A scenic landscape featuring a river flowing through a valley. The river is the central focus, with white water rapids. The surrounding area is lush green with several trees of varying sizes. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a bright, hazy sky with soft clouds. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

***Focus on Jesus the
Source and Goal of our
Faith!***

Heb 12:1-3 (Topical Message)

Hebrews 11:1 (GW)

¹ Faith assures us of things we expect and convinces us of the existence of things we cannot see.

Faith

Assures us of things we expect (Christ to Work in our Lives & Circumstances)

Convinces us of things we cannot see currently or in our futures (Christ to Work in our Lives & Circumstances)

Faith = Belief = Trust = Dependance

(Faith-Belief-Trust-Dependance) on Christ gives us assurance and convinces us the Christ is at work: Amen!

So, today as we start the year (2021), I want to look at a passage in Heb 12:1-3 that highlights the importance of our **Faith** in Christ as the **ONLY** way to live our lives as believers. ***It is my prayer for you that you make this a priority in 2021.*** Thus, the title of my message today ***“Focus on Jesus the Source and Goal of our Faith!”***

Today, we will discover from this passage:

1. Our Race of Faith

2. The Goal of Our Faith

3. The Opposition to Our Faith

Hebrews 12:1-3 (GW)

¹ Since we are surrounded by so many examples {of faith}, we must get rid of everything that slows us down, especially sin that distracts us. We must run the race that lies ahead of us and never give up. ² We must focus on Jesus, the source and goal of our faith. He saw the joy ahead of him, so he endured death on the cross and ignored the disgrace it brought him. Then he received the highest position in heaven, the one next to the throne of God. ³ Think about Jesus, who endured opposition from sinners, so that you don't become tired and give up.

1. *Our Race of Faith*

Hebrews 12:1 (GW)

¹ Since we are surrounded by so many examples {of faith}, we must get rid of everything that slows us down, especially sin that distracts us. We must run the race that lies ahead of us and never give up.

Chapter 12 in Hebrews follows right after **Chapter 11** which has been described in the Bible as the **“Faith Chapter”**. I encourage you to read it on your own.

In Chapter 11, the writer of Hebrews gives examples of men & women, who were looking forward to the Cross, **who put their faith in God**. They all had choices to make to exercise (Faith-Belief-Trust-Dependance) on God. Some endured greater hardships than others, some experienced greater victories of faith than other. The common theme was that they all put their (Faith-Belief-Trust-Dependance) in God:

Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, (OTHERS)

Brothers & Sisters – All that are mentioned in Hebrews Chapter 11 didn't know of Christ who was in the future when they lived. They put their faith in God looking forward to the Cross, and Christ's resurrection from the dead. Today, we live in a time when we are looking back to the Cross (**Post Resurrection**). The writer of Hebrews alludes to this in the last verse of Chapter Heb 11:40

Hebrews 11:40 (GW)

⁴⁰ God planned to give us something very special so that we would gain eternal life with them.

This something planned (Plan of Salvation) this is very special is "Jesus Christ" who give spiritually dead men spiritual life by (Faith-Belief-Trust-Dependance) in the Gospel Message: Post Cross one gains eternal life with them by belief:

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 (GW)

³ I passed on to you the most important points of doctrine that I had received: Christ died to take away our sins as the Scriptures predicted. ⁴ He was placed in a tomb. He was brought back to life on the third day as the Scriptures predicted.

In our current time, we have God's word, we know much more about the God/Man Jesus Christ, the salvation He offers, and have the Gospel message. Amen!

But as a Christians today, we also need to live by Faith like the Saints of old with Faith in (God) Christ as one's source of life:

How can I say this?

Because the NT is filled with exhortations to do this very thing as the way to live the Christian life.

For example, the NT book of Roman's theme verse Ro1:16-17, explains that the faith that saves us, is the same faith that grow us, mature us and is the way we live our lives!

Romans 1:16-17 (GW)

¹⁶ I'm not ashamed of the Good News. It is God's power to save everyone who believes, Jews first and Greeks as well. ¹⁷ God's approval is revealed in this Good News. This approval begins and ends with faith as Scripture says, "The person who has God's approval will live by faith."

(Faith-Belief-Trust-Dependance) in Christ as one's source of life! Amen

Brothers & Sisters – Heb 12:1, says we are surrounded by so many examples of faithful men and women from the past who put their faith in God (Hebrews Chapter 11). **But (Today)** We must rid ourselves of everything that slows us down, especially sin that distracts us which makes us **UNFAITHFUL**. We must run the race that is ahead of us and never give up.

The writer of Hebrews says the Christian life is like a race. He exhorts us to rid ourselves of things that slow us down, or sin that distract us away from God, **and to NEVER give up!**

How?

