible book. Hebrews chapter 11 and Hebrews chapter 12 are two portions of scripture that are well worth returning to again.

But the first two verses of Hebrews 12 are one of the texts of the Bible to which God's people return to, and often ponder and think upon. Wherefore, seeing we are compassed above with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every wish of the sin which does so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. For the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

I was struck recently when I returned to this portion of scripture in my personal Bible reading, to see that there are seven things here that we should consider as we come to find the sweetness and the blessing of this text, which as Christians we should return to again and again and again. Notice, first of all, the encouragers that are all around us. The text starts with, wherefore, seeing we also are compassed above with so great a cloud of witnesses.

The cloud of witnesses, of course, is all the people referred to in chapter 11. What a great company of God's people are sat down here. A cloud of witnesses.

They are a cloud of witnesses to what God has done for them. They are a cloud of witnesses of what God is doing for his people. And they are a cloud of witnesses for our encouragement and exhortation in our Christian life, our Christian service, and our Christian activity.

A cloud of witnesses. A cloud of battlers. A cloud of consecrated believers.

A cloud of saints. A cloud of patriarchs and priests and prophets. A cloud of the greatest encouragement that the people of God ever had.

Man and woman of faith. What giants, what conquerors are listed in that brief chapter. It commences with the elders who had a good report.

And it lists all those who went the second mile for God. And as you are down in the arena of life, facing the battles, the difficulties, the oppositions, the temptations, the darkness, the disappointment, and the disgraces of time, God has sent around you a great cloud of witnesses. My, if you think of that crowd and think of what they endured for Christ, our life is a paradise compared to theirs.

Our occupation for Christ is simple compared to the fires they passed through, the burdens that they bore, the disappointments that they suffered, the strain that was put upon them. And they are all around us, the encouragers around us. You go down through that chapter and ask yourself as you read every name, what was that man's special place in the history of the church? What was that woman's special place in

the history of the church? And you will discover something, that each one mentioned had a special, peculiar trial.

But in that trial they conquered and they, so we have the encouragers around us. Secondly, there is to be an execution required within us. There is something that is to be executed in our hearts.

Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which does so easily beset us. Why are we not like the children of God? Because we are cumbered with weights that tie us down to the affairs of this life. God's people should live above the world and its sinning, but God's people today are living and they have become spotted by this evil world in which we live.

These weights hold us back. They hold us back from looking on Jesus and they hold us back from running the race that we should be running for Jesus. Look at these men.

How did evil run the race? He allowed no weight or no sin to beset him. How did he not run the race? He allowed no weight or sin to beset him. How did Noah run the race? He allowed no weight or sin to beset him.

How did Abraham run the race? He allowed no weight or sin to beset him. How did Isaac run the race? He allowed no weight or sin to beset him. How did Jacob run the race? He allowed no weight or sin to beset him.

There is an execution that has to take place. The weights are to be executed and removed. The sins that dare so easily beset us are to be executed and removed.

We are to be like Samuel, who when they brought the king Agabe before him, Samuel took the sword and slaughtered him completely. There has to be a slaughter in our hearts. We need to declare unceasing war against these weights that tie us down, that tie us back, that keep us from doing the job of work we should be doing.

Yes, there is an execution required within us. We need to come and we need to have that slaughter of the weights and that slaughter of the sins that dare so easily beset us. The expanse before us, the race, God has set the race ground for you.

You do not set the place where you have to run. You do not choose the place you have to run. It is not of your picking, of your choosing.

God has planned it for you. God has set up its hedges. God has set up its path.

God has laid its foundation and God has pointed with His finger and said, Run now! Remember, you have not to run outside the hedgerows, you have to run within them. You have not to run on someone else's path, you have to run on your own path. You are not to run in the place you want to run, but you are to run in the place God Almighty says you have to run.

Think that they can do another Christian's running. I have heard young preachers say, if I was only minister of that church, what a great preacher I would be. Well, you will never be.

You will only be the minister of the church that God has appointed. God has a place for you. It is the duty of every child of God to discover the expanse that is before us.

Time is short. The enemies of the Christians are great and powerful. The temptations are terrifying.

The opposition is of the fiercest people of God. They are not to surrender, they are to fight. They are not to bow themselves to the enemy, they are to break the enemy.

This expanse must be faced and conquered, so run that ye may obtain. That is the challenge of the exhortation to us in Christianity. Let it resound in our ears this morning.

So run that ye may obtain. Are you running to obtain? Are you running for the first place? Are you prepared to learn? I do not care where you are. Dear child of God, this is surely a text we need to be always returning.

What an expanse is before us. What work needs to be done. What prayers need to be prayed.

What souls need to be saved. What evangelism needs to be accomplished. What are we doing? Idling away our time when the colossal task and expanse is before us.

And then there is the exhortation given us. Look what it says. It tells us here that we have to run the race.

We have to run the race. This is a hard race. This is a difficult race.

This is a long race. This is a lifetime race. There is no discharge from the running.

The race is set. It is decreed of God. There is no alteration.

There are no changes. The rough places have to be conquered, not shunned. The crooked places have to be straightened, not forgotten.

Every wall must be leaped. Every difficulty must be faced. Every enemy must be destroyed in Jesus' name.

