

# Looking Unto Jesus

by Brian Long

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of looking unto Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith, and depending on him for everything in order to persevere and finish the race.*

**Duration:** 48:43

**Scripture:** Hebrews 2:1-12

**Topics:** "Jesus"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher uses the analogy of a marathon runner to illustrate the importance of endurance in the Christian faith. He emphasizes the need to keep our focus on Christ and His purpose for us, even when faced with challenges and temptations to give up. The preacher also highlights the significance of looking to Jesus and His shed blood for forgiveness and freedom from past sins. He encourages listeners to find security in the finished work of Christ and to trust in God's sufficiency rather than relying on their own abilities.

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## Transcript

We're going to turn to Hebrews chapter 12 this morning Hebrews chapter 12 2 verses verses 1 and 2 Therefore we also since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily ensnares us and let us run with Endurance 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 has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God Amen Now the book of Hebrews was written to Hebrew Christians that were being persecuted no doubt some of them were growing very discouraged and they were being tempted to draw back and drift away and the going was getting really tough and many of them were growing discouraged and All because they got in their eyes off of Jesus and we see this theme throughout the whole book of Hebrews There's this appeal and this call for God's people to endure to persevere Don't quit don't give up keep your eyes on Christ He likens the Christian life here in these verses that we just read to a race and the kind of race is Not a it's not so much a sprint like the 50-yard dash or something short like that but instead it's more like a marathon and the only one who finishes a marathon is the one who Perseveres when the going gets tough It's when your legs get weak your knees feeble the the the body's growing tired The lungs are burning. It's at that moment when you the race doesn't get easier Does it it gets harder? Have you realized that brothers and sisters? Have you realized that the race is it gets harder not easier. That's okay Because God's grace is sufficient But it gets harder and that marathon runner when his body is growing tired His legs are getting

weak as the Bible talks about weak hands and feeble knees His lungs are burning.

He everything in him is saying give up It's at that moment that he has to remember. This is what I've trained for. This is my purpose My whole purpose is the prize on the other side of that finish line.

Therefore, I will keep on going I will keep on enduring. I will keep on persevering well We have also been called by God to persevere To stay on track to endure to the end. There's so many scriptures in the Bible about enduring to the end about Perseverance staying on on track and the only way the only way That we will reach this finish line.

The only way we will persevere and endure to the end Is found in our text this morning looking on to Jesus Looking on to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. There is no other way There is no other way to stay on track There is no other way to endure to the end and to persevere but looking unto Jesus and that's the message this morning three simple words looking unto Jesus The look is not a sideward glance or a passing glaze, but it's an intent focus looking unto Jesus the Greek word carries with it here the meaning of looking away from everything else and Fixing your eyes upon Christ riveting them upon him in fact Spurgeon says Really the Greek is saying here not so much look unto but look into Jesus that's how intent the gaze is. Let us look into Jesus fix your eyes upon him one translation says it's so beautiful and accurate.

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus the author and finisher of our faith It's one thing to be deer hunting and to be up on a high point and to be looking all around for that deer You're looking at the grass the valley the trees You're looking at the rocks and there's the river But there's a whole nother kind of looking when you spot a deer and you think that's the big buck And then all of a sudden you look away from the rocks the grass The river the valley and your eyes are focused and fixed upon that big buck Deer and you say give me those binoculars. I think I've just found him you see that kind of look It's an intense Beholding a looking into a focus. That's what he's talking about Looking unto Jesus.

Let us fix our eyes on the author and finisher of our faith faith has a focus Faith has a focus and true faith saving faith Enduring faith is faith that focuses upon Christ He must be our focus, what does it really mean to focus on something? What is a photographer when he's out? Photographing what does he do? He finds something that he wants to capture in a picture once he finds it He looks at it intently he puts it dead center in the middle of his frame and he focuses He focuses until that object of his picture is in clear crystal clear focus and then he snaps the picture Okay, what does it mean to focus? I want this morning to hold up this lens of faith and have you and I look through it together and see Crystal clear. What is the focus of faith? True faith, you know what it is Christ Jesus Christ alone if anything else is your focus you're going to get off track You will veer off the course You won't finish the race Christ must be our focus this crystal clear focus of our faith That's the only way we will stay on track and the only way we can endure to the end It doesn't matter how we how hard we run It doesn't matter how fast we run if we veer off the track We won't reach the finish line and therefore we won't reach the prize There were three young men Back in the old days who needed a job, but the farmer only had enough money to hire one So he says to these three young men. He says, all right, I'm gonna have each one of you get behind the plow and Whichever of you the three of you can plow the straightest furrow That's the one I'll hire so the first one puts his hand to the plow and he sets off But he when he was finished the furrow went this way and then it went that way and then it went the other way And the old farmer said young man.

