

Believers in Christ often seem to hold to the truth that living a committed Christian life will result in a blessed life. Of course, this is true on a spiritual level, but it does not mean that you will *feel* blessed as the world tends to define it. Many have received the message that health, wealth and general success are guaranteed to those who follow Jesus. Their pastors and Bible teachers may or may not have intended to communicate this, but either way, they did.

For many of us, however, this has not been our experience. We came in with one expectation about what an "abundant life" looks like, but what we have gotten is something entirely different. What do we do when things aren't going well? What do we do when things are dark? How do we trust God in the midst of suffering?

This week's sermon focused on Christ's ultimate example of how to faithfully run the race that has been marked out for you. It may not be glamorous, but it will be worth it. You will come out on the other side (of eternity) knowing that you have faithfully pursued God's calling on your life. Many that have gone before us can testify that God's faithful fulfillment of his promises is 100% guaranteed. However, the ultimate example of this is Jesus. God knows that the journey can be tough, but the destination is worth it.

Read Hebrews 11.

- 1. When you read this roll call of faith what stands out to you? Are there any stories that are particularly interesting to you?
- 2. Share some of the spectacular stories of faith that you have heard.
- 3. Share a time when you struggled to embrace the truth that the best was yet to come.

Read Hebrews 12:1-3.

- 4. When was a time when you hated something, yet embraced what it accomplished at the same time?
- 5. Where do you put your focus (healthy or unhealthy) when you are facing struggles?
- 6. Can you share a time that you were discouraged, but God came through in a powerful way?

