

LOOKING UP

“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross.”
—*HEBREWS 12:2*

If we are to press on to spiritual maturity, the second direction we need to look is up. Jesus lives within us, but there is a sense in which He is on the right hand of the Father in heaven. Most would agree that when we look up to the highest possible peak of the universe, we look to Christ.

To grow and mature in the Christian life, we need to live everyday in dependence on Jesus. In Hebrews 3:1, the writer says, “Fix your thoughts on Jesus,” and in 12:2, “Fix our eyes on Jesus.” It follows that the more we know Christ, the more we’re going to trust Him. The more we trust Him, the more confident our faith is in Him, and the less conscious of it we become. Faith is believing in something that acts on our behalf, and believing in Jesus with all our hearts and souls becomes an everyday disposition of faith in Him that we’re barely aware of.

Why do we look up to Jesus? Why place our faith in Him? Because as a man on earth, Jesus was oriented towards the future. The writer of Hebrews says, “who for the joy set before him endured the cross.” The word ‘endured’ speaks clearly of

Christ's sufferings. He went willingly to the cross, but He didn't waltz to it. In the Garden of Gethsemane, He prayed three times, "Father, if it is possible for this cup to be taken from me; that is if there is any other way a man, woman, boy or girl can be reconciled to You, let it be that way, but if there is no other way, your will be done." We can't begin to comprehend the agony Christ endured on the cross, not just physically, but the immense spiritual torment of, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). In those hours of darkness, He was made sin for us, and the very atmosphere of hell descended on Him.

Isaiah 53:11 says, "After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied." The joy set before Christ was looking into the future, seeing generations and centuries of everyone who believes in Him being redeemed, reconciled to a Holy God, and restored to life eternal with Him. Why do we live the way we do? For the joy set before us to share in the glory of Christ with hearts and minds oriented to an everlasting future with Him.

PRAYER: Precious Lord, what a blessing and privilege to live a life in your presence that will never end. Thank You for all You endured on the cross to make that possible for me.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I looking to Jesus every day of my life?