

# EXPERIENCING, ENJOYING, AND EXPRESSING CHRIST (3)

## Message Eight Looking Away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of Our Faith

RM Hymns: 1206, 1159

Scripture Reading: Heb. 1:3; 12:1b-2a; 1 Cor. 9:24; 2 Thes. 3:5

- Heb 1:3 Who, being the effulgence of His glory and the impress of His substance and upholding and bearing all things by the word of His power, having made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;
- Heb 12:1b ... put away every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us and run with endurance the race which is set before us,
- Heb 12:2a Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, ...
- 1 Cor 9:24 Do you not know that those who run on a racecourse all run, but one receives the prize? Run in this way, that you may lay hold.
- 2 Thes 3:5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the endurance of Christ.

### I. “Looking away unto Jesus”—Heb. 12:2a:

- A. The Greek word translated “looking away unto” denotes looking with undivided attention by turning away from every other object—v. 2a  
Heb 12:2a Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, ...
- B. The Hebrew believers had to look away from all the things in their environment, away from their old religion, Judaism, and its persecution, and away from all earthly things, that they might look unto Jesus, who is now seated on the right hand of the throne of God in the heavens—1:3.  
Heb 1:3 Who, being the effulgence of His glory and the impress of His substance and upholding and bearing all things by the word of His power, having made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;
- C. If we would enjoy the heavenly Christ (v. 3), we need to look away from all things on earth unto Him.  
Heb 1:3 Who, being the effulgence of His glory and the impress of His substance and upholding and bearing all things by the word of His power, having made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;
- D. The wonderful Jesus, who is enthroned in heaven and crowned with glory and honor (2:9), is the greatest attraction in the universe.  
Heb 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little inferior to the angels because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death on behalf of everything.
- E. It is by being attracted by His charming beauty that we look away from all things other than Him so that we may run with endurance the race which is set before us—12:1b.  
Heb 12:1b ... put away every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us and run with endurance the race which is set before us,

### II. The Christian life is a race; every saved Christian must run the race to win the prize—1 Cor. 9:24:

- 1 Cor 9:24 Do you not know that those who run on a racecourse all run, but one receives the prize? Run in this way, that you may lay hold.
- A. The prize is not salvation in a common sense but a reward in a special sense—v. 24; Eph. 2:8-9; 1 Cor. 3:14-15.  
1 Cor 9:24 Do you not know that those who run on a racecourse all run, but one receives the prize? Run in this way, that you may lay hold.

- Eph 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not of yourselves; it is the gift of God;
- Eph 2:9 Not of works that no one should boast.
- 1 Cor 3:14 If anyone's work which he has built upon the foundation remains, he will receive a reward;
- 1 Cor 3:15 If anyone's work is consumed, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.
- B. The apostle Paul ran the race and won the prize—9:26-27; Phil. 3:13-14; 2 Tim. 4:7-8:
- 1 Cor 9:26 I therefore run in this way, not as though without a clear aim; I box in this way, not as though beating the air;
- 1 Cor 9:27 But I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest perhaps having preached to others, I myself may become disapproved.
- Phil 3:13 Brothers, I do not account of myself to have laid hold; but one thing I do: Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before,
- Phil 3:14 I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward.
- 2 Tim 4:7 I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith.
- 2 Tim 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, with which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will recompense me in that day, and not only me but also all those who have loved His appearing.
1. An encumbrance is a weight, burden, or impediment; the runners of the race strip off every unnecessary weight, every encumbering burden, that nothing may impede them from winning the race.
  2. The unique entangling sin in Hebrews 12 was the willful sin of forsaking the assembling together with the saints, of giving up the new covenant way in God's economy, and of going back to Judaism—10:25-26.  
 Heb 12 be omitted.  
 Heb 10:25 Not abandoning our own assembling together, as the custom with some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more as you see the day drawing near.  
 Heb 10:26 For when we sin willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice of bulls and goats for sins,
  3. Both the encumbering weight and the entangling sin would have frustrated the Hebrew believers and restrained them from running the heavenly race in the new covenant way of following Jesus.
  4. We need to run with endurance, asking the Lord to direct our hearts into the love of God and into the endurance of Christ—2 Thes. 3:5:  
 2 Thes 3:5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the endurance of Christ.
    - a. The love is our love toward God, issuing from the love of God that has been poured out in our hearts—1 John 4:19; Rom. 5:5.  
 1 John 4:19 We love because He first loved us.  
 Rom 5:5 And hope does not put us to shame, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.
    - b. This endurance is to endure with the endurance of Christ that we have enjoyed and experienced—cf. Rev. 1:9.  
 Rev 1:9 I John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and endurance in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

