

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

by Mel Esh

Turn your eyes upon Jesus, who is the way, the truth, and the life, and trust in Him to guide and direct you through difficult times.

Duration: 1:12:41

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5, Proverbs 3:11-12, Isaiah 34:16, Isaiah 43:21, John 14:5-6, John 16:13

Topics: "Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher addresses the strife, confusion, and problems that individuals, families, and churches face in the present world. He emphasizes the need to turn our eyes upon Jesus, who is a rock that cannot be moved. The preacher encourages listeners to strengthen their weak hands and confirm their feeble knees, assuring them that God will come with vengeance and save them. He reminds them that Jesus is the way, the river of living water, and encourages those who are struggling or feeling discouraged to keep their eyes on Jesus, who will pour fresh water into their hearts and bolster them with His resurrection life.

Transcript

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A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Good morning, brothers and sisters in Christ. This morning, welcome to each one and to this service and all the visitors as well.

It's a joy to be together on a Sunday morning again on the Lord's Day in the house of God. To worship Him, to hear the Word of God, you know, I was just thinking this morning as we were down in the prayer room, you know, the Word of God, what it does to our souls, nourishing us, you know, directing us. God gives grace through His Word and there's so much happens as we hear the Word of the Lord.

And as our hearts are open and it's quickened by the Spirit, God brings us home to our heart and changes us. So let's allow our hearts to be open this morning, completely open to the Word of the Lord and allow God's Word to speak into our hearts and allow God thereby to do His work of grace that He desires to do. All right, can we stand again for a word of prayer? Father in Heaven, we give You praise and thanksgiving this morning.

Thank You, Father. Thank You, God, that You're so good, Lord, to us, Your people. Father, thank You for giving us Your Word.

Father, we thank You for the many physical and material blessings we receive from You as well. Oh God, truly You're a good God. You're a wonderful Father.

And Father, we do worship You and exalt You and extol You this morning. We love You, Lord. We love being one of Your children.

And Father, we love Your Word this morning. And Father, we pray that as we open up Your Word this morning, oh God, that You would quicken Your Word to our hearts. Anoint my lips, Lord, that I can preach and share Your very heart, oh God.

Father, that we can hear from You, our living God, and Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to His head of the church. So Father, we pray now that You would bless us, cause Your face to shine upon us, encourage our hearts, lift us up into the realms of faith, Lord, where some may be discouraged this morning. Maybe there's those that have fallen this week, Lord.

We pray, I pray, Lord, for every soul, God, who is present here in this building, Lord, that You by Your Spirit would minister to each heart, oh God, and let each one be fed from Your eternal Word. Father, give me grace to be able, Lord, to share and break down Your Word in such a way that it's easily understood. Give me clarity of thought.

I pray for Your grace, abounding grace, as I share Your Word this morning. Thank You, Father, in Jesus' name. Amen.

You can be seated. Well, we read much these days. We hear much of the uncertainties that are taking place in this present world.

You know, we hear of floods. We hear of fires. We hear of, most recently, an oil spill that they hardly know how to cap down in the Gulf.

And, you know, the economy is uncertain. There's tornadoes. There's accidents.

And besides that, there's people issues. There's wars and turmoil in this world on that level as well. There's strife and there's confusion.

Sometimes we even face problems as individuals, families, and churches. You know, where do we go to? How do we find our way in this present world that we live in? And sometimes the problems we face, the issues, the things that come our way, the trials, as is written on the board there. We have trials and tests.

We have trials and temptations and things we face in life. Sometimes, like I said, uncertainties as to our future, as to the future of the economy, as to maybe the future of what is God's calling for our lives. What does that? Maybe some of us don't really know what the Lord has for our future.

Well, this morning I'd like to preach a message on turn your eyes upon Jesus. You know, Jesus is a rock that will not be moved. He's unshakable.

Christ will never be moved. And whoever puts his trust on that rock, likewise will be unshaken and unmoved in this world that we live in. So I'd like to preach a message this morning.

Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Let's turn our Bibles to St. John chapter 14. Turn your eyes upon Jesus.

