

Title: LOOKING LEST

Text: Hebrews 12: 1-17

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The Hebrew brethren had been taught to look to the tabernacle, the sacrifices, the priests all their lives. Then God sent forth his Spirit into their hearts and gave them faith in Christ. They beheld those things were shadows and types of Christ and now Christ has come. It would be the same as a man in our day who has spent his life in religion then Christ comes in Spirit into his heart. All their brethren were trying to turn them back to their former dead religion. The book of Hebrews is the declaration of Christ and the exhortation to continue in faith. Chapter 10 ends with the exhortation to continue in Christ by faith. Chapter 11 gives a great list of believers who walked by faith. Then we come to chapter 12 which is the end point--the application--to which Paul has been exhorting the brethren.

Hebrews 12: 1: 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.

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- Hebrews 12: 3:...lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds....
- Hebrews 12: 13...lest that which is lame be turned out of the way
- Hebrews 12: 15:...lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble [you], and thereby many be defiled; 16:...Lest there [be] any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. 17: For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. (lest there be no repentance).

I. WHEN THE CONTRADICTION OF SINNERS AGAINST YOU IS GREAT LOOK TO CHRIST, LEST YOU BECOME WEARIED AND FAINT IN YOUR MINDS (Hebrews 12: 3-4).

Brethren, sometimes it seems like everyone is against you.

Notice the word "resisted" here: we are talking about turning from all else and believing on Christ--faith--looking to Christ (Turn to 1 Peter 5: 8)

1 Peter 5: 8: Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

Satan desires you and I to think that we are the only ones suffering what we are suffering. The adversary wanted Eve to think God was treating her unfairly. Satan did not want Eve to rejoice in God's faithfulness to save. He wanted Eve to look to Eve--so he put a question in her mind--she looked to the fruit. The subtlety of our adversary the devil is to take our eye off of Christ. Often he does it by making us think no one else is suffering what we are suffering. The Apostle Peter and apostles experienced this sifting of Satan--they began to be divided. Resist the adversary by steadfastly looking to Christ in faith, casting all care on him--knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

Lest ye grow weary at a contradiction fo sinners--look to Christ with the eye of faith

1. The government and religion was against him

Acts 4:26: The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.

2. Members of his own earthly family were against him

John 7: 2: Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand....4:...If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. 5: For neither did his brethren believe in him. 6: Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready. 7: The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. 8: Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come.

3. His own true disciples at times spoke against him and forsook him on the cross.

4. Satan himself roared against him in all.

5. On the cross we see it unleashed in all its fury.

Oh, but when you begin to grow weary and faint in your minds, consider--we have not resisted unto blood, but he has and he did it for you believer.

Hebrews 12: 2:...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.

Contradiction of sinners is a great weight. The only way we lay it aside is by looking to Christ.

2 Corinthians 4: 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding [and] eternal weight of glory; 18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen [are] temporal; but the things which are not seen [are] eternal.

WHEN THE CONTRADICTION OF SINNERS AGAINST YOU IS GREAT LOOK TO CHRIST, LEST YE BE WEARY AND FAINT IN YOUR MINDS!

II. WHEN YOUR SUFFERING IS GREAT LOOK TO CHRIST LEST YOU FORGET THE LOVE OF YOUR FATHER'S CORRECTING HAND (Hebrews 12: 5-13).

Brethren, though the contradiction of sinners be great, remember it is not the rod of men, but the chastening hand of our faithful Father in heaven. Run straight to him and be healed.

Brethren, we are the lame.

At times we are more lame than at other times. When we think we are strong we are truly lame. Let me flee to my heavenly Father that this lame one may be healed. Then will he use me to heal others who are lame that they might make a straight path to Christ and be healed.

Christ is the Way.

How easily we turn out of the Way. But the Lord will turn us using three things together:

1. All things in providence--good or evil
2. Uses teachers he has given to teach us his word-I have teachers God uses to teach me

3. The Spirit of God--still small voice--speaking into our hearts

It is never pleasant at the time when the Lord chastens us, it is grievous.

1. In our lameness, we try to free ourselves from the trials
2. We remove our teachers into a corner
3. We try to resist the still "small voice"

The elect remnant in Judah did all three during Isaiah's day, but the faithful Father turned the children to trust him! What love and faithfulness for him to do so?

Isaiah 30: 20: And *though* the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: 21: And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This *is* the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

It is grievous to bear at the time, but

Hebrews 12: 11: Nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. 12: Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; 13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Illustration: Child hugging up to his father. Brother comforting his brother. Peaceable fruit!

III. BRETHREN, FLEE TO THE FOUNTAIN OF ALL GRACE FOR ALL SUFFICIENCY IN ALL THINGS, LEST THOSE WHO FORSAKE THE GOSPEL DEFILE YOU.

Hebrews 12: 14 Follow peace with all [men], and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: 15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble [you], and thereby many be defiled;

Esau was a bitter root. He forsook all for the world. He proved himself a fornicator--one who was not the chaste virgin of Christ our Husband. He proved himself a profane man--one who hated every privilege of the birth right. He hated the Light, the gospel, the gathering with saints, the ordinances and he loved his belly.

There will always be roots of bitterness--opposition to the gospel--contradiction of sinners. We see that in Heb 11. We have seen that in Matthew 13. We must follow peace with all men. But we must not attempt to make peace without the sanctifying seed of the word. Without Christ the Peace, Christ the Sanctifier no man shall see the Lord by the Spirit of grace with the eye of faith.

Christ is the Word who is the Sanctifier and is our Sanctification (John 17). We have been separated from the common way of natural man, from the peace the world gives, from that which the world calls separation. Believers, have been turned into the Way by the hand of the Father that we might be partakers of his holiness--partakers of the divine nature.

Pureness of heart and peacemaking go together and so does persecution.

Matthew 5: 8: Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. 9: Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. 10: Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11: Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12: Rejoice,

and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Christ is the Seed, the Root, the Vine wherein we are kept and abide. Let us never forsake the truth for the sake of making peace only then has the salt lost its savor and its good for nothing.

Matthew 13: 20: But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; 21: Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. {troubled}

But who is sufficient for these things--where will I find grace.

Hebrews 4: 12: For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13: Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. 14: Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. 15: For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as [we are, yet] without sin. 16: Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 2: 18: For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. 3: 1: Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; 2: Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. 3: For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. 4: For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. 5: And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; 6: But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

This is God's design in the trial, in the contradiction of sinners, in the chastening hand of the Father--with renewed strength and patience follow peace and holiness with all men!

This body of death is the dead weight, the root of all unbelief which is the sin that so easily besets us.

Romans 7: 4: O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25: I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

So we run this race "looking unto Jesus Christ the Author and Finisher of faith?"

Jesus the Author--the first to run the race--the pioneer who went before--the Captain of our warfare.

Colossians 1:18:...he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

Jesus the Finisher--he Perfected and is our Perfection. By his faithfulness, he perfects our faith. He makes us to know more and more he is our Perfection.

V2:...and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (by himself purged my sin)

The life I now live, I live by the faith of him--

- Look unto Jesus the Author and Finisher, consider him in the midst of contradiction of sinners, lest ye be faint and weary in your minds
- Hear the Father say, "This is my beloved Son hear ye him" and flee to him to be healed, lest ye forget the Father's chastens those he loves
- Flee to the fountain of all grace lest we fail of the grace of God as bitter roots like Esau attempt to kill us as he did Jacob.

Psalm 23

Lord, teach us to pray and to rest in your prayer and your rest: **John 12: 27: Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. 28: Father, glorify thy name.**

Read the words to: FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT

Amen!