What were you looking at while you were making this furrow? He said sir. I looked right at the handles of that plow I was looking right at what I was supposed to be hanging on to and he said that's your problem That's why the furrow is so crooked Second man laid his hand to the plow got behind the mule plowed a furrow It also was crooked as it could be young man. He said what were you looking at? Well, he said I was looking at the furrow that I was making making sure that you know, the plow was going deep I was staring at what I was doing That's where you went wrong.

He said and that's why your furrow is so crooked Third man plowed a furrow and it was straight as an arrow Young man a farmer said what were you looking at? He said sir. See that tree on the other side of the field I fixed my eyes upon that and never took him off of it And he said that's why your furrow is straight as an arrow. You are hired brothers and sisters When you fix your eyes upon anything other than Christ, you're gonna go here there You're going to be a double-minded man unstable in all of his ways.

But when you fix your eyes on Jesus Christ alone You're fixing your eyes upon the one who is our constant one He doesn't change like shifting shadows. The Bible says in Hebrews 13 a Jesus Christ the same yesterday today and forever Hallelujah, he's our constant one fix your eyes upon Christ who does not change and then we will make it to the end Enduring to the end requires that we stay on track That we not get sidetracked There are thousand and one things the flesh the world and the devil will use to lure you off the track And then it doesn't matter how hard you run It doesn't matter how hard you strive if you're off the track, you're going to miss the mark You won't reach the prize. You won't finish the race Now I want you to notice in our text This author the author and finisher of our faith How did he run because he is the one we're following.

How did Christ run notice what it says in verse 2? looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith Who for the joy that was set before him? Endured the cross he endured the cross. He stayed the course All the way to the cross and no devil not anything could get him off track because he set his face like Flint to go to Calvary. He wouldn't be diverted over and over again We also are called to endure as I said, and I want you to just follow me quickly through the book of Hebrews and see this common thread and this appeal to people who were tempted to get discouraged to give up and To and to fall back and drift away Hebrews chapter 2 first of all Hebrews chapter 2 verse 1 Therefore he says we must give the more earnest heed to the things.

We have heard lest we what? Drift away You mean there's a possibility of drifting away getting off course Therefore he says we must give the more earnest heed to the things We have heard lest we drift away For if the word spoken through the angels proved steadfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward How shall we let's escape if we neglect so great a salvation? There's the appeal chapter 3 and verse 7 Hebrews chapter 3 verse 7 Therefore as the Holy Spirit says today if you will hear his voice Do not harden your heart as in the rebellion in the day of trial in the wilderness Why did they get off course and wander in the wilderness so long?

Why they hardened their heart when they heard the voice of the Holy Spirit? He's saying to you brothers and sisters and to me today if you hear his voice Don't harden your heart and how does your heart get hard? When you read when you hear the voice of God you hear the Word of God and you don't obey There's a hardening that takes place over your heart and you're sure you're to be prone to drift away then look at verse 12 of chapter 3 Beware, he says beware brethren lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the Living God The danger of departing of turning away from him of getting off course chapter 10 Verse 25 you see this throughout the whole book chapter 10 Actually, let's look at verse

24 Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as in the manner of some but Exhorting one another and so much the more as you see the day approaching here The appeal is to encourage one another spur one another on so that we we keep the faith we fight the fight We finish the race and and we we endure to the end now also in chapter 10.

Look at verse 32, please verse 32 He says but recall the former days in which after you were illuminated you endured a great struggle with sufferings You endured a great struggle with sufferings partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated for you had compassion on me in my chains and Joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods knowing that you have a better and enduring possession for yourselves in heaven Therefore do not cast away your confidence Which has great reward for you have need of endurance That is perseverance so that after you have done the will of God You may receive the promise for yet a little while and he who is coming will come and will not tarry Now the just shall live by faith, but if anyone draws back My soul has no pleasure in him, but we are not of those who draw back to predict perdition But of those who believe to the saving of the soul So you see we're called to endure to the end to finish the race to beware of drifting away to stay on track Can I tell you no matter how much we or anybody else may boast?