14 verse 6. I'll read verse 5 first. Thomas saith unto Him, Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto Him, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by Me.

You know, Thomas, in this particular Scripture, Thomas was facing some confusion. He said to Jesus, Jesus, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way? You know, he was facing some cloudiness of thought and just kind of a fog in his heart and mind as to, you know, how do I know the way? How do I know the way into the eternal mansions that you're talking about, Lord? And Jesus spoke these profound words, I am the way. I am the way.

And that's what I'd like to bring out this morning in the three aspects that Christ brings out here. I am the way, I am the truth, and I am the life. I'd like to share on those three points there that Christ brings out in verse 6 here of chapter 14.

Let's turn our Bibles to Isaiah chapter 43. Isaiah chapter 43. I'll start reading verse 14.

Thus saith the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, for your sake I have sent to Babylon and have brought down all their nobles and the Chaldeans whose cries in the ships. I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King. Thus saith the Lord, which maketh a way in the sea and a path in the mighty waters, which bringeth forth the chariot and the horse, the army and the power.

They shall lie down together. They shall not rise. They are extinct.

They are quenched as toe. Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing.

Now it shall spring forth. Shall ye not know it, I will even make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The beast of the field shall honor me, the dragons and the owls, because I give waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert to give drink to my people, my chosen.

This people, if I form for myself, they shall show forth my praise. You know, here's a Scripture that is very encouraging to our hearts as we think of Jesus being the way this morning. I just want to show us in this passage of Scripture, maybe this morning some of us are going through trials and confusion of mind and heart to the degree that we've kind of lost our way.

You know, we've kind of lost our way maybe in our Christian walk and we're trying to get back into the beaten path. And before us, there seems to lie this wilderness. Now when I was over in Africa, Brother Ross, when I was over in Africa, you know, my wife and I, when we were missionaries there, I went up to, a few times, I went on my, going up toward a town called Nakhpanduri.

Off to the right is all these Kukumba villages. But you can't really, it looks like, if you take a path back into the bush part ways, you get to a nab, kind of a hill, where you can look over the vast beyond. The vast

Kukumba territory.

Off to the right, I mean, from there to, what's the name of that town? Saboba. Yeah, from there, it's a vast territory that just looks like one big wilderness. And really, you can't see much of the path and much of the trails.

It just looks like one vast wilderness. Now if you follow the path, you know, you'll find your way into villages. But I believe in our Christian life sometimes, our life, sometimes when we're groping in darkness and through trials and temptations and testings and all these things, our life begins to become, to us, like a wilderness.

You know, it begins to look like a wilderness where there is no way. We think to ourselves, is there no way beyond? It all looks desolate. All looks forlorn.

All looks like there's no life there. And it just looks like a wilderness. Wilderness.

You know, we can't see the path. Well, here in Isaiah 43, Isaiah's prophecy of Christ, and he says, Thus saith the Lord which maketh a way in the sea and a path in the mighty waters. We know that Christ has made a way for us to escape Egypt.

Our sin, our bondage, our iniquity, our lost condition. He made a way of escape. He made a path through the mighty sea.

He made a way in the sea and a path in the mighty waters. But sometimes, just like the children of Israel, we get into the wilderness and we begin to wonder, where is God? Where is God? This place is dry. It's desolate.

I'm thirsty. I'm hungry. And we begin to wonder, where is God? Where is God in all this? Where is God in this temptation, in this trial, in this condition that I find myself in, and all beyond me looks like a wilderness with no path? And the temptation is to begin to give in to confusion, doubt, discouragement, and all of those things.

And many of the children of Israel fell into that very thing of doubt and fear and never did find their way through that wilderness into the land of Canaan. But God says here very encouraging words, Behold, I will do a new thing. Now it shall spring forth.

Shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness. Brother, sister, as we look to Jesus, Jesus is that way. And as we look to Christ in the midst of our crises, in the midst of our temptations and trials and all of these things that we face in our Christian walk at times, Christ is the way.

My heart this morning is to share that. Look to Jesus. Maybe you're in a condition this morning.

