The Race Before Us
Heb. 12:1-2

Introduction:
A. Christian life compared to a race.
   1. Witnesses are those in chapter 11.
   2. Participants are Christians.
B. Christian life must have qualities needed in a race.

Discussion:
I. It Requires Freedom (“Let us lay aside ... weight ... sin ...”)
   A. From the weight of sin.
      2. Its practice — in thought, word or deed. (2 Pet. 2:1; Col. 3:8-9)
   B. From every hindrance.
      1. Things that choke out the word. (Mark 4:19).
      2. People and relationships that hinder. (Matt. 10:37).
II. It Requires Effort (“Run”)
   A. Must work. (Phil 2:12; 1 Cor. 15:58; 16:10).
   B. Must strive (Lk. 13:24; Phil 1:27).
III. It Requires Endurance (“Patience” - kjv).
   A. Must wait for the reward. (“American Prayer”; Cf. Gal. 6:9)
   B. Impatience may cause one to either quit, burn out or cut corners.
      1. Gospel preaching.
      2. Church growth.
   C. Patience easier with better understanding.
      1. Of the purpose of suffering for Christ (vv. 4-13).
      2. Of the value of heaven — worth endurance and wait.
IV. It Requires Vision (“Looking ...”)
   A. Look to Jesus.
      1. His suffering - “endured the cross” (cf. 1 Pet. 2:20-21).
      2. His victory - “sat down at right hand”
   B. Look to the future - “race set before us.”
      1. Not good to brood over past.
      2. Not good to depend on past.
   C. Look too the “cloud of witnesses” (ch. 11),

Conclusion:
A. Get into the race — obey the gospel.
B. Run to the finish (cf. 2 Tim. 4:6-8).