### III. Jesus is the Author of faith, the Originator, the Inaugurator, the source, and the cause of faith—Heb. 12:2a:

Heb 12:2a Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, ...

- A. The faith of the believers is actually not their own faith but Christ entering into them to be their faith—Rom. 3:22; Gal. 2:16:  
 Rom 3:22 Even the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ to all those who

- believe, for there is no distinction;  
Gal 2:16 And knowing that a man is not justified out of works of law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, we also have believed into Christ Jesus that we might be justified out of faith in Christ and not out of the works of law, because out of the works of law no flesh will be justified.
1. Our believing is our appreciation of Christ as a reaction to His attraction—Rom. 10:17.  
Rom 10:17 So faith comes out of hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
  2. In the natural man we have no believing ability; we do not have faith by ourselves.
  3. The faith by which we are saved is the precious faith that we have received from the Lord, the God-allotted faith—2 Pet. 1:1; Col. 1:12  
2 Pet 1:1 Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have been allotted faith equally precious as ours in the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:  
Col 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;
  4. When we look away unto Jesus, He as the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b) transfuses us with Himself, with His believing element.  
1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
  5. This faith is not of ourselves but of Him who imparts Himself as the believing element into us that He may believe for us.
- B. Faith is a substantiating ability, a “sixth sense,” the sense by which we substantiate, give substance to, the things unseen or hoped for—Heb. 11:1:  
Heb 11:1 Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
1. Substantiating is the ability that enables us to realize a substance.
  2. The function of our five senses is to substantiate the things of the outside world, transferring all the objective items into us to become our subjective experience.
  3. As the eye is to seeing, the ear is to hearing, and the nose is to smelling, so faith, our spirit of faith, is the organ whereby we substantiate everything in the unseen spiritual world to us—2 Cor. 4:13:  
2 Cor 4:13 And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak,
    - a. We must exercise our spirit of faith, our mingled spirit, to believe and to speak the things that we have experienced of the Lord.
    - b. Faith is in our spirit, which is mingled with the Holy Spirit, not in our mind; doubts are in our mind.
  4. We do not regard, look at, the things which are seen and temporary but the things which are not seen and eternal—v. 18:  
2 Cor 4:18 Because we do not regard the things which are seen but the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.
    - a. The Christian life is a life of things unseen—Rom. 8:24-25; Heb. 11:27; 1 Pet. 1:8; Gal. 6:10.  
Rom 8:24 For we were saved in hope. But a hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what he sees?  
Rom 8:25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly await it through endurance.  
Heb 11:27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he persevered as one seeing the unseen One.  
1 Pet 1:8 Whom having not seen, you love; into whom though not seeing Him at present, yet believing, you exult with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory,  
Gal 6:10 So then, as we have the opportunity, let us do what is good toward all, but especially toward those of the household of the faith.

