

Sinners looking unto Jesus (Quality:Good)

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Date: 05 April 1985

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[0 : 0 0] If the Lord may be pleased to help me for a little while this evening, I'll direct your minds to Hebrews chapter 12.

The twelfth chapter of Hebrews, we are reading the first two verses.

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about, with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

And as some present here this evening knows that we announced this as a text this morning.

And one remarks somewhat based upon the first part of the first verse.

[1 : 5 9] Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about, with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside the first verse.

And this is the first verse. And this was the part that we tried to meditate upon this morning. The words of the apostle.

And as we said, no doubt in his days there was a cloud of witnesses.

Many, many who gathered together. Many who had hearts opened to receive the word. Many who hungered and thirsted for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about, with so great a cloud of witnesses. We mentioned a few things in respect of the Lord Jesus Christ in his miracles.

[3 : 1 6] How many hundreds and thousands gathered together to see him. We fear there were many amongst those thousands that had a natural desire to see him, knowing and of hearing many miracles that he had performed.

But there was number, yea, there was with them this great number, those who feared God.

So we can quite understand that in the days of the apostle. And we mentioned this morning in later years.

And there was many, even in our forefathers' times, that gathered together. And we could speak, and they could speak of them, similar as we have in the text, being compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.

And we put this question, shall I say, to ourselves. What do we know of these witnesses?

[4 : 3 8] Witnessing. Oh, what do we witness? What do we know of these truths? Witnessing. Why those dear men and women, the apostle Paul, why they witness to the graciousness of God, the mercy of God, the love of God, the compassion of God.

And I trust we, in our day, in some measure, can be witnesses to the truth, to the truth that is revealed in the word, and I trust revealed into our own hearts.

This great cloud of witnesses. I was pleased to hear, dear friend, this afternoon, the men mentioning about the book of Psalms, and how the book of Psalms has been a great help and blessing unto many of the Lord's dear people.

I mentioned that the book of Psalms was like a cloud of witnesses.

The language of David and others, what is recorded in the Psalms, how often haven't they fitted your heart, fitted your case?

[6 : 06] The times when you have been buried down and cast down, yet there has been a word. Such as David said, Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?

And in some cases in experience, those who feel to be much in the dark, and wondering if they are completely left, and will be left, and have the fear of being left.

Yet David said, Did he not? Be not silent unto me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the bed.

Well, in these many portions in the Psalms, it encourages, I believe, the Lord's dear people to still press on, knowing that David and others, Asaph and Moses, had walked the same path, endured the same grief and darknesses in the mind.

It encourages us to say, There is still a great cloud of witnesses in the scriptures, in the old word of God.

[7 : 26] Well, there, there is another thought here, Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us. We made a few remarks, respected this, and it is not easy, dear friends.

We can read it, oh yes, which are sins which doth so easily beset us, but, is it easy, dear friends?

Is it so easy even to confess? We have quoted in prayer, I believe, if we confess. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

What do we need? Why we need the Holy Spirit to help us. We need the Holy Spirit to reveal to us, and to convince us, and then we need the Holy Spirit to help us rightly to confess.

And it is the Holy Spirit's work to give the application of forgiveness. Let us lay aside in every weight, and the sins which doth so easily beset us.

[8 : 46] Now this evening, one needs the help of the Holy Spirit to venture into another line.

And let us run with patience the race that is set before us. We read in the 37th Psalm that the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.

There has been times, I believe, when we have tried to speak from those words, that I have always had to bring one for first, and that is the Lord.

He is steps. The steps of a good man. And He is, and He has been, He ever will be the same.

Really and truly, when we venture to speak from that word, it's Christ. He has been, He has been, He is, He ever will be the good man.

[9 : 57] Yes, perfect in every way, shape and form. Perfect in body, perfect in spirit, perfect in love, perfect in His warmth, perfect in His, uh, approaching.

That is, His prayers was perfect, perfect in His, uh, His prayers were perfect, as He approached unto His Father so many, many times. As you know, and as we read, day by day, night by night, spent all night in prayer.

Well, He was, He still is, that perfect man. But here on the other hand, I believe, all the Lord's dear people, they are made good by the grace of God, not otherwise.

