

Consider Him

Hebrews 12:1-3

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FOCAL Read Together Hebrews 12:1-3 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, {2} **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. {3} For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.**

The Christian way of life is not an easy way of life, but it is a blessed way of life *if it is lived*. The Christian way of life is not without its stress nor without its maligners. Jesus warned His disciples to **“count the cost” of following Him (Luke 14:28)**. Our Founder was **hated without a cause (John 15:25)**, and He knew that His disciples would be hated as well. Everywhere Jesus went He was mocked by the religious and the irreligious alike. His ministry revealed sin while presenting Himself as the only Solution for sin. The self righteous, confident of their own innate goodness, hated Jesus because He revealed their **“righteousness as filthy rags” (Isaiah 64:6)**. The Pharisees as well as the Sadducees hated Jesus because their faith was not founded in God's Word but in ritualism and self. They twisted the Word of God to suit their own agenda, and despised Jesus because He uncovered their twisting. **“Their root shall be as rotteness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel” (Isaiah 5:24)**. In the midst of all this controversy

the downtrodden and the sinner flocked to where Christ was. He never condoned their sin, yet never failed to offer Himself as the Solution for what ailed them. The leper was cleansed, the blind made to see, and the dead received life from the incomparable King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus Christ!

We who belong to Christ are very much in a race. We must not be diverted from our goal, and must not be untrue to our Leader. Are you a Christian? Then follow Christ! Run the race that God has set before us, run following Him Who gave Himself for you. Dear Christian, you cannot afford to be diverted from the course He has set before you. Just as in any race there are many who call out and try to confuse us, to keep us from victory.

Look yonder, and see the unbelieving world yelling at us, telling us what we *ought to do*. “Condone sin. Accept everything. If it feels good, it must be love. God made me this way. It's all genetics. That was written for a different world and a different time”. Beloved, the children of another household should not sway those who are **of the household of God (Ephesians 2:19)**. **Heed Christ. Look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of your faith.**

Look in section “F” where the false prophets and false brethren sit (**Matthew 7:15**). Jesus had His Judas, Paul his Hymenaeus and Philetus – we, too, have wolves in sheep clothing crying out orders. “Don't follow Jesus, follow me. I don't care what everyone else in the Church says – I'm right and everyone else is all wrong.” False

brethren and Judaizers creep into the Church (**Galatians 2:4**) with one goal: they want to rob us of all that Christ has given us while enslaving us under *their* law. **Look unto Jesus, consider only Him.**

Laying here and you are brothers in Christ who, like John Mark or Demas, have fallen away from the race set before them. They sit rather than run. They find fault rather than encourage and exhort (**Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:10**).

An Army cannot win the war if it has multiple and conflicting orders from numerous commanders.

God is not the Author of confusion, but of peace (**1 Corinthians 14:33**). **“In the world you have tribulation” (John 16:33)**, but in Christ we have peace. **Look unto Jesus and consider only Him.** When a shout of direction comes from the crowd ask yourself, “Where is Jesus in this command? Where is it written in God's Holy Word?” If the Bible does not clearly substantiate it, reject the uncertain sound. **Look unto Jesus and consider only Him.** Whatever you hear, whatever you read, whatever you see should be filtered through that Holy Word of God. As the great preacher C.H. Spurgeon said:

“Where you have no command from Christ, your teaching is naught. Stand away, sir! You have no place here! Where you have no teaching of Christ at your back, your word is the word of man, and nothing more: it is not a word before which the subjects of King Jesus can bow themselves. If Christ

be King, we both receive laws from Him, and the force which makes the law, its dominion over our consciences. ... We are not to cut, and pick, and choose, and take this and leave the other, for the royal [seal] is put upon every page of the statute Book, and it is our part, like little children, obedient to a gentle Parent, to subject our wills at once. We should, like Mary, sit at Jesus' feet to learn, and then rise and carry into practice what we have learned in so good a school.”¹

May God touch your hearts as we learn His Word.

1. Eternal Power Is Found In Jesus Alone

FOCAL Hebrews 12:2 **Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of [our] faith;**...

The Bible gives us a number of illustrations concerning *power*. For instance, there was a man named **Shamgar** who ..

Judges 3:31 ... **slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad:** and he also delivered Israel.

That's an amazing thing! One man killed six hundred men with a pointy stick. That is astounding, and I don't want to take anything away from Shamgar. He was surely a mighty man of God! What about another judge

called **Sampson**? This man found

Judges 15:15 ... **a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith.**

That's amazing!

One judge killed six hundred men with a pointy stick, and another judge killed a thousand men with a new jawbone of an ass.