- b. The degradation of the church is the degradation from unseen things to seen things.
  - c. The Lord's recovery is to recover His church from things seen to things unseen.
- 5. Faith is to believe that God is.
- 6. Without faith it is impossible to please God, to make God happy—Heb. 11:6a.  
     Heb 11:6a    But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, ...
- 7. "He who comes forward to God must believe that He is"—v. 6b:
  - a. To believe that God is, is to believe that He is everything to us and that we are nothing—John 8:58; Eccl. 1:2.  
     John 8:58    Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Before Abraham came into being, I am.  
     Eccl 1:2      Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher; / Vanity of vanities; all is vanity.
  - b. To believe that God is implies that we are not; He must be the only One, the unique One, in everything, and we must be nothing in everything—Heb. 11:5.  
     Heb 11:5      By faith Enoch was translated so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had translated him. For before his translation he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God.
  - c. To believe that God is, is to deny our self; in the whole universe He is, and all of us are nothing—Luke 9:23.  
     Luke 9:23     And He said to them all, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me.
  - d. The Lord was saying, "I am the great I am. I am the One who is. You must believe that I am and you are not"—cf. John 8:24, 28, 58.  
     John 8:24     Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am, you will die in your sins.  
     John 8:28     Jesus therefore said to them, When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am, and that I do nothing from Myself, but as My Father has taught Me, I speak these things.  
     John 8:58     Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Before Abraham came into being, I am.
  - e. This is faith—"O the joy of having nothing and being nothing, seeing nothing but a living Christ in glory, and being careful for nothing but His interests down here"—J. N. Darby.

#### **IV. Jesus is the Perfecter, the Finisher, the Completer, of our faith—Heb. 12:2a:**

- Heb 12:2a    Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, ...
  - A. As we look away unto Him continually, He will finish and complete the faith that we need for the running of the heavenly race—vv. 1b-2a.  
     Heb 12:1b    ... put away every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us and run with endurance the race which is set before us,  
     Heb 12:2a    Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, ...
  - B. When we look away unto Him, He ministers heaven, life, and strength to us, transfusing and infusing us with all that He is, that we may be able to run the heavenly race and live the heavenly life on earth—2 Cor. 3:18.  
     2 Cor 3:18    But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.
  - C. We all have the same faith in quality, but the quantity of faith we have depends upon how much we contact the living God so that we may have Him increased in us—Rom. 12:3:  
     Rom 12:3     For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think so as to be sober-minded, as God has apportioned to each a measure of faith.
  - 1. Faith in the progressing stage comes through our contacting the Triune God, who is

faith in us—1 Thes. 5:17.

1 Thes 5:17 Unceasingly pray,

2. The way to receive such a faith is to contact its source, the Lord, the processed and consummated God, by calling on Him, praying to Him, and pray-reading His Word—Heb. 4:2, 16; Rom. 10:12; 2 Tim. 2:22; Eph. 6:17-18.

Heb 4:2 For indeed we have had the good news announced to us, even as they also; but the word heard did not profit them, not being mixed together with faith in those who heard.

Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.

Rom 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all and rich to all who call upon Him;

2 Tim 2:22 But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Eph 6:17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,

Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

3. When we contact Him, He is overflowing within us, and there is a mutuality of faith among us; we are encouraged through the faith which is in one another—Rom. 1:12; Philem. 6.

Rom 1:12 That is, that I with you may be encouraged among you through the faith which is in one another, both yours and mine.

Philem 6 That the fellowship of your faith may become effective in the full knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ.

- D. Our regenerated spirit, our spirit of faith, is the victory that overcomes the Satan-organized-and-usurped world—1 John 5:4.

1 John 5:4 For everything that has been begotten of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory which has overcome the world—our faith.

- E. The great irrepressible and unlimited power of faith motivates thousands to suffer for the Lord, risk their lives, and become overcoming sent ones and martyrs for the carrying out of God's eternal economy, which is in faith—Luke 18:8; Phil. 2:30; Rom. 16:3-4; Acts 20:24; 1 Tim. 1:4.

Luke 18:8 I tell you that He will carry out their avenging quickly. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?

Phil 2:30 Because for the work of Christ he drew near unto death, risking his life, that he might fill up your lack of service toward me.

Rom 16:3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,

Rom 16:4 Who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;

Acts 20:24 But I consider my life of no account as if precious to myself, in order that I may finish my course and the ministry which I have received from the Lord Jesus to solemnly testify of the gospel of the grace of God.

1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.