We're not and we're not a denomination of church We're not a denomination. Can I tell you how denominations form? It's when something or someone other than Christ Becomes our focus That's when it happens many great moves of God began Because the leaders and the people at that time their eyes were solely upon Christ and Christ was building his church but as the years go by man always has to put a label on it and so you become a Name you become a label Following a particular man a particular doctrine or particular tradition and that's how it forms I'm not here to point at everybody else.

I'm here to point at us and say let us beware Let us beware The only way church for us to stay on track is to keep our thought of our focus upon Christ Keep him dead center in that frame look away from everything else Anything else and let Christ alone be our gaze be the one that we behold Let us look unto Jesus. Let us look unto Jesus so many, you know It will become Well, that's the church where so-and-so preaches. That's so-and-so's church.

Oh, that's the church where where they have that particular doctrine Or this this particular tradition. That's the King James only church. Oh, that's the church where they lift their hands That's the church where they don't lift their hands.

That's the church where they speak in tongues Oh, that's the church where they don't speak in tongues. That's the church where the women wear a head covering Oh, this is the church where they don't wear head You see all the the craziness and it divides and divides and divides and divides why? because that particular thing becomes a focus and it never was supposed to They can be good things. They can be biblical things, but they are not preeminent What must always have the preeminence in the church in your heart and mine and in our lives is Jesus Christ and him alone Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

How did you begin this race? Looking unto Jesus. How were you saved? Looking unto Jesus by his grace his grace alone No works of your own. It was his grace.

It was his shed blood It was his finished work at the cross you look to Jesus because you had nothing to offer But your sin and the Lord came and saved you. He's the author of our of our salvation He's the author of our faith. It also says here.

Let us looking unto Jesus the author and Finisher of our faith. How will you finish the race? Many begin the race saying well, I look to Jesus, but they think they have to finish the race by looking to themselves Let me keep myself saved let me let me make let me look at myself make sure I'm on track It's like the guy looking at the furrow to see what he's doing You're going to get off track you finish the same way you began Looking unto Jesus and let nothing Nothing take my eyes off of him Is that too simple? Is that too simplistic That's Bible, that's the Word of God That's what that's that's for those looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of their of our faith They will not get off track How about the church not where this is that and this is the other but how about the church where Jesus Christ is? Preeminent how about being the church where oh, that's the church where where everything is about Jesus That's the church where their answer those people's answer to everything is looking unto Jesus. How about being that church? How about never losing that focus? Let this be our label Christ.

Let this be our identity Christ. Let this be our doctrine Jesus Christ died for our sins was buried raised again and Ascended and seated at the right hand of God. Let this be our message.

Let this be our gospel Jesus Christ Risen, he is alive. He saves He is Lord and he is Savior. Let that be our message Simple praise God.

It's simple It is simple for those who are looking unto Jesus for everything and you see looking unto Jesus is not just it It's not the same as looking at him if I if I can't fix my broke-down car Which typically I wouldn't be able to if it goes much beyond the battery or changing the oil or you know Those simple things if I cannot fix that I don't have the knowledge to I don't have the tools probably too But I know who I can look to I can call Curtis Stanley and so far. He's always been able to give me an answer When it comes what am I doing? I and when I come to him in this with this need I don't say Curtis Let me look at you That's not going to do anything for my car. I come to Curtis and I say Curtis I'm looking to you to fix my car.

He could say to me brother Brian. Look to me I'll see to it. You see the difference not just looking at Jesus but depending on Jesus Looking to Jesus put putting all of your dependence and reliance upon him I believe that it's important for us when we praise the Lord and worship him I believe God gives certain gifts and talents They're God-given and it's a beautiful thing when you can have someone that plays skillfully It's a beautiful thing when you have someone that does have a gift to sing and has a voice to sing now when I'm by myself It doesn't make any difference.