I believe I've mentioned this evening, we are all born in sin, shaped in iniquity, and came forth from the womb, speaking lies. That's our condition by nature.

Ruined, ruined, ruined in sin. Ruined, ruined in sin. Ruined, ruined in sin. But, by the grace of God, by the grace of God, we can enter a little into these words, a race that is set before us.

[11 : 29] And, by the grace of God, we can rise. We can rise. For the grace of God, we can rise. For the grace of God, we can rise. We can rise. And, we can rise. And, you and I, as it were, planned the future. Plan the future. Yes, we is going to do this, and we is going to do that.

We are going to undertake such an occupation, a post, as it were, in providence. But the Lord overthrew it all. The steps. The steps.

Of a good man are ordered by the Lord. And some of us have lived long enough to thank God that we are never left to ourselves.

And our own way. But have, by the grace of God, turned into that pathway. That he has designed for us.

Well, in the text this evening. To run with patience the race that is set before us.

[12 : 42] In providence. In grace. And we are to run. What does that speak to us?

It speaks to us. There is no lingering in the matters of salvation.

There is no lingering in coming to the Lord. But we are to be diligent. Seek ye first the kingdom of God.

We must hasten, as it were. And how true it is that the words that the Lord has given us in the gospel. He has warned us that he will come.

As it were, an unexpected moment. What are we to do? Pray and watch. To run in the race.

[13 : 46] With patience. With patience. With patience. So the Lord has this pathway designed for his people.

God is a sovereign. We have our various paths. We have our various paths. that the Lord has designed for us even in providence in the things of this life.

Lord, the Lord has set it down. What a wonderful thing. What a mercy. What a blessing that the Lord has designed our footsteps, as it were.

That we are to run the race that is set before us. And we are to run with patience. With patience.

Now may I look at it for a few minutes under this light and let us run with patience. As we all know that there must be the new birth.

[15 : 03] The new birth. Jesus spake those words himself. Ye must be born again to enter into the kingdom of God.

Now previous to this heavenly calling as this same dear man speaks of in this same epistle, wherefore holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling.

When that call has been received, I may have some here to see. You're often trembled. Often troubled. Maybe day by day, night by night, have I received that heavenly calling.

There's an earthly calling, but there's an heavenly, heavenly calling. Now when we receive that heavenly calling, our feet will be directed by God, not by ourselves.

We cannot, He can, by His grace, out of His love, direct our feet into the pulse of righteousness.

[16 : 26] This is, dear friends, one of the great mercies that the Lord bestows upon Zion, is chosen to be brought out of the broadway into the narrow and given grace to run in the race that is set before us.

When we are brought into that narrow way, there's something of the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart.

as you know, God works in the heart. We've quoted tonight, I believe, of Lydia, whose heart had been opened to receive the things of God.

It was so in her day, it is in our day, even this day. We need the Lord to open our hearts to the things of His grace.

when we've received in the heavenly calling, the work of the Holy Spirit within, revealing to us in some measure God is a sovereign.

[17 : 47] It's some as little known that is the weight and burden of sin, little known of their heart by nature, where others are deeply taught.

One day, a man of old, wasn't it, Job, who said, behold, he said, I am viable. Now this is the teaching, friends, of the Holy Spirit when called by divine grace.

And from that time there will be, as it were, a road before us. And that road will lead to heaven by the grace of God.

And this is the pathway, the road that is mentioned in our decks and let us run. Let us run. The apostle says, let us run with patience.

Let us. why? Why? Why did he pen this blessed word?

[18 : 58] I am quite aware it was under the leading and teaching of the Holy Spirit. But I believe the apostle could see the future by faith knowing that the Lord had prepared a place for his people.

therefore he saw the price. He has some faith view of the place that the Lord had prepared.

Did he not the Lord Jesus say unto his disciples of old, let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. For in my father's house are many mansions.

If it were not so, I would have told you. But I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself.

I believe the dear man Paul had some faith view of this and therefore he said, and let us, don't want no endurance here, let us run with patience.