Maybe you've fallen in your Christian walk. Maybe you're in a place where you're confused and you're just not knowing which is the way. How do I find my way? In what looks like a vast wilderness with no way.

It looks like a vast wilderness where there is no way. Maybe you're there this morning where Jesus said, I am the way. I just want to get you to lift your eyes to the Lord.

Turn your eyes upon Jesus. He is the way. Jesus said, I am the way.

I am that way as you face trials, as you face temptations, as you face those things in your Christian walk, times of confusion. Keep your eyes upon Me. I am that way and you'll find your way.

You'll find yourself walking in the way as you keep your eyes on Me. Too often I find myself, the Lord is teaching me, I confess, there are times and quite many that I get my eyes off the Lord. And I'm growing.

I know that I have a lot of growing to do in this area. I still face trials in regards to some of my past and just kind of temptations on those lines. And I get my eyes off of Christ at times.

God is teaching me to keep my eyes on Jesus. Keep my eyes on Him in the midst of the storm. He has a way.

He has a way through. He has a way through that storm, through that temptation, through that trial, through that confusion, through that perplexity. It looks very much like it could somehow overtake me.

Somehow it could overwhelm me. But Christ makes a way as we trust in Him. Jesus is the way.

Lift your eyes toward the Lord Jesus Christ this morning. Also, it says here that He makes rivers in the desert to give drink to My people, My chosen. You know, we know that in a desert basically all is dry and desolate.

There is hardly any water to be found. There's hardly any life in the desert. But here the Scripture says He maketh rivers in the desert.

He giveth rivers in that desert. Maybe this morning you're hungry. You're thirsty.

You know in your Christian walk that you're somehow unfulfilled. Somehow you're unfulfilled in your Christian walk. You know there's some void.

There's some void there. There's some lack there. There's something there that is just not being fulfilled.

And you know that you're kind of empty and dry. Maybe you've lost your way spiritually through discouragement or even sin. Let's turn our Bibles to Genesis 20.

Genesis 20. I'm going to show us something here in this portion of Scripture about Hagar. And I'll start reading in verse 21.

And God said unto Abraham, let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad and because of thy bondwoman. In all that Sarah has said unto thee, hearken unto her voice, for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation because he is thy seed.

And Abraham arose up early in the morning and took bread and a bottle of water and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder and the child and sent her away. And she departed and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. And the water was spent in the bottle and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.

And she went and sat her down over against him a good ways off, as it were a bow shot, for she said, let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him and lifted up her voice and wept. And God heard the voice of the lad and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is.

Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand, for I will make him a great nation. And God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water and she went and filled the bottle with water and gave the lad drink. And God was with the lad as he grew and dwelt in the wilderness and became an archer.

And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt." So here we see Hagar with Ishmael being sent away from Abraham's house. And we see that he was sent with a bottle of water. A bottle of water was given to the lad and his mother.

But after a few days, after a period of time there, the water was spent. This was a wilderness. This was a desert.

And it looked hopeless for the child. It looked like there was no hope that this child would live. It looked like a hopeless situation and Hagar actually gave up and just thought, hey, this child's going to die.

And she just kind of gave up in her spirit. But she lifted up her voice and wept. And God heard her weeping in that wilderness.

That's what I'd like to share with us this morning. Maybe you're in a desert place this morning. Maybe you started out in your Christian walk being filled with that living water.

You know that you were filled with the living water of God. And as you walked along in your Christian walk, for some reason, that water began to ebb out, maybe through discouragement. Or maybe you're here this morning just having been hit with discouragement this week.

I'm not saying that your heart is not clear before the Lord, but simply you're feeling empty and dry. Maybe for some of us, it feels like death is stalking our Christian lives this morning. Maybe it feels like death is at the door.

You're being overwhelmed with temptation. You're being overwhelmed with all these temptations that you feel like you can hardly handle anymore. You feel like death is stalking at your door.

Where it says in Isaiah 43 that He giveth rivers in the desert. That's what I'd like to bring out this morning again. He gives rivers in the desert.

He met the lad's need at the very hour when he was almost at the point of death even. Let's remember that Christ, He is the way. He's that river of living water.

