

Prepare Yourself for the Race

Hebrews 12:12–17

Imagine a championship team entering the decisive game convinced that victory is guaranteed. Its players have talent and an impressive record, but confidence has made them careless. They neglect practice, overlook weaknesses, and arrive unprepared. Across the field, the other team has studied, trained, and learned to work together. When the contest begins, preparation and unity overcome ability without discipline.

The Christian life carries the same warning. If we are to succeed in our Christian walk, we must prepare ourselves for the race. Hebrews 12 calls us to strengthen hands that hang down, steady feeble knees, and make straight paths for our feet. We cannot live on yesterday's faith or assume that past victories will carry us through today's temptations. Spiritual readiness requires honest self-examination, prayer, Scripture, worship, fellowship, and the removal of habits and distractions that hinder our progress.

Yet this race is not meant to be run alone. God also commands us to pursue peace and holiness and to watch carefully over one another. A faithful church does not turn on its own runners; it encourages the weary, lovingly restores those who stumble, resists bitterness, and helps every member remain on the path. Like a disciplined team, we become stronger when each person is committed both to personal faithfulness and to the spiritual well-being of others.

This week, ask yourself two questions: **What weakness in my faith needs strengthening?** and **Who beside me needs encouragement?** Then take one faithful step. Remove a hindrance, renew a neglected spiritual discipline, pursue peace in a strained relationship, or reach out to someone who is struggling. Confidence alone will not finish the race, but by God's grace, prepared hearts and united believers can press forward faithfully toward the heavenly prize.

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