[20 : 04] Dear friends, running in this race we shall have some obstacles. there are these of indolences and these things that we pass through will cause the pathway to be a pathway of tribulation and the apostle knew it and that caused him to say through much tribulation ye must enter into the kingdom of God to run with patience.

Now what are the things that we pass through that we need patience and we shall? Can you give it to yourself?

No, it's the blessing of God to be given patience under the various strokes or the various afflictions or the storms of life, the deep waters, the places that the Lord has designed for us to go through.

We need patience that we might endure the cross. How often the Lord lays a cross at his people's doors, at his children's doors, and the voice says, this is yours, take this cross and bear it.

Oh, how we need to look to the Lord that we may be given that patience to endure or patience to carry, as it were, whatever the Lord has designed for us.

[21 : 44] Let us run with patience the rights. And these things that will often cause a bearing down, heaviness in the heart, make it stoop.

Now, these heavy weights, these things that trouble us, these things that we have to carry, the cross upon the back, as it were, makes us stoop.

Where? Where? I believe it makes the child of God stoop. Where he ought to stoop. Where he desires to stoop.

And that is at the feet of Jesus. Let us run. Be diligent, diligent, earnestly, seeking.

Let us run. He can see the necessity of this. What do we read in one of the Psalms? He says, Make haste, O God, make haste.

[22 : 54] He asks the Lord not to linger. He asks the Lord to make haste and come to his help. Let us run, then, with patience, the race that is set before us, according to God's will and God's command.

And where will it lead us, dear friends, where life is upon it this evening? If we are brought into this narrow way into the path of righteousness, I believe the Lord will, in his love, give us that grace and strength to run.

We need strength, do we not? The poet has said, As thy days show shall I strength be, and the Lord gives the strength. We shouldn't get far, should we, if we are left to ourselves.

We shouldn't be allowed to make many steps. We couldn't run in this pathway. It's by the grace of God, and the grace of God alone.

Nothing of the creature. Now let us run, says the apostle, by the help of the Spirit, by the help of God, strengthening our poor bodies, strengthening what?

[24 : 15] Faith. God, and let us run with patience the grace that is set before us.

Dear friends, how far have you got in this pathway? How far? You know, there's some of the Lord's children, there are lambs in the fold, and they cannot get far before the Lord gives them the heavenly calling, and then a call from earth to heaven, and their pathway, their grace, soon comes to an end, where on the other end, the Lord preserves us over many years.

We're still running in the race. May the Lord help us to still run with patience and earnestly desiring to know his will in the path we tread.

Now, the secret of this or all this is the secret here in the following words of our text, looking unto Jesus.

Now, there's something most blessed in these three words, looking unto Jesus. Going back to the apostle for a moment, you will remember there was a time and some years he wasn't looking to Jesus.

[25 : 56] Jesus. You can go back in your own experience, can you not? You wasn't looking to Jesus. You had no desire to look to him.

You can manage your affairs yourself. In other words, you knew not Jesus. I believe the apostle spake to the Ephesians and said, ye now are no more strangers nor foreigners.

Not a mercy, dear friends, if we be brought out of the spirit of the Pharisee, having their eyes open, and now looking unto Jesus.

This is safe ground, dear friends. You say, well, so often my mind is taken in other directions. And perhaps I'm not looking unto Jesus as I should.

What is their text? Run, run, with patience, looking unto Jesus. What are you looking for this evening?

[27 : 05] If we come into this little sanctuary this evening looking, looking unto Jesus, looking to him, no small mercy, as some of you have been looking to him for many, many years.

And perhaps you're still looking for the same thing that you desired perhaps twenty, thirty years ago. And that is a token that you're among his people, that you're in the covenant, that your name is in heaven.

Looking unto Jesus to give you some full assurance that he entered into those sufferings that we heard a little of this afternoon and have been singing in the hymns of the sufferings of Christ.

Looking unto Jesus, looking for a token, looking to know from him. You will not be satisfied anything short of this.

You may read it in the scriptures. We are thankful for the scriptures. But unless the scriptures made life and power into our hearts, they've often looked upon a promise, it may be, such as, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

[28 : 34] And the Lord's dear children, you know, they want to be honest. They can't say that that promise is theirs unless it is given. That's one of the deep exercises, I believe, of the Lord's people.