And this morning, if you're at the place in your Christian walk, or maybe sooner, friend, you're at a place of desiring that living water. Jesus said, I am the way. I am the way in which that river will flow into your heart and life.

Turn your eyes upon Jesus. You know, I can testify in my Christian walk, I'm just honest with you this morning, I've gone through a lot of struggles. I've gone through a lot of temptations.

I've gone through a lot of trials. But I keep coming back to Christ. And I find answers.

I find Him lifting me up again. I find He gives me courage again. I find He's there when I sin, when I fail.

My temptation is fear. I fall into fear at times. But I find He makes a way again.

He makes a way. He gives me courage again and He has answers when I come to Him. He again fills me with that river of living water.

And my soul is revived and renewed and strengthened. My vision is restored. And on I move in my Christian walk.

While I don't learn my lesson, I feel like I'm learning, but Christ is the way. I want to share with you this morning that Christ is the way. If you're down this morning, if you're down, if you have been knocked down by the enemy, Christ, turn your eyes upon Jesus.

He has the answer. He will quicken your soul again and give you life, give you renewed vitality in your Christian walk. He'll open up that well right in your desert.

Okay, let's go on. Jesus said also, I am the truth. I am the truth.

Hebrews 8. Let's turn our Bibles there to Hebrews 8. Hebrews 8. I'll start reading in v. 9. Let me read from v. 6. Let me start with v. 6 here. Get the context here. But now He hath obtained Christ.

Now Christ hath obtained a more excellent ministry. By how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

For finding fault with them, He saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, because they continue not in My covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. Now look at this. It says, For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord.

I will put My laws into their mind and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people. They shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know Me from the least to the greatest. And I'll conclude there.

Here's the Word of the Lord saying that we can know God in such a way through His eternal Spirit bringing truth to bear upon our hearts, that we no longer, in essence, what it's saying is, I will teach you. Yes, He teaches us through others. But I'm the One who will bring the truth of My Word to bear upon your heart.

So maybe this morning, you're also maybe in a confusion as to what is truth. What's the truth of my situation? What's the truth about the matter at hand? What's the truth about how to get through this? How do I get through this? How do I walk through this Christian life victoriously? What is the truth of the matter? You know, it's in our temptations we must believe God. But how do we know what to believe? How do we know what to believe? Well, God, Jesus said, I am the truth.

I am the truth. I will bring My truth to bear upon your heart in every given situation as you put your trust in Me. I am the truth.

Jesus says, I am the truth, so let us keep our eyes on Christ. Cast your eyes upon the Lord this morning. Look upon Jesus.

He is the truth. And here it says in James 1, it says, My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations, knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect

work that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth none. And it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith nothing wavering.

So in this life, we're even to count it joy when we face various temptations and trials and testings. Because our life is perfected through them. But if you're like me, sometimes in a trial and a temptation, I need wisdom.

I simply need wisdom. You know, sometimes we're bombarded with the devil's onslaught of, you know, trying to lie to us about the given temptation we're in. You know, trying to bring condemnation or whatever the situation.

You know, he strikes us with his lies. And we tend to at times get our focus off of the Lord Jesus Christ unto the situation or unto His lies and we begin to analyze. We begin to reason it out.

We begin to just try to find our own way through. I have found if I analyze a situation, if I analyze my temptations, I mean, the devil's reasonings are my own mind. I'm not sure which is always the one.

But if I begin to try to reason it out, try to analyze, you know, it brings me into confusion and turmoil. If I keep my eyes on Christ, He brings His truth to bear upon my heart. He brings truth in and through that confusion, that maze, that temptation, that trial.

He cuts into it and cuts into all the maze of it with His truth. And He brings it home to bear upon the heart. And it's enlightening.

It's light for the fog you're in. All of a sudden, the fog begins to part. It begins to dissipate.

And light shines onto your pathway. And you begin to recognize there is a way through this. Remember, Paul said to the church at Corinth, no temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man.