I'll praise the Lord with all of my heart, but when it comes to Congregation coming together, isn't it wonderful when you have someone who has that gift that ability to lead us in that? I can't stand up here and say to you Look to me and I'll lead you in worship, but I can say Look to Stan Look to the look to Kaylee look to Pam and Brenda Look to those who God has given gifts and will join together and look to now We're not fixing our eyes on them. But you see what I'm saying? We're depending upon the gifts God's given them to help us look to Jesus and to praise him and to worship him I don't say let's look at Stan But I'm looking to Stan to lead us out and it's like that with every gift. So we're not just looking at Jesus We're looking to him But notice and notice that's the only way brothers and sisters.

That's the only way you will not grow discouraged It is impossible to get discouraged and quit if your eyes are upon Jesus the reason people get discouraged and quit and give up and turn back and drift away and

go back to the old Lifestyle is because this is very simple. They stop looking unto Jesus They may start looking to themselves and that's the way that it often is. Well, look at me.

I can't do this I'm keep falling. I keep failing you keep failing because you're not looking unto Jesus. You're looking to yourself You're looking to a man you're looking to a method you're looking to something to be a thousand and one other things Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, but not only did you know do you notice that he? Endured the cross, but what's the next thing he says? Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross? Despising the shame he despised the shame they shamed our Lord Jesus Christ By stripping him naked and nailing him to a cross.

They laughed at him. They mocked him. They scorned they ridiculed I know most of the pictures show Jesus on the cross with some loincloth around him wasn't so Part of the humiliation was that they stripped him naked and hung him on a cross.

He suffered shame shame and Rejection, but you know what? He despised the shame That is none of it moved him. None of it could get him off the track No, no, none of it could keep him from finishing the course You know why because he was totally secure and the will and the love of his father He was totally secure the shame couldn't move him He despised the shame and brothers and sisters Not only must we look unto Jesus to endure to the end But we must look unto Jesus to despise the shame for those who look to him shall never be ashamed Put this verse in your margin or listen to it. Look at it with me.

Psalm 34 verse 5. What a beautiful scripture To say what I believe the Holy Spirit is saying to us today Psalm 34 and verse 5 it says they look to him and were radiant and Their faces were not ashamed They looked to him and were radiant and their faces were not ashamed It's the insecure that need and want the approval of men It's the insecure that need and want the approval of men but when you look to Jesus and you see him looking to you at you and Give in and and you have his approval you can become Unshakably secure even if the whole world laughs and mocks and scorns and shames you whose approval Really matters. This is amazing how the Lord always ties this in Laurie what you were sharing at the communion table that little testimony About when she was in school It all of us could relate to that we don't want people laughing at us We don't want people making fun of us and so what happens when they do we have a tendency to draw back What is the message throughout all of Hebrews? Don't turn back. Don't draw back Endure.

Okay. How am I going to despise the shame? How can I become such that the the peer pressure and the shame? That the mocking and the laughing and the scorning won't take me off track It's when you become secure and the approval of Christ the love of God It's when you look to him and your face is radiant and you know, if I have your approval Lord Let the whole world come against me. Let the whole world laugh at me Whose approval do I really need if I have God's approval if I have God's favor if I'm looking to him And he's looking to me.

But what about the shame of your past sin? How do you despise and overcome that shame the shame of your past sin whether it be ten years ago Whether it be ten days ago, whether it be yesterday you look unto Jesus You should stop looking at yourself look unto Jesus and his shed blood That washes away all of our sins and cleanses us from all Unrighteousness and blots out our past sins never to remember again Hallelujah, you know why the past shame will weigh you down and get you off track and keep you from enduring to the end because you're looking at it Look unto Jesus who paid it all It's finished Hallelujah Praise be to God become secure in the finished work of Christ. Now, how about How about the storm?

How about becoming secure in the storm? You know the scripture Peter was in the boat with his those other disciples on the Sea of Galilee this violent Raging storm came in the middle of the night It was dark the winds were howling crashing against the boat. The waves must have been coming over the boat They were terrified and one of them saw somebody up there looked like a ghost.

No, it's not a ghost It's the Lord Lord Peter said if it be you Bid me to come to you on the water Jesus says come in the midst of the storm come and Peter steps out of the boat and Walks on water. This is supernatural. This is impossible.

How can he do it? looking unto Jesus Looking unto Jesus. He's walking miraculously above his circumstances in the midst of his storm He's not seeing he's not seeing Jesus through the storm. He's seeing the storm through Jesus He's looking unto Jesus.