They want these promises given. They want them applied. They want them being spoken by the Lord. They want this promise to have an entrance into their heart.

They do not wish to steal anything, any precious promises. they want them given. Looking unto Jesus, your often prayer, give me a token.

Show me that I am born of God. Give me some evidence that the Lord Jesus died on that accursed tree for me.

You want some evidence within your soul that he suffered for you, that he shed his blood for you.

[29 : 45] You want that sweet evidence that he bowed his head and when he said it is finished, that you were in that number among that people and in that work that was accomplished in Jesus Christ, the Son of God in God in the way of redemption.

Looking unto Jesus, as I said, you may have been looking for this blessing many years, and as you have been earnestly pleading for that precious promise that you are to seek, to know that you are born of God.

I believe I have got every authority from the word of God to say to you this evening, you are born of God. If you really feel your sin, sin is a burden, then you have to come into these three words, looking unto Jesus.

Looking unto Jesus. God is a sin. If you know the burden of sin, the burden of sin, something there, something more than just a reading that you are a sinner, it's when the Holy Spirit sent that arrow of conviction right into thy soul, causing a light to shine within your heart, revealing to you that your heart is in an awful condition by nature, you are looking unto Jesus.

So now you are standing, looking unto Jesus. And there is a looking unto Jesus for many, many things.

[31 : 41] When you come to the earth of God, are you looking unto him? Are you praying unto him? Give me a crown, Lord. May there be a crown from thy table.

These dear people know that there is a table full of the richer provisions, spiritual provisions, for the poor and the needy.

Looking unto Jesus that there may be a crown that might drop from this table within your heart. Looking unto Jesus that he might refresh you, your spirit, with a little of that stream that flows so freely.

And dear friends, oh, that stream will do you good. It will. Just a touch of that stream that flows from the river.

It will help you, cheer you, and you'll come here. I believe I shall endure unto the end and be saved. Looking unto Jesus.

[32 : 53] Ah, there's something yet to be faced here, looking unto Jesus, that on Calvary's cross he so willingly and lovingly shed his blood.

Oh, what a fountain there is there, dear friends, a fountain, never dry up as long as the earth continues, and never dry up.

No, it cannot. As yet, poor sinners, I trust to be caught by grace and still in need of it, and there will be, I believe, unto the end of time, those who will be looking unto Jesus to be washed and cleansed, purified in that precious blood of his, looking unto Jesus, looking unto him, seeking his mercy, his compassion, looking unto Jesus to give you the application of that blood, looking unto Jesus that you are upon the rock, Christ Jesus.

There is but one rock, one foundation, France, one foundation for the church of God, it's Christ. Christ comes into everything, that is to supply the needs of his dear children, because he loves them so, and he'll bring them through, he'll help them to run the race, give them patience to run it, and they'll see the prize at the end.

oh, that blessed prize, as it were, yea, Jesus Christ, and the place he has prepared for them, looking unto Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, looking unto Jesus, for the promise, some of you may have come this evening, asking the Lord, looking unto the Lord, looking unto Jesus, give you some word, a promise, a promise, perhaps some of you would never receive one yet, yet you're after it, are you?

[35 : 17] What, and you're running in the race, are you not? Have a little patience, and the time will come, the time of love will come, where thou shall clearly see, not only that he shed his blood, but thou should say for me that I shall run.

Looking unto Jesus, yes, dear friends, every day, every step of the way, keep your eyes on Jesus, you'll never think, my mind goes for a moment to beat, as you will remember, on the sea with others, and there the storm arose, and, did Jesus forget them?

No. But they was in a pathway, yea, they were being tossed, as it were, upon the waves of the sea, but they were looking unto Jesus.

and how Jesus came to them, walking on the sea, here again, how Jesus was ever near, and still is, his four, fearful, tried children, looking unto Jesus.

and Jesus drew near, and eventually Peter said, it is the Lord, it is the Lord.

[36 : 55] Did Jesus forsake them? no, no, no, he did not. He soon made the waves to cease, and so on, and did he not speak to them?

It is I, being not afraid, looking unto Jesus, and that Jesus is ever looking to his dear chosen people.