But God is faithful who will with the temptation make a way of escape that you may be able to bear it. So trust the Lord in your temptation that His truth will come through. His light will come through.

His Word will come through to your heart to enable you to find your way. Find your way. And like I said, if any man lacks wisdom, some of us, sometimes we lack wisdom in our temptations and trials.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God. Ask the Lord. Come to the Lord.

Come to the truth. Come to Jesus. The truth.

Jesus is the truth. Come to Him. He'll bring truth to bear upon your heart.

In that very temptation and trial you find yourself in. And you'll be able to find your way. Somehow He'll make a way of escape, often through the truth of His Word, through His quickening power.

We must stay close to Christ in this day of apostasy and unsoundness of doctrine. In 2 Thessalonians it says, because they loved not the truth, God gave them over to a strong delusion. Again, Christ is the truth.

Keeping our eyes on the Lord Jesus Christ means you'll find your way with truth, for He is the truth. He is the truth. As you keep your eyes on Christ, you'll find your way with truth.

As you follow Him. As you follow His direction. As you follow the truth that He brings to bear upon your heart.

And to follow that truth, we must keep our eyes on Christ. Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Lean not unto your own understanding.

In all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy path. Another place in John it says, He has given us the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth. So this morning I just wanted to bring to bear upon our hearts truth that Christ will see us through those struggles and trials and temptations that maybe you're facing this morning.

Let's turn to Proverbs 3. Proverbs 3. I just quoted that verse. Trust in the Lord. But that's not the one I want.

I want to go down to verse 11 and 12 there. My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of His correction. For whom the Lord loveth, He correcteth, even as a father the son in whom He delighteth.

So this morning, maybe some of us are going through, maybe some of us are experiencing the chastening hand of the Lord upon our lives. Maybe we know we're being chastened of the Lord. Maybe you don't know.

But there's those chastenings that each one of us, I believe, go through in our Christian walk. I just came across this verse recently. I know I've been experiencing the chastening of the Lord for a time here.

A period of time He's taking me through to purify my life. But I'm so encouraged here. You know, in our chastening sometimes, in the chastening of the Lord, when He chastens us, we think maybe He's displeased with us.

Maybe somehow we get the mentality that God is displeased. His favor is not upon us. Well, here it says, for whom the Lord loveth, He correcteth, even as the Father, the Son, in whom He delighteth.

Praise the Lord! God is delighting in you this morning. If you're under the chastening hand of the Lord, His delight is upon you. Ask Him that.

Believe it. You know, receive it. That God is the truth of His Word to your heart this morning.

Those of you who are under the chastening hand of the Lord, He's delighting in you. He's delighting in you. Now, the devil or our own mind at times likes to tell us for some reason, like I said, that God is displeased with me.

God's disfavor is upon me. And you know, that's often what begins to breed fear in our Christian walk. In 1 John 5, it says, We have known and believed the love that God hath to us.

God is love, and He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in Him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment. Because as He is, so are we in this world.

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because feareth torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. So I just want to bring to your hearts this morning often the lie of the enemy when we're under even trials and temptations, but also chastening that somehow God's displeasure or disfavor

is upon us.

Here in John it says, We must believe the love that God hath to us. God is love. If we dwell in love, we dwell in God.

God's fullness dwells in us. There's need to be at that place of believing the love of God. So in our chastenings, in our trials, in our temptations, in those things that we go through where we're tempted with condemnation and the accusing voice of the enemy, let's be at a place of continuing to keep our eyes on Jesus, turning our eyes upon Jesus, because He brings to bear His Word upon our hearts.

It's only a few short months ago that I was under the chastening hand of the Lord and I was questioning in my own mind, you know, why, Lord? Why am I going through this? And God just brought this Scripture and Proverbs to my mind. Mel, you're going through chastening. But I'm delighting in You.

And that so encouraged my heart. You see, if I would have looked at my circumstance, at that chastening that I'm going through and I would have tried to analyze it at all angles, gotten my eyes off Jesus, I would have never received that Word of the Lord into my heart. But I chose to look to the Lord in the midst of that trial, in the midst of that chastening.