He's walking on water. But you know, what happened? What happened the winds and the waves? Became so much that he took his eyes off of Christ The Bible says when he saw the wind the waves He began to sink and he'll finally cry out Lord Save me and the Lord reached down and grabbed his hand and pulled him back up on top of the water When does it happen brothers and sisters? When you take your eyes off Christ the storms of life will absolutely overwhelm you They will not when your eyes are upon him How are you doing someone says good under the circumstances you should never be under the circumstances Christian Circumstances are like a mattress you never to be under it. You always be on top of it.

You get under it. You'll smother on top of it how Looking unto Jesus when we look unto him. You're still going to go through storms We're still going to go through storms.

We're going to go through fire. We're going to go through flood We're going to go through attacks. We're going to go through persecution.

Yes But Jesus is right there put your eyes on him and you will overcome What's better to have no storm to have no trial or to have it all and have Jesus? Right there in front of me calling me come to me if it's you Lord bid me to come to you in this storm Come he says and you walk on the water like the guy that had the dream Night after night. He had this dream He was rowing upstream in this river and he kept hitting something underneath a rock He couldn't go and he kept saying Lord remove this hindrance remove this hindrance remove this obstacle remove this trial Lord says I won't remove it But I'll do something better. I'll raise the level of my grace and you'll overcome That's what God does.

I'll raise the level of the water. The hindrance is still there The storm is still there. The trial is still there But keep your eyes upon me and I in my grace is sufficient God says and you will overcome Come to me on the water.

We can be secure in the midst of shame We can be secure in the midst of of the storm We can be secure when the devil tries to bring back past sin secure in Christ Secure because of who he is keep your eyes on Jesus Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. Somebody says what about eternal security? How many times have I been asked this brother Brian? What's your stance? What do you do? Do you believe in eternal security I do if you are looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of your faith That is my answer Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. I don't if you're looking anywhere else For your salvation if you're looking to to the the day you walk the aisle if you're looking to that Some sinners prayer you prayed and you're looking to that you're looking to your baptism in water

You're looking to your so-called good works.

You're looking to the fact that you help the little lady across the street No, there's no security for you There is no eternal security outside of Christ the person of Jesus Christ My eternal security is in him very simple very simple eternal security Yes, if I'm looking to Jesus all of Jesus only to Jesus none, but Jesus. Yes See him brothers and sisters look unto him and The look and see him endure the cross and you also will endure and not grow discouraged Look unto Jesus as he despised the shame and you also will be so secure in him that no shame no storm no satanic deception will ever be able to pluck you out of his mighty hand and Finally look unto Jesus it says here in verse 2 as He has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Do you see it there verse 2? He is sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

In other words, it is Finished Jesus Christ has triumphed Jesus Christ has the victory There is victory in him only he who has finished the race can sit down The Bible says here he is seated at the right hand of the throne If you sit down before you reach the finish line you forfeit the race The only one that sits down is the one who's finished the race. He's the author and Finisher of our faith. He is seated at the right hand of God It is finished was his cry on the cross as he died to pay for your sins in mine and full Te teleste I was the word te teleste I he cried on the cross it is finished Sin debt paid in full done Christ the perfect sacrifice the Lamb of God who takes away the sin the world Took took our sins away and cried it is finished and therefore Victory is in Jesus and only in victory you want victory over your sin.

Stop looking at your sin You want victory over anger stop looking at your anger and look unto Jesus One victory over the sins of your tongue your mouth gossip look unto Jesus You want victory over lust look unto Jesus one victory over depression look unto Jesus You want victory over sin stop looking to yourself The photographer who is taking that picture is nowhere in the frame He's behind the frame we were created in such a way to look out Somebody said that the only eye that sees itself is blind. We weren't created that way look out Steve Our Steve Oh always down here taking photographs you ever see one with him in the frame He's looking out Where the problem that we're so defeated is when we get in the frame When we get in the picture when we think it's about us and we look at to ourselves to our strength to our striving Strive all you might if your eyes are not on Christ, you will not finish the race He is the victor he is the one seated at the right hand of the throne of God let us look to him looking Unto Jesus in faith is having complete reliance and dependence upon Jesus Christ alone my dear friend and brother Frank McAleenan you most of you know Wrote this and I wholeheartedly agree. Listen carefully he writes a Man must never believe that he has arrived How many of us have thought we learned a lesson only to fail the very same lesson days later? How many? What great things the Lord does when a man does not even realize that he's being used The greatest humility comes when we look full into his face When we look at worship worship vanishes Isn't that true brothers and sisters when we look to am I playing this just right? Am I singing this just right? We become so consumed into the worship the worships God the focus of worship is who? Jesus Jesus only When we look to worship, he says worship vanishes when we look at humility Pride always finds a way in in looking at any of the virtues of Christianity One must take his eyes off Jesus and look to the left or to the right or in front or behind Yet to look into the face of Jesus and see the glory of God this is where we are rightly shaped Amen We don't become humble by studying and looking at humility, especially our humility You the moment you do that you become proud we become humble one way Looking under Jesus because when you're looking under Jesus, you're not about to compare yourself with anybody else The comparison you're looking to him It's impossible to walk in pride when you're looking at the one who is clothed in glory and majesty and holiness and perfection and beauty How can we walk in pride? Looking unto Jesus and we will walk in humility You don't become holy by

