

Separated to follow and consider Christ (Quality: Good)

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[0 : 00] I feel led this evening to turn to the epistle of Paul to the Hebrews at chapter 12 and at verse 3.

The epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, chapter 12, verse 3. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

The apostle Paul in the previous chapter had been speaking of those worthies who lived and died by faith.

Those who were called by God out of the world to follow him, to do his bidding, to walk in that way which he had appointed for them.

And they continued, they endured unto the end. And my friends, how good it will be if you and I are found in that word which the Lord spoke to his beloved disciples before entering into that pathway of suffering and death.

[1 : 53] Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom as my Father hath appointed unto me.

I say, what a favour. What a favour if you and I are found there. If the Lord has begun with us, if the Lord has called us by his divine grace, and we walk a step at a time in the way, for the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way.

Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down. You know, it is appointed, isn't it? It is appointed in this life for the child of God, a pathway of tribulation.

In the world, ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world.

It is through much tribulation ye must enter the kingdom. These dear saints of God that are spoken of in the 11th chapter, they knew, they knew what tribulation was.

[3 : 27] They knew what persecution was, what suffering was, oppositions and difficulties. There were those who, it seems, stood alone, stood alone, and yet they were not alone.

They had their God, dear God, before us, who can be against us? Solemn thing, if God is against you.

But a most blessed thing, if God is for you. If he is for you, who can be against you? And do some of these characters suffered death by the sword, did they not?

They suffered many things in their poor bodies. But the Lord had saved them eternally, and they were brought at last into that eternal dwelling place which he had prepared for them.

Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword.

[4 : 59] They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy.

The world did not deserve them. And the world does not deserve the people of God, those who are the excellent of the earth, those who are the salt of the earth, those whom God has chosen to be his own eternally, and in time caused them effectually by divine grace.

They are made manifest that they are his. They were his before. They were his before they were born. In eternity past, he saw them, and they were named, and their names were written, their names were written in that land book of life.

And I thought this morning that we tried to speak of Zion and the Lord's work.

You know, Lord, it is possible, isn't it, that there shall be born into this world a number who in days to come shall be called with that divine calling, that effectual calling, and it shall be made manifest that they are in Zion and part of the one church of God, praying people, godly people, burden bearers, mothers in Israel and fathers also.

[6 : 51] But as one generation passes, another is raised up, the Lord will have a people.

He will have a people to serve him in the earth. And these, his people, by grace, will walk in that way which he has appointed and will seek to honor him and praise him, to praise the Lord their God, who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Ah, that's something to praise him for, isn't it? That's something to praise the Lord for. If he has begun a work in your heart, you not make a great noise, as some do.

They think they praise him on various instruments and so on.

But you know, there is a sitting before the Lord and praising him. When your heart is filled, when mercy flows in, when the love of God is shed abroad in your heart, and you are truly humbled, and you are made to feel your unworthiness.

[8 : 33] Oh, that my soul could love and praise him more, his beauty's traits, his majesty adore, live near his heart, upon his bosom lean, obey his voice and all his will esteem.

It will not be so for that. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

And as the apostle speaks of these, such as Moses, who, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, forty years.

Forty years. He lived, didn't he, in the court of Pharaoh? And then he had to go into the plains of Midian.

Forty years. He was being prepared for that which the Lord had called him. Forty years.

[9 : 50] Forty years. Forty years. Eighty years of age. When he was raised up to be the leader, to lead the children of Israel forth, a remarkable man was Moses.

And when he was born, the king had decreed that all the male seed of the Israelite women should be destroyed.

But Moses wasn't destroyed. Moses was preserved. God had appointed this. God watched over him. He was spared, wasn't he?

Spared by his God. You know, sometimes we sing the hymn on the sovereign decrees of God.

Parents, native place and time, all appointed were by him. He who fixed my first and second birth.

[11 : 02] You were born into a family. You didn't come by chance, did you? Into that family. And you bear the name of that family.

Great mercy. If you were born into a family where there was a praying father and a godly mother and grandparents also who watched over your soul, who prayed for you, and they looked for the sweet answer of their prayers, and perhaps they didn't live to see the answer to their prayers, but their prayers followed them.

Their prayers were recorded in heaven. And as I said, this forenoon, there is an appointed time. An appointed time.

Appointed time to call by grace, to change the heart, renew the will, and turn the feet to Zion's hill. And if you and I are those among those that have been separated separated by God himself, separated from the human race to be his own, if that time has not come, then it will come when that divine call will be made not to propose, but called by grace.

says the apostle, wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight in 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.

[13 : 28] For consider him, consider him. Those of you who were at Haydok this afternoon will know this, that I was led to preach from this text to the end.

And, you know, it seems so full, doesn't it? It is so full. There's such a lot in it. Consider him, says the apostle.