I chose to look to Christ and ask Him, what's going on? And Jesus brought the truth to bear upon my heart. You see, that's what happens when we keep our eyes on Jesus. He is the truth.

And He brings truth into the situations that we face. Yes, He brings truth into our everyday Christian walk. And we find ourselves walking in the way.

Okay, the last point there is Jesus also said that He is the life. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life. As we keep our eyes on Christ, He will bring forth life, abundant life, resurrection life.

Maybe in our own lives, we're seeking to have more of the life of Christ flowing within. Maybe it's out of our families. Maybe it's out of our home fellowship groups or our church here.

Or maybe in our individual lives, we desire more of the life of Christ. And I can testify, I desire more of the life of Christ. But where does it come from? Does it come from trying to figure it all out? From trying to just analyze and try to muster it up or pull yourself up by your own bootstraps? And that's a temptation of mine at times when I see that I don't have quite what I think I ought to have.

I don't have my Christian life. I begin to, you know, I've got to get with it here. And it usually doesn't work out.

And I would like to say this morning again, Jesus is the life. If you find yourself in a place of powerlessness or you find yourself in a place where you feel like there's just a trickle or maybe even a stream, but there's no river in your life, Jesus is the life. Cast your eyes upon Him.

Turn your eyes upon Jesus. This morning, you're lacking. Turn your eyes upon Jesus, because He is the life.

He's the life. And He is the essence of life that will flow into your heart and life. Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life.

He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. Maybe you're in a place this morning where you feel like your Christian life is dry and stale and almost... You wonder, is there any life there? Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life. I'll cause life to spring up within you, a well of living water, springing up into everlasting life.

I'll cause those rivers to gurgle and flow forth once again from your heart and life, because I am the One who gives life, though he were dead, yet shall he live. Let's turn our Bibles to Psalm 36. Psalm 36, verses 7-9.

How excellent is Thy lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house, and Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures. For with Thee is a fountain of life.

In Thy light shall we see light. So in Christ, in Christ is a fountain of life. He is able to abundantly satisfy us.

He is able to make us drink from the river of His pleasure. I like Psalm 23. It says, He maketh me to lie down and cream pastures.

He leadeth me beside the still waters. He, Jesus. You know, as we look to Christ, He causes rivers to well up within us.

He causes us to eat living bread. Bread that is satisfying. A river of light springing up within us.

Where there's dryness in your life, where there's areas of your life where you know there's no life or you're lacking the life of Christ this morning. Maybe you're in a place, like I said, maybe you're in a place of trial, temptation, and you've lost your way and now you're discouraged and the life of Christ is no longer flowing in its fullness. Look, turn your eyes upon Jesus.

Turn your eyes upon Jesus. He is the life. 2 Corinthians 4 Verse 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. We are perplexed, but not in despair. Persecuted, but not forsaken.

Cast down, but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you. This morning I'd just like to bring to our hearts also that the heart of God here, what God is aiming at sometimes in our trials and temptations, well, we know He's aiming at working all things out together for good, like brother Paul mentioned.

And what He's aiming at is that more of the life of Christ might flow forth. So in your perplexity, when you're perplexed, when you're in a place of perplexity in your Christian walk, when you're troubled on every side, when you're in a place of distress... I mean, perplexity. It says we are troubled on every side, yet not distressed.

We're perplexed, but not in despair. When you're at that place in your Christian life where you're perplexed and sometimes you're just wondering what is the next step of the way? You know, Paul said, I was

pressed out of measure above strength and so much that I even despaired of life. But then he said, I trusted in the Lord.

How does he say there? For we have the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raised us the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us. So this morning, let's put our trust in Christ. You know, as we face these trials, as we face sometimes the onslaught of the enemy, sometimes perplexity, sometimes we're at a place where we're wondering what is the next step of the way, Paul brings out that God actually uses those things to bring forth life! To bring forth more of the life of Christ! So, mother, you know, maybe you're a homeschooling mother this morning and sometimes you're overwhelmed.