looking to yourself to become holy you become holy by looking unto Jesus You don't become loving by saying I'm going to try harder to love that person I'm gonna strive.

I'm gonna try harder to love them. You'll never love them with the love of Christ you will love them with the love of Christ when you look unto Jesus and You receive his love and you're changed by his love and you're overwhelmed by his love. You will begin to love them Without even striving it Laurie said it at the communion table your change and you didn't even know it Something happened as you were looking unto Jesus you were being changed from in image to image in glory to glory It says that in the Bible look at this beautiful scriptures 2nd Corinthians chapter 3 Watch this 2nd Corinthians chapter 3 first of all notice he says in the fourth verse and We have such trust through Christ toward God not that we are sufficient of ourselves To think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God It's from God not from myself, but from God now jump on over to the 16th verse Watch this 2nd Corinthians 3 16 nevertheless When one turns to the Lord and that's he's talking about turning our eyes to the Lord Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord the veil is taken away Now the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty But we all with unveiled face beholding looking gazing intently as in a mirror the glory of the Lord are being Transformed into the same image from glory to glory just as by the Spirit of the Lord He's saying that we're literally changed to become like Jesus simply by beholding the glory of Jesus as You look unto Jesus as you behold his glory like a caterpillar becomes a butterfly Metamorphosis you are transformed to become more and more like Jesus You spend an awful lot of time in a rose garden.

And what do you start smelling like? Roses You spend an awful lot of time in the Sun and people can tell it You spend a lot of awful lot of time with Jesus Looking unto Jesus always only none, but Jesus and what happens You're becoming like Christ You become like the one you worship He transforms us by his spirit is a work of the Spirit of God No striving of the flesh Praise be to God See Christ seated in glory and majesty at the right hand of God and you will be changed See Christ seated in majesty and glory at the right hand of God and you will live in light of eternity You will live in light of eternity the things of this earth will grow strangely dim to you They will have no hold on you when your eyes are fixed upon Jesus in his glory and majesty Look at him and you will live in victory Look unto Jesus and you will be an overcomer because the race is already won It's already won when you look to him. You will see the race is already won We only need to reach the finish line we need to just endure to the end and cross the finish line and you will you will When you look unto Jesus and you let nothing and no one steal your gaze upon him Something else I read of brother Frank's this week. I want to share with you as we come to a close This is a true story.

He writes in 1911 There were few great adventures left few places not already discovered one of the last places on earth for men to explore was the South Pole in the Antarctic a race of epic proportions took place between captain Scott and the British team and a monson and his Norwegian team When captain Scott and his team finally arrived at the South Pole They were devastated to find the Norwegian flag already planted. It was clear. They had lost the race 800 grueling miles in one of the most inhospitable places on the planet only to find they had been beaten a Monson and his team managed to race back home in record time Knowing well that the world waited to laud and cheer on the victors Fame and glory awaited them and they ran towards the prize Scott and his team on the other hand had no such glory awaiting them and they struggled to Trek back the 800 miles that they had just came Sadly every member of the team on captain Scott's team died in the effort with biting bitterness and disappointment Defeat they all died one by one in the frigid wastelands in the bottom of the earth Brothers and sisters this speaks

volumes to us We are running Not from a place of defeat, but victory We are running toward the one who is already finished the finisher of our faith We are running for the one who sits at the right hand of the throne of God clothed in glory and majesty And he is waiting Looking to you and I looking when you look to him you will see him looking to you calling us endure Persevere don't stop.

