




Enduring the Race

Therefore, since we also have such a large cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us lay aside every hindrance and the sin that so easily ensnares us. Let us run with endurance the race that lies before us. ~ Hebrews 12:1

Discover the Context Hebrews 11:30-12:3

 Does the weekly description of life at camp match with your experience this summer? Have you noticed that your duties are being done less thoroughly than several weeks ago? Are you rushing through today's devotion and prayer time because you overslept? What does all of this reveal about the focus of your heart?

 As you read Psalm 69 from today's *Dig Deeper*, let it be your prayer. Make verse 5 your confession—name those foolish things you have placed before your relationship with God. Use verse 13 as a memory verse. Turn verse 29 into your creed that brings you through the summer.

 Ask other staff members what God's been teaching them in their Bible reading and devotions. Be ready to share what God's teaching you.

Very soon camp will be coming to an end. The weeks of screaming kids, overflowing toilets, and dishes stacked to the ceiling will be over. You will probably miss all the excitement, water activities, and relationships with the other staff. But right now the last day of summer is not coming quickly enough. Even veteran staff are not immune to summer fatigue.

Let me describe what it often looks like. Week 1—you're excited, lots of energy, ready to reach the world for Christ. Week 2—energy level still high, have all your duties down pat. Week 3—have a harder time getting up in the morning. Week 4—stop taking showers in the morning because you need more time to sleep, spending less time in devotions. Week 5—struggling with your quiet time, start taking shortcuts on your duties. Week 6—some of the staff are really irritating you.

What you need is endurance. Endurance to press on. Endurance to complete your tasks well. Endurance to be true to your calling. So how can you endure the race?

God taught me how to endure the first time I worked at a summer camp. It was not a deep, theological truth. It was not wisdom from a seasoned counselor. It was something I was desperately needing.

It was rest.

That's right, rest. Now I was not able to create extra time throughout the day to sleep or go to bed any earlier. But the rest I needed was rest in Christ. That's why the very next verse after the one at the top of this page says, "Keeping our eyes on Jesus, the source and perfecter of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2). Because he endured to the cross for our sins, we can rest in him. We might get weary, we might fail, we might be weak. But to endure we must rest in our Savior.

Let him put his arms around you and carry your load. [KMP]