By the exercising the same faith that we saw the men and women of Hebrews Chapter 11 exercise. **(Faith-Belief-Trust-Dependance) in Christ as one's source of life is our "Race of Faith"** because we live post cross. This is how we run the race of life, by faith.

When we "Live by Faith" automatically we rid ourselves of everything that slows us down, or sins that distract us away from God. We see God work in His timing, and this further deepens our faith.

If you want to move forward in the Christian life, one needs to "Live by Faith" and **NEVER give up in Life's race of Faith!**

2. The Goal of Our Faith

Hebrews 12:2 (GW)

² We must focus on Jesus, the source and goal of our faith. He saw the joy ahead of him, so he endured death on the cross and ignored the disgrace it brought him. Then he received the highest position in heaven, the one next to the throne of God.

In our version (GW), the writer of Hebrews in verse 2 writes believers must (Focus) on Jesus:

Focus – *Other translations (Fix our eyes on, looking to, keeping our eyes on)*

Focus on Who? Jesus

Why? Because Jesus is the source and goal of our faith!

I don't think it could be **any more clearly stated** here as the way to live the Christian's race of life.

Focusing on, looking to, keeping our eyes on Jesus who is THE SOURCE and GOAL of our FAITH!

Notice that JESUS is our SOURCE!

WE are NOT the SOURCE, nor any other THING is the SOURCE!

NOT: Our Flesh, Old Covenant Law, Christian Disciplines & Rules, Spouse, Family, Children, Church, Intelligence, Education, Career, Money, Government, Popular Charismatic Leaders, Empty Philosophies, Humanistic Teachings, 401k, Doctors, etc.!

Jesus is our SOURCE of LIFE (AMEN!),

Brothers & Sisters – Most Christians miss this simple truth. You are not the SOURCE to live your life, as a BELIEVER, Jesus is your source of which to live your LIFE.

(Faith-Belief-Trust-Dependance) in Christ as one's source of life! Amen

That is the Goal of our Faith! Amen

What's your GOAL for 2021? (We all set Goals in the Beginning of the Year – Weight, Exercise, Health, Financial)

Whatever it is, scrap those plans and change your GOAL to the ONLY GOAL that Matters:

² We must focus on Jesus, the source and goal of our faith.

AND THEN run the RACE and LIVE by Faith

POST Cross – As a believer, we have the SOURCE living inside us. This is different for the Saints mentioned in Hebrews Chapter 11. We have been risen with Christ! Paul states this in Gal 2:20:

Galatians 2:20 (NASB)

²⁰ "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

The Old me has been crucified with Christ, Christ lives in me, and now the race of life I live **by (Faith-Belief-Trust-Dependance) in Christ** who is in me, and died for me to give me spiritual life. **Brothers & Sisters** – Setting this Goal and exercising daily, a moment-by-moment choice of **(Faith-Belief-Trust-Dependance)** in Christ as one's source in the race of life, **WILL RADICALLY** Change your life by you being conformed into the image of Christ, expressing Him, and Him living the Christian Life for you and thru you. God will do amazing things in your life (In you, and thru you).

GOAL for 2021!



Hebrews 12:2a (GW)

² We must focus on Jesus, the source and goal of our faith.

AND run the RACE of Life by Faith

3. The Opposition to Our Faith

Hebrews 12:3 (GW)

³ Think about Jesus, who endured opposition from sinners, so that you don't become tired and give up.

Brothers & Sisters – There will be a tremendous ***DEMONIC*** opposition against you to putting your (Faith-Belief-Trust-Dependance) in Christ as your source of life.

This will come in all ways, in all forms, and at all times in a ***DEMONIC*** effort to slow you down, and distract you away from CHRIST as the source and goal of your faith.

When this happens (and it will), think about Jesus who also endured opposition from sinful men.

don't become tired and give up!

It doesn't matter how many times we fail when opposition comes upon us. It will happen. However, Christ will use the opposition as an **OPPORTUNITY** to show us our **NEED to depend on Him! Satan thinks he is winning, but he is losing!**

Opposition in our lives turn us away from our flesh as the source for coping and dealing with life, solving our own problems, and meeting our needs so that we will **turn to Christ as our source to live the race of the Christian life!**

DON'T GIVE UP!

The **EVIL ONE** wants us to give up (That's his Goal in your life) and will throw obstacles and opposition against us every inch of the way, **SO** you we don't exercise (Faith-Belief-Trust-Dependance) in Christ as your source of life.

Once you give up, the **EVIL ONE** renders you stagnate, immature, fruitless, in habitual sins, fearful, anxious, depressed and hopeless:

An abundant, victorious life is experienced by putting your *(Faith-Belief-Trust-Dependance)* *in Christ as your source of life.* What does an abundant life look in one's Life (Not enough words to describe)?