Consider Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, who comes to bow with a great cloud of witnesses.

They have gone on before. The memory of the just is blessed. You have known them, I have known them. Those with whom we could walk and converse.

Those with whom we could pray and worship God. they lived by faith. They walked by faith.

[14 : 42] They took a step at a time by faith. Their eyes were up unto their Lord. And the nearer they got to the promised land, the heavier they leaned upon their Lord.

And the more they prayed, they prayed their way along, did they not? Wherefore, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.

They were the excellence of the earth. They were the people, the living family of God. they have passed on and we missed them, don't we?

We missed them, the righteous. Mark the perfect man and behold, the upright for the end of that man is peace.

Wherefore, seeing we are compassed about, let us lay aside every weight. Let us run with patience. Let us continue.

[16 : 01] Let us endure, seek that grace to endure unto the end. Let us look to Jesus. He came, came down from the realms of glory.

glory. He was born of a woman. He took not upon himself the nature of angels.

No, they had the promise, the promise of the Messiah. One would come, when he came, was he received?

He came to his own. Did they receive him? They looked for one to come and set up his kingdom here. They looked for one to come and overthrow the Roman oppressors.

They looked for one to come and raise a great army to do this. He came, said the apostle in another place, ye know, ye know the grace.

[17 : 13] Ah, great mercy of you and I know, this grace. You know the grace of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Though he was rich, yet for your sake became poor that ye through his poverty might be rich.

He came down to that lowly, humble place. He had no home in which to dwell. He had no possessions here.

Did he not say the foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, and the Son of Man had not where to lay his head? Do you ever think of this when you lay yourself down to rest at night in a comfortable bed, rest your head upon a soft pillow?

the Lord Jesus had not where to lay his head? Consider him. Consider him in this. Be thankful.

Be thankful for those mercies, those temporal mercies that you have. Be thankful for them. Be thankful for a home in which to dwell.

[18 : 30] Be thankful for that raiment to put on. Be thankful for your daily bread. The Lord taught his disciples to pray at their request.

They said, Lord, teach us how to pray, as John taught his disciples how to pray. And was this not in that prayer which perhaps many take upon their lips unthinkingly when they repeat it?

But are, you know, there is much in that, isn't there? Give us this day our daily bread. Give us this day our daily bread.

We think of our forefathers, those that have gone before, those who were in very poor circumstances. How thankful they were for bread, for a piece of bread.

How thankful people, and how sweet it was to them. You read the account of those characters. Why, that was very sweet, wasn't it?

[19 : 43] A piece of bread in boiled water, water, and they sprinkled pepper and salt upon it. And Christ was there with them.

All this and Christ, said the old woman. All this and Christ. You and I have a lot more than they had.

A lot more. Consider him the giver of these things. The Lord himself who gives daily those things which are needful, those things, those daily blessings which we have in this life richly to enjoy.

It's not wrong, is it, to enjoy those things which the Lord gives us. And to be thankful, consider him.

Consider him when he came up out of the waters of the Jordan and was led of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil forty days, forty nights, without the bread, and without water, a wilderness place, and the devil came.

[21 : 23] The devil is never very far away, is he? You do not have to look down the street, you do not have to look at your neighbors, oftentimes arms, you feel the devil is close by, and you have to cry out, do you not, unto the Lord, Lord, deliver me, deliver me from the adversary, deliver me from Satan, deliver me from the tempest power.

The Lord has passed this way, the Lord knows all about it, he has experienced this, in the earth, led of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the adversary, and in that he suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.

are you tempted? Oh, you may say, I have a lot of temptations, the devil knows exactly where to attack, he shoots forth his fiery darts, he comes in like a great house sometimes, ah, blessed be God, he lifts up a banner against him when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Lord lifts up a banner and says, thus far and no further, remember Job, hast thou considered my servant Job, Job, who was one that feared God, who stood evil, who walked uprightly, we are told, Job, who was prosperous, the Lord had blessed him abundantly, and then the Lord so feared those things which Job had should be removed from him, and he was bereft of his family, and his poor body was afflicted with a sore boils, naked came I into this world, said he, naked shall I return, the Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the

Lord, we don't hear Job saying, oh, oh, the camels, they were all gone, oh, that I could have them all back, and the sheep, and you know, we read that the sheep were grazing, and fire fell from heaven, and consumed them, he doesn't weep over the camels, and the sheep, and the asses, and the oxen, and those things which he had lost, but he says, oh, that I knew where I might find you, ah, it was his Lord he wanted, he wanted to find him, and you know, we read that he went forward, and backward, and to the right hand, and to the left hand, and he was in darkness, but he knew, he knew his redeemer lived, and he speaks of a daisman, doesn't he, ah, consider Jesus, the redeemer, I know that my redeemer liveth, consider him, who went forth unto the end, who paid the price, demanded by the law, paid it to the utmost father, redeemed his people by his own shed blood, consider him in this, consider him as he went forth, he had to pass that way, which was appointed by his father, he set his face as a flint to