Let it be an opportunity for the grace of God to come through and bring forth more life to your family. Let's let us as a church be at a place when we're in perplexity, when we're in a place of trial and testing and working through things, let's allow ourselves to continue to keep our eyes on Jesus through those perplexities and out of that death, out of all of that death, if I can call it that, comes forth life. If we trust the Lord.

If we take our temptations the right way. It says here, perplexed, but not in despair. You know, when we're given despair, there's a sense of hopelessness.

Trouble on every side, yet not distressed. When a person is distressed, he's at a place of confusion, just kind of confusion and just kind of given in to being in a fog and just kind of sitting there in that fog and not really pressing in in faith. When a person is feeling like he's forsaken, maybe some of us feel lonely in our Christian walk.

Cast down, but not destroyed. So, this morning, let's take our trials the right way. As churches, as individuals, as families, as home fellowship groups, whatever the need of the hour is, let's take our trials the right way.

Out of death comes forth life. Out of these perplexities, out of these numerous things that we at times face in our various, whether it's home or church. Through the many storms of life, let's keep our eyes or turn our eyes upon Jesus and life will be produced.

In conclusion, let's turn our Bibles to Isaiah 35. I'll start reading verse 16 of chapter 34. Seek ye out of the book of the Lord and read, No one of these shall fail.

None shall want her mate. For My mouth it has commanded and His Spirit it has gathered them. And He hath cast a lot for them and His hand hath divided it unto them by line.

They shall possess it forever. From generation to generation shall they dwell therein. The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them.

And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as a rose. It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it.

The excellency of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God. Strengthen ye the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees.

Say to them that of a fearful heart be strong. Fear not. Behold, your God will come with vengeance.

Even God with a recompense. He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Then shall the lame man leap as an hart and the tongue of the dumb sing. For in the wilderness shall waters break out and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool and the thirsty land springs of water.

In the habitation of dragons where each lay shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And a highway shall be there in a way and it shall be called the way of holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those, the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein.

No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon. It shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk therein. And the ransom of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads.

They shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." So this morning, maybe you're in this wilderness or solitary place, and maybe you're groping around. Well, Jesus wants to make a way through that wilderness. He wants to give rivers in the desert.

He wants to bring His truth to bear upon your hearts and situation. And He wants you to be able to return, to return maybe from... maybe you've gotten off the beaten path. He says the ransom shall return and come with singing into Zion.

And everlasting joy shall be upon their heads. Sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Let's turn our eyes upon Jesus this morning.

He has the answers. He is the way, the truth, and the life. He will make a way through your wilderness.

He will give rivers in your desert. He will cause the enemy... Where does it say about the enemy? No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon. He'll cause the enemy to flee away, to have to back up.

You're being harassed this morning. You're under the attack of the enemy. He has a way of holiness for you to walk in.

He has a highway. Jesus loves you this morning, and He loves you, and He just wants to take you up, like the song was sang this morning. Maybe you're one of those... maybe the 99 are in the fold, but you're that one who has fallen over the cliff, who has lost his way.

Maybe you're that one who is in the pit of discouragement this morning, and you feel like it's no use anymore. I have fought this thing, and I have battled this thing, and it's just no use! You're almost at a point of giving up. I want to encourage you this morning.

Turn your eye upon Jesus. Jesus has a way. He'll pour fresh water into your heart and life.

He'll bolster you up again with His resurrection life. The resurrection life of His will flow into your heart and soul. Keep your eyes on Him.

And then keep your eyes on Him. You know, maybe you'll falter again, but keep your eyes on Jesus. He has a way to get you through that wilderness into Canaan land.

If you feel like you're in a wilderness this morning, He'll give you rivers. He'll make a way. He does have a Canaan that He wants you... He desires to bring you into.

Isaiah 55 Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. And he that hath no money, come ye buy and eat. Yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfies not? Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good. And let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear and come unto Me.

Here and your soul shall live. And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. The sure mercies of David this morning are reaching out to you.

David fell. He fell into deep sin. David was a man with many faults in his life.

He had many faults, many needs. Some of his children went astray. David had many needs in his Christian life and in his walk with God.