Peace!

Rest!

Fruits of the Spirit!

Joy!

Feeling Loved!

Expressing Love!

Walking in Works God planned for You!

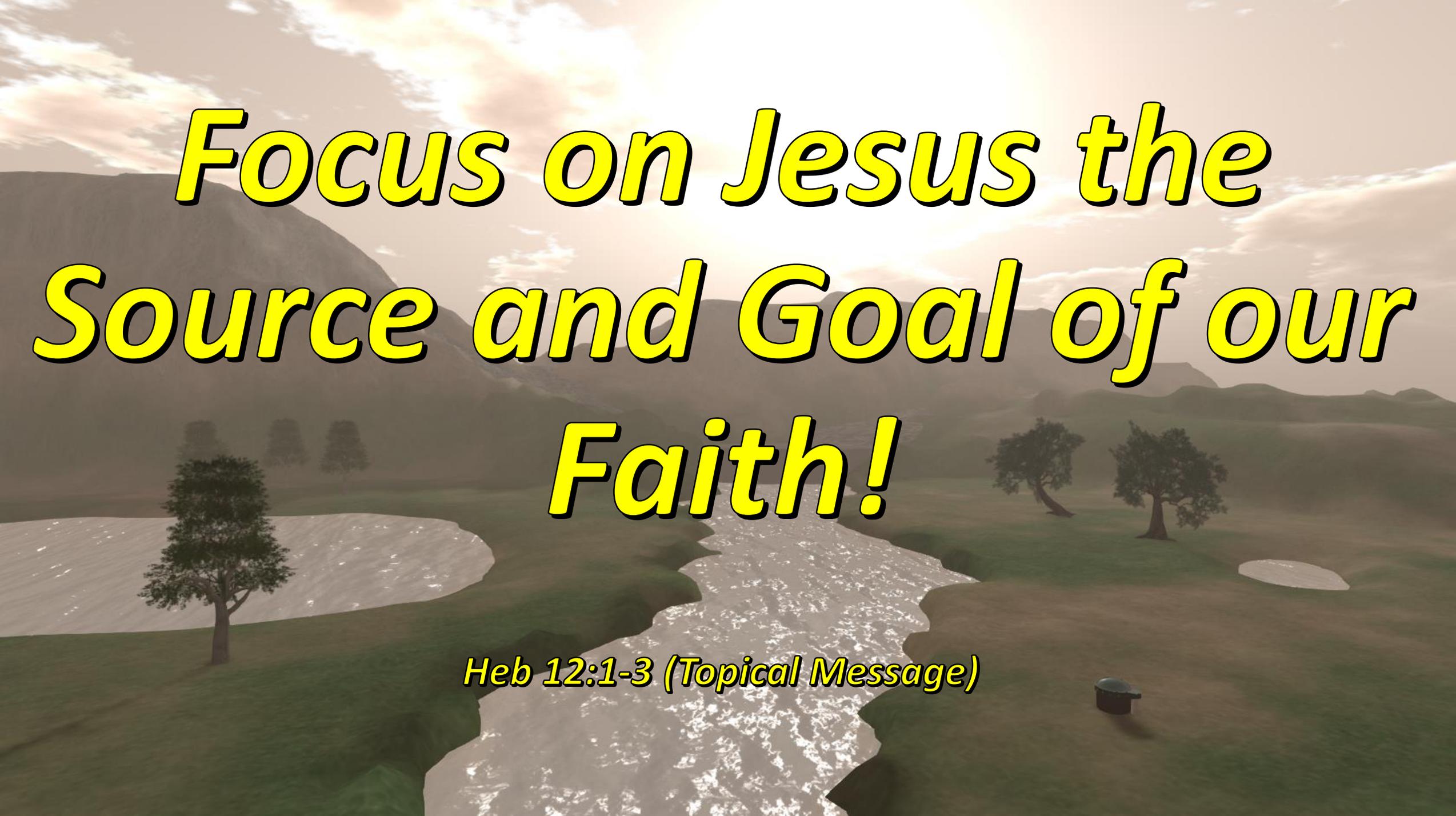
Brothers & Sisters – The opposition to our Faith has its roots in the ***DEMONIC REALM.*** You will experience opposition. This opposition is an opportunity to put your (Faith-Belief-Trust-Dependance) in Christ as your source of life. ***TAKE A STEP OF FAITH!!!***

Focus on Who?

Jesus

***Why? Because Jesus is the Source
and Goal of our Faith***

Heb 12:1-3

A scenic landscape featuring a river flowing through a valley. The river is the central focus, with white water rapids. The surrounding area is lush green with several trees of varying sizes. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a bright, hazy sky with soft clouds. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

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Heb 12:1-3 (Topical Message)