Jerusalem, to the end, and he himself knew, what was before him, he knew, but consider him that endured, his dear people were upon his heart, each one there, carried there upon his heart, the love of the Lord Jesus to them, greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends, he's not ashamed of them, ah, this, isn't this a sweet thought, the Lord is not ashamed of his own people, not ashamed to call them brethren, those who before were rebellious, those who before said, if not in word in their heart, we will not have this man, we will not serve him, we will not do what he wants, we will go our own way, we will do what we want to do, many have said this, thousands have said it, but the

[27 : 17] Lord is pleased to break down rebellion, and what a mercy it is so, rebellion, rebellious, why the rebellious dwell in a barren land, they dwell in a dry place, and you have to prove this, don't you, to pray Lord, break down rebellion, break down that rebellion in May, and break down that rebellion in those that we love and pray over, oh, do Lord give that softly, of heart and spirit, do give a tender heart, a broken heart, consider him, as he went forth, as he went into the garden of Gethsemane, leaving the eight disciples, taking three, and leaving them, and going a stone's cast beyond, and being exceeding sorrowful, and very heavy, consider him, exceeding sorrowful, and very heavy, carrying that great weight upon himself, you know, the 53rd chapter of

Isaiah's prophecy, is a very sweet chapter, isn't it? Written centuries before the Lord Jesus came into this world, written concerning him, said the eunuch to Philip, when Philip by the spirit was led to join himself to that chariot, in which the Ethiopian eunuch journeyed, and he was reading from that prophecy, those words which the prophet had written of the Lord Jesus, he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is done, so he opened not his mouth, consider him, that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest he be wearied and faint in your mind, consider him, the lamb of

God, one who came walking to John, John had two of his disciples with him, Jesus walked, Jesus walked toward them, and John spoke of him, behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world, the lamb of God, led as a lamb to the slaughter, her, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth, the lamb of God, and those two disciples, you know, they left John, and they walked with Jesus, their eyes were opened, they saw, didn't they, they had such a view of

Jesus, the lamb of God, Jesus, who was the sacrifice, the old dispensation, the sacrifices were slain, and the blood was poured out, sacrifices were consumed, upon the altars, you may have read of the numbers of sacrifices that were offered in Solomon's day, for instance, and could the blood of those beasts take away sin?

They were a time, they set forth the Lord Jesus, who was to come, the great antitipe, not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altar slain, could give the guilty conscience peace, or wash away the stain, but Christ, the heavenly lamb, takes all their sin away, the sacrifice of nobler name, and richer blood than they, have you a sweet hope that your sin has been removed, carried away, carried away at Calvary, the Lord entered into that pathway of suffering, shame, ignominy, death for you, the dear writer of this epistle was called by grace, called by grace on that

[33 : 10] Damascus road, was made a praying man, was led forth to walk in that pathway which the Lord had appointed before him, and he went forth, he said when he came almost to his end, I fought a good fight, I fought a good fight, he did preach Christ and him crucified, he ever did endeavor to exalt the Lord Jesus, and he writes, doesn't he, of the Lord Jesus Christ, he who did lay down his life that others might have life, and have abundant life, the dear apostle

Paul, did write most failingly and lovingly those letters to the churches, some that he was responsible for planting, others he had not seen, though there were those sweet exhortations to continue, to live, to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you're called, to follow in that way which the Lord had, in which the Lord had gone before, consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds, consider

Jesus in the garden, beyond the Calvary, consider him, now we read, we think of the seven sayings of the Lord Jesus upon the cross, how did they begin?

Consider him, Father forgive them for they know not what they do, and there would have been those there that not long afterwards would have been under the influence and the power of the Holy Spirit in the day of Pentecost eyes open to see to see Jesus Jesus the saviour of sinners and the dear apostle in his letter to the Galatians says this beautiful word of Jesus who loved me and gave himself for me loved me and gave himself for me love love me a sinful worm and gave himself for me consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself lest he be wearied and faint in your minds are you weary do you faint do you feel sometimes you cannot continue will you not endure unto the end you feel like that are you willing yourself you will feel like that left to yourself and you'll not continue left to yourself will you why I said you know a little while ago thinking of those saints of God who have gone before and as they got nearer to their journey's end they leaned heavier upon their

Lord they leaned harder didn't they upon him may the Lord add his blessing to these few thoughts for his name's sake amen so we close by singing hymn number 239 239 the lamb is exalted repentance to give that sin may be hated while sinners believe contrition is granted and God justified the sinner is humbled and self is denied hymn 239 are or or

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Amen. May the grace of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit abide with us now and always.

Amen.