Don't look to the right. Don't look to the left. Don't become so bogged down and consumed and all these things Someone says well, I'm a Calvinist that's all they talk about.

I'm a Calvinist I'm an Arminius. That's all they talk about. I'm an Arminius.

I Want to say I'm of Christ. I am of Christ. Let me see Jesus look unto Jesus And I believe that's what the Lord is saying.

Look unto me and you won't go off track Get your eyes off of Christ and you were sure You were sure to get it off brothers and sisters And when we see him again, we're running from a place of victory both these teams face the same conditions the difference between life and death for the two was that for one victory had already been won and The praise awaited them that I mean the prize awaited them They only needed to reach the finish line but for the other there was no such victory and therefore no such glory in sight and a people even a People who profess to be Christians, but you don't really believe that Jesus Christ is the victor you're walking around with your head hanging in shame as if we're defeated people as if there's no prize in sight as if the victory has not been won as if Christ is not risen Wake up Look up put your faith. My faith looks up to thee thou lamb of Calvary Savior Divine look up to him and see the victories won and you know what will happen even through 800 miles of grueling trial bitter cold Disappointment defeats Bitterness all this stuff that comes at us and all these thoughts and voices When we know there's victory, I just must cross the line. I'm getting closer every day You run from a place of victory from a platform of victory and you will arrive But Lord help the people Who do not believe that? Jesus Christ truly is the victim and you wander around in defeat.

You will die in the bitter cold brothers and sisters Let's fight the fight like Paul said Let's finish the course Let's keep the faith That's what he's saying to us. Let's persevere a lot of people are throwing in the towel and There will be we're told over and over again in Scripture. There'll be a great falling away a Departing from the faith.

It's tragic. It's one of I think the hardest things in the world to endure as a pastor or as any Christian to share the gospel even to see people get excited for the Lord and To see people go right back sometimes Do we give up on them? No, if you were here Wednesday night, you know that You never give up on the people you love you get up and you get to Jesus on their behalf He never gave up on you. We will never give up on others But it's tragic when someone makes a choice to depart May it never be and make Christ always always always Fill our vision.

Amen. Let's stand, please Father God, I thank you for the simplicity That is in your word Lord so simple that many of us have missed it time and time again Getting our eyes on this thing get on our eyes on the other thing getting our eyes on ourself And the next thing we know we've drifted way off course Lord Jesus by faith today We lift our eyes and we look to you the very same way. We would have Lord or we did When we came to know you as Savior and Lord The moment we passed from death to life.

We simply look to you and we were saved We look to you now Lord. Not only as the author of our faith, but as the finisher Thank you that you are faithful to complete that which you've begun We praise you for

this Oh Lord We praise you and we ask you we plead with you to help us Help us God the moment The moment that we take our eyes off of you. Would you quicken us by your Holy Spirit? Would you quicken us immediately? Eyes back on Christ Heart back on Christ trust back on you Lord Jesus.

Would you correct us? Would you chase in us if necessary do anything Lord? But do not allow us to take our eyes off of you and on to other things Help us to follow you wholeheartedly Thank you Lord that it is by your grace and we trust in you. We trust in you alone We praise you that you endured the cross. You didn't quit You didn't quit even when they were nailing you to a cross even in the midst of the shame and the mocking and the spitting and the beating and the wrath of God being poured out upon you knowing that was to come you Set your face like flint all the way Lord Thank you for this.

Thank you that you persevered. You're calling us to do the same Thank you for those here today So when it comes to their marriage will not quit but persevere because their eyes are upon you those who are facing trials held trials and and Trials of besetting sin help them today to look to you Jesus and see those things just slough off Cast them off Cast them off Help us Lord to repent Throw off every weight that weighs us down and causes us not to run. Well, let us get rid of it Even if it seems like a good thing, but it's weighing us down and we're not running this race Like you've called us to let us get rid of it today Hallelujah May we cast off every sin Lord may we loathe it may we hate it as you do We will if our eyes are upon you Help us Lord Jesus to see you more clearly Transform us to become more and more like you Please help those who are discouraged Would you encourage them greatly today Lord? Would you cause him to see through the eyes of faith? the focus of our faith the person of Jesus Christ Thank you for this in Jesus name.

Amen

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