Or consider the judge **Gideon**. He took three hundred men who were so crude that they lapped water from the river's edge like dogs, surrounded a vastly superior army, and with trumpets and pitchers of fire caused the enemy to kill itself. The Bible says:

Judges 7:22 **And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled** to Bethshittah in Zerzerath, [and] to the border of Abelmeholah, unto Tabbath.

How the blood ran that day as thousands died by their own hands and by the hands of **Gideon's** army. Look at these men, these deliverers. Consider the Patriarch **Abraham** who, delivering his nephew **Lot**, left the enemies of God dead and dying in the dust. Consider

¹ *The King In His Beauty*, delivered May 26th, 1867, at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington.

Moses, that great prophet of God, who seeing an Egyptian beating a relative he killed that unbeliever and buried his body in the sand. Consider **Joshua** who, along with **Caleb**, led Israel on a bloody path through Canaan as the Promised Land was conquered for God. And let's not forget **David** who began his ministry by killing **Goliath** with a stone. Each of these mighty men brought order and peace to God's Israel, but they did so by bathing their hands in the blood of their enemies. They were men obedient to God, but their obedience brought *death*.

How does Jesus Christ differ from the other mighty men of the Bible? (**Colossians 3:4**)

Now consider **Jesus**. The Blood that flowed between His fingers was not the Blood of the unbeliever, but it was His Blood, His flesh that bled and died for you and for I. Jesus did not come to judge the sinner with a sword. Jesus told Pilate, "**My Kingdom is not of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews**" (**John 18:36**). When His little band of disciples tried to defend Him in the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus said to Peter:

John 18:11 ... Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

Though the Old Testament judge shed the blood of the enemies of God, Jesus Christ *shed His Blood for the*

enemies of God. The Bible does not say "**It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus came into the world to lead an army in killing sinners**". No, dear ones, no! The Holy Text says:

1 Timothy 1:15 This [is] a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners

...

Jesus came to this world and clothed Himself in humanity so that He could give life to all who would believe in Him.

Illustrate the Name Consider Jesus, dear sinner, and consider the price He paid for you. **Consider His Name - "Jesus"**. Though parents through out this wide world have the right to name their babies, Mary and Joseph were given no such freedom. The Angel Gabriel speaking on behalf of God said of Mary:

Matthew 1:21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Jesus Christ came to save sinners. If there are no sinners, then His Name has no purpose. And if His Name reflects His calling you can rest assured that there is no sinner that He cannot save. Jesus is a Great Savior - and He can save the greatest of sinners. Who *can't* Jesus save? He cannot save the self righteous, the arrogant, the prideful.

He cannot save the person who makes excuses for their sins, or who refuses the repent. Jesus said:

Luke 5:32 I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Do you have your own righteousness. Do you, like the Pharisee in the Temple, pray to God:

Luke 18:11-12 ... God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men [are], extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. {12} I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

If you do, Jesus cannot save you. If you refuse to bow your knee to Him, to recognize yourself as a sinner, to turn from your wicked way and unto Him for salvation - then you, dear one, shall die in your sins! He Whose very Name is "Savior" did not come to this earth, suffer, and die on Calvary so that you could vindicate yourselves in the eyes of God. **God hates sin, and has show His hatred of sin by Calvary.** The Bible says that *God cannot even look on sin.* We read:

Habakkuk 1:13 [God is] of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: ...

If God cannot look on evil or on sin, and if God is truly eternal, then what hope does *anyone have* to avoid the

torment of eternal damnation?

FOCAL Hebrews 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of [our] faith;...

Look unto Jesus. Consider Him on that tree, suffering and dying for you and for me. Consider that He took your place, a place of well deserved judgment. Consider the darkness as it looms over Calvary. The Father turned His back on the Son so that He would *never have to turn His back on you* - if you but believe in Him. Trust Him - He came to this earth for you. Believe in Him, surrender your allegiance to Him. Christ alone can save you from your sins.

2. Our Eternal Confidence Is In Jesus Alone

FOCAL Hebrews 12:2-3 ... Looking² unto Jesus the author³ and finisher⁴ 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. {3} For consider⁵ him ...

- 2 Present Active Participle of G872, ἀφοράω, aphoraō, *af-or-ah'-o*, From G575 and G3708; to *consider* attentively: - look.
- 3 G747, ἀρχηγός, archēgos, *ar-khay-gos'*, From G746 and G71; a *chief leader*: - author, captain, prince.
- 4 G5051, τελειότης, teleiōtēs, *tel-i-o-tace'*, From G5048; a *completer*, that is, *consummator*: - finisher.
- 5 Aorist Middle Imperative of G357, ἀναλογίζομαι, analogizomai, *an-al-og-id'-zom-ahee*, Middle voice from G356; to *estimate*, that is, (figuratively) *contemplate*: - consider.