There is a hard part to every day's running. At times there is smoothness, but every day there is a hard patch. Are you going to let that hard patch beat you and punish you and destroy your love in serving Jesus Christ? Run the race.

You will not run the race if you are entangled with the affair. You will not run the race if the first thing is not God's priority. Seek first the kingdom of God and His mercy.

Then all other things shall be added unto you. Notice that the race is to be run with patience. The Bible says, let patience have her perfect work.

There is one thing that the children of God, there is one thing that every child of God needs. It is a renewed baptism of patience. So often Christians tire.

I look back on a long ministry in this world and the experiences of Christians who got tired, who grew weary, who said, I have done my bit. No you haven't. You will never do your bit until God calls you home.

You have neither the start journey and this race in your hand or the end of it. Christ has marked the starting point and Christ has marked the ending point. You have absolutely no say in what lies between those two points and nor can you change those points.

They are not in your changing or in your sovereignty or in your authority. And you are called to have untiring patience. You are called upon to have unfailing patience.

You are called upon to have unflinching patience to set yourself that task. I would say to you in all your giving, get patience. It is easy to be impatient.

It is easy to be weary and well doing. It is easy to listen to somebody. No man prayed more than George Muller to feed his orphans.

And at the age of 70, George Muller retired. He gave up his orphanages. He gave up his work in Bristol to do what? To have an evangelistic campaign round the whole world.

A man of 70 setting out on an evangelistic campaign round the whole and during the next 20 years George Muller was a world wide known evangelist. Mr. Spurgeon who suffered a lot of ill health was in Mentone in South France and he says the youthful George Muller called in with me today. He is heading on to the 90's but he is busy evangelizing the whole world from country to country.

Many people have heard of George Muller and his great work with the orphans. Few have heard of George Muller, the great international evangelist and the work that God rightly did. I am reminded of one strange happening when he started off in his ministry.

His first campaign was to be in Canada. But when the boat reached Canada, the great river was covered with mist. And he went up to see the captain and the captain said to him, Mr. Muller this mist will last for 10 days and we will not land in your place where you are going for your mission.

10 days. Mr. Muller said I am sorry captain I am arriving on time. The captain said do you know what you are talking about? He said yes I do.

Do you see that mist captain? My father made it. My father will remove it. So the captain said to him I don't believe it but if you want to pray I will kneel down with you.

He said you will not kneel down with me you are an unbeliever. God doesn't hear unbelievers. You will not dare bow your knee to an unbeliever.

I am going to kneel down because I believe. And he knelt down and he prayed a very simple prayer. In fact it was said the most simple part of George Muller's Christian experience was the way he prayed.

And he said Lord I am your servant. I am starting these evangelistic meetings. I have to be on time.

You must be served by somebody who is on time to do your work. I am not a loafer I am a laborer. Please take away this mist.

And he got up and the captain smiled at him and said is that a door? No no he said that is not a door. He said would you step over to the door of the house? And he stepped over the door and he said just open the door. He said do you see any mist? No he said there is no mist.

I can see for at least 50 miles ahead the mist had gone. There was a man who knew how to run with patience the race that was set before him. God is a miracle God but he only does miracles for those who believe that he is.

Do you believe him? If you believed him you would not. Notice also the example before us. Looking unto Jesus.

Ah here we are. Get our eyes off ourselves. Get our eyes off others.

Don't listen to what they say. The greatest discouragers don't listen to them. Carry with you ear plugs and when a child of God tries to take the cotton wool of the ear plug very strongly don't listen.

Listen to God. Looking unto Jesus. My Savior never tired.

I have meat to eat ye know not of. He was wearied in body but he was alert in soul as he led the woman at the well to the place of forgiveness and peace through the Savior's blood. Yes looking unto Jesus steadfastly.

Looking unto Jesus strongly. Looking unto Jesus strongly because when you look to Jesus you get a song in your heart even praise. Oh for a church of people who will be looking unto Jesus.

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. Here we have the excellency inspiring us. Christ started the course.

Christ started well the course. You can start the course and you can start it well. How? Jesus.

Christ finished the course. Christ finished the course well. You can finish the course well.

You can finish it well by looking unto Jesus. You've got to run. You've got to run and run and run to win.

This is a great work. It's a work of goodness. It's a work of load carrying.

It's a work of stickability. It is the thought of partnership. We are yoked into the plow.

We have our work to do and we must do it well. We must pull our weight and take the portion of the work that is our task and discharge it with great seriousness and great consecration. This is the way that God wants us to do.

He wants us to consider the encouragers around us. He wants us to carry out an execution within us. He wants to glue us to the expanse that is before us.

He wants us to heed the exhortation given to us of running. He wants to have an expectation from us that we run the race with patience. He wants us to follow the example before us, looking unto Jesus.

And He wants us to consider the excellency that will always inspire us. Let us pray. Father in heaven, we thank Thee for the solid word of God.

Write its truth, its exhortation upon our hearts. Grant that the words of our lips and the meditation of our hearts will be acceptable in Thy sight, O God, our strength and our Redeemer. And the people of God said, Amen.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/15/SID15207.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ian-paisley/the-text-to-which-we-must-ever-return/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**