We know that. We have it in the psalm, that he never slumbers nor never sleeps, his eyes rose upon the righteous, the faithful of the land.

Oh, what a wonderful God we have, dear friends. I wish I could lift him high, exalt him, praise him, how short I come, but I believe, they still are looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith, author and old vegan, the first, the last.

He brought it forth, and it continues, looking unto Jesus by faith. Well, as you know, there is no other way to look unto the Lord.

[38 : 26] Unto Jesus, but by faith. I have often thought of those dear disciples, such as John and Peter and James, who they saw the Lord, and walked with him, communed with him, saw his miracles, heard him speak, yes, they speak to him, heard his gospel, preached to his own lips, and so on.

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Now, we are not blessed with that, but we are blessed by being given faith.

It's surprising, dear friends, with this faith is an exercise in our soul, how far it will take us, how dear it will bring us unto him.

I remember on one occasion, not that I wish to speak a lot about myself or my own experiences, but it wasn't long ago, when I believed the Lord took me, the Spirit took me by faith, as it were, dear, to the gates of heaven, near to the gates of heaven, so faith will bring thy faith, the Lord will bring thy faith is chosen very near to where he dwells in heaven.

But, we soon prove that we are still in the world, and still in the body of sin, as the apostle said, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and of death?

[40 : 27] Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, it's a wonderful gift, dear, first. Have you ever thanked God for faith, for faith?

Why, there be no prayer unless it's in faith. There be no access to the throne of grace. There be no access unto the Father, only as we are given faith to have access to them, to the mediator, mediator, and through him unto the Father.

Oh, this blessed faith, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, we shall lead it right to the end of the journey, for it.

Oh, that the Lord then would give us a grace to run with patience, amidst all the trials and difficulties of the way, to run the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Now, the next clause in our text, friends, I feel I must leave for this reason. Now, dear friend, as most of you know, spoke this afternoon.

[41 : 55] I was very fearful when he read a few of these verses in the twelfth of the Hebrews, he is going to take everything I got. I wondered where I should be this evening, that he took the third verse, for consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest he be wearied and faint in your minds.

The next clause of our text, I feel I can leave with you. Oh, for the joy that was set before him and endured the cross.

Joy, what joy to enter into those sufferings. Dear friends, he could look beyond the suffering, he could look beyond Calvary, and he could think, as it were, of his chosen people, all that the Father had given him, all that he had seen on Calvary's cross, would be with him throughout a never ending eternity.

We don't read much in the scriptures of the Lord Jesus being in that sweet atmosphere of joy, but as he looked, as it were, upon his race, is chosen, and could see beyond them, beyond death, closing of the world, there would be joy in heaven.

Joy. Therefore, as our text says, for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, endured it.

[43 : 52] the cross, again we heard this afternoon, how the Father strengthened his dear son to endure the cross, to endure the punishment of sin, not his own, not his own, but the sins of his own people.

Endured the cross, despising the same, and now just a thought or two. Where is he?

Our text tells us very plain, and he sat down, he rose to the dead triumphant, over sin, death, and hour, manifested himself to some of his chosen people.

Spoke to them, ye now have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man take it from you. He wrote a few miracles, and his disciples saw him as he is about to leave them.

He lifted up his hands and blessed them, and they saw him ascending into heaven, returning to heaven.

[45 : 24] I believe, dear friends, in somewhat likeness, as they saw him upon the mount of transfiguration, in his glory, in his glory, returning to heaven, to his father.

Yes, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. He has worked, he's still working, and he will, as he's on the throne, remembering, yea, loving, working, on behalf of the whole election of Christ, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God.

Dear friends, some of you who have lost dear and dear ones, and you've had a good hope of them, being saved with an everlasting salvation, they, in this evening hour, glorified through heaven, looking upon Jesus, not by faith.

Faith is now finished, looking upon Jesus, face to face, without a veil between. God's name, yes, he's on the right hand of the throne of God in heaven.

Oh, may we each, in this little congregation this evening, be found with him and all of those whom he hath redeemed by his precious blood, and in this time, join in that everlasting song, and cry with Lord of all.

[47 : 32] Amen. Amen.