Most alarming is the number of people who profess to be “Christian”, and yet have no confidence in eternity.

Salvation from the condemnation of God and entrance into Heaven is based on Jesus. **Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.** Your salvation – if you have it - must be based on “Jesus PLUS NOTHING”. He did the work of salvation for us on Calvary. The goal of every Christian is to be like Jesus, to follow Jesus, to be:

Philippians 3:9 ... found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

Just as Saving Faith is “Jesus PLUS NOTHING”, living faith is also “Jesus PLUS NOTHING”.

How does one know that he is saved? Because those who are saved **look unto Jesus, and keep on looking unto Jesus.** We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

Look at the word “**Author**” in our focal text. This is a word that means “the Chief Leader”.

The same word is translated “**Captain**” in:

Hebrews 2:10 For it became him, for whom are all

things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Jesus Christ is the **Captain of our salvation.** He is its Architect, its Commander, its Builder. We see that same Greek word translated “**Prince**” in Peter's sermon to the Jews when he said:

Acts 3:14-15 But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; {15} And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. (also see Acts 5:31)

Jesus Christ alone is our Savior – there is no other. He has earned our allegiance with His Blood. He is the Captain, the Prince, the Author of our salvation. Without Him we would yet be dead in our trespasses and sin.

If you have been saved, then you know that your “password” into Heaven is “Jesus”. If you have been saved then you have been “branded” by God as His. Here is where our confidence is – in HIM!

Jesus Christ is also the **Finisher of our Faith.** His resurrection is the promise that God has given unto us. Our faith in Him is our password into Heaven. We wear His brand if we are saved – and are yet dead in our sins if His mark is not clearly seen in our lives. Didn't our Lord say:

3. Will You Consider Him This Day?

Matthew 7:18 **A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither [can] a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.**

Illustrate by Branded If you are His, you bear His brand. **Samuel A. Maverick** (1803-1870) was a New England lawyer who moved to Texas and later became mayor of San Antonio and a member of the state legislature. After acquiring a herd of cattle in payment for a debt, he also became a rancher on a 385,000-acre spread. Cattle roamed free back then, so ranchers branded them to avoid theft and disputes over ownership. But not Mr. Maverick. He decided that he would leave his cattle unbranded. This caused a great deal of confusion as his unbranded cattle wandered and mingled with other branded herds. Were the unbranded cattle Maverick's, or were they unbranded cattle that had yet to be branded by that herd's owner?

Christ does not let His people wander about unbranded, looking like the rest of the world. If you have been saved His mark is on your soul and on your spirit, and is surely shown in the life that you live.

There are no “mavericks” in the Kingdom of God.
“We are His people and the sheep of His pasture”.

We follow God's Son, and are obedient to God's Holy Word. **He is the Finisher, the completer of our Faith.**

FOCAL Hebrews 12:3 **For consider him** that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Will you consider Jesus this day?

Consider Him Who endured denial, mocking, and bruising. Why did He do this? Because He loves you and I.

Consider Him Who purchased you with His own dear Blood.

Consider Him when enemies rise against you, and seek to destroy you.

Consider Him when you become weary with life, and with this present darkness.

Consider Him Who rules all things – and Who oversees your life even now.

The words “**consider Him**” literally mean to **focus on Him**. As Stephen was being stoned he focused on Christ – and went to glory. As one thief hung next to Him dying he focused on Christ – and went to glory. As Peter preached in hostile Jerusalem he focused on Christ – and won thousands to his side. Focus on Him, dear ones, on Him and Him alone.

Illustrate and Close In the **Battle for Yorktown** (the

last major battle in the War for Independence) there were times when it seemed as if the American troops would fall under the attacks of British General Lord Cornwallis. At certain times the volley of cannon and muskets threatened to turn our men away. Yet we rallied to the flag of the United States, we followed the colors, and stayed the course. Cornwallis was defeated, and the War for Independence was won that day.

Christian, you *must stay the course*. Church, you *must stay the course*. Jesus was mocked and attacked by unbelievers and false believers, but He stayed the course. Because He endured our salvation was secured. Focus on Him and Him alone, **lest you be wearied and faint in your minds**. The Apostle said:

2 Corinthians 6:1 We then, [as] workers together [with him], beseech [you] also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

His Grace was given to you so that you could share the life of Christ with others. It was not given so that we could hoard it, or hide it, or defame it, or depose it. There is a world of people who need to hear about Jesus. Jesus died to bring **many sons unto glory**.

Work together to glorify Him while we win others to His side. May God open our eyes through the preaching of His precious Word.