But God often refers to the sure mercies of David when He speaks about His mercies. And I just want to encourage your hearts this morning. God's mercy is reaching out to you this morning.

His mercy is reaching out to you. He wants to maybe reach down into that cleft of the rock and pull you back up into safety. Pull you back up into a place of life where you're walking the beaten path once again.

Where you have joy in your heart. Where you're drinking of that river of His. He wants to pull you back up.

He cares the sure mercies of David upon your soul this morning. Sinner friend, likewise you. The sure mercies of David are reaching out to you this morning.

They're reaching out to you. Saying, come. Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden.

And I will give you rest. And I like how it says there in Matthew 28. I'll just turn there briefly.

Jesus says, come unto Me. I'm sorry, not Matthew 28, but Matthew 11. Jesus says, come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Come unto Me, Jesus said. I'll give you rest. If you're at that place of labor and are heavy laden this morning, I'll give you rest.

And I'll give you a yoke. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me. For I am meek and lowly in heart and you shall find rest into your souls.

It almost appears to me Jesus is saying there, come to Me. I'll relieve you of your burden. But after you have been relieved, I'm going to give you a yoke.

And I'm going to give you a burden. Maybe that yoke is some temptations that we face yet and trials that we go through. But He says, learn of Me.

Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me. And when you learn of Me, you'll learn that I am meek and lowly in heart. I'm meek and lowly in heart.

I'm there if you fall again. If you falter again, I'm there to pick you up. I'm there to help you along in your Christian walk.

Even when you have stumblings and bumbings, I'm there to pick you up once again. I am meek and lowly in heart. And as you learn of Me, as you keep your eyes on Me, you'll have rest.

Learn of Me. Sit at Jesus' feet. I am the way, the truth.

Sit at My feet. Learn of Me. And you'll have rest in your Christian journey.

For My yoke is easy and My burden is light. So this morning, this was a message that God laid on my heart. Turn your eyes upon Jesus.

Maybe there are those of us who need to turn our eyes upon Jesus. I had to do it just this morning. I faced a discouragement as I was preparing.

I had to turn my eyes on Jesus. And again, He lifted me up and gave me courage. I was discouraged this very morning.

But Jesus is there as we lift our eyes on Him. He's here to pick us up and give us courage once again for our Christian pilgrimage, our Christian walk. God bless.

Well, praise God. I felt like I heard from the heart of the Father this morning. The heartbeat of God.

I've got a lot of thoughts, things in my heart I feel like I could share, but I'm wondering this morning, I'm sure you have some too. And one of the blessings of the worship service we have is we get to share one another, with one another, and a testimony. Maybe some of you have a testimony about how you turned your eyes on Jesus in a certain situation in your life.

Maybe somebody has a scripture. This is a time that we can edify one another. So, is there anybody who has something in your heart that you want to share this morning? I want to give you an opportunity for that.

Anybody on the men's side? Yes, this morning I was feeling a little bit discouraged and I just really felt this message was exactly what I needed. I needed to turn my eyes on Jesus and not on the things I'm facing and what I have to go through in life or anything that I have to face. Thank you very much, Fr.

Mel, for bringing that word. Anybody else? In the back there? Was there somebody? Okay. Thank you for that message, Mel.

It was very encouraging to me. I had to think back to before I was converted, God used that scripture, I am the way, the truth and the life to bring me unto Him. And yet, in my years as a Christian, there's been many times I've had to be renewed in that to realize that no matter what I face in my life, no matter what circumstance I'm walking through, He still is the way and He still is the truth and He still gives life if we look unto Him.

Hallelujah. Jess? Yes, just this morning I was feeling very discouraged and just beaten down. And I just went to my husband and just poured out, actually I poured out to the Lord first and I just didn't feel anything in that peace and joy.

And so I went to my husband and just sharing, all of a sudden he just said, that sounds like condemnation and not conviction. And it was just, after that, I was just, just to realize that that's condemnation and coming from the enemy. It just brought such a peace and a joy as I just once again turned to Jesus and just such feelings of thankfulness and joy just burst forth from my soul just knowing that Jesus is there and we can just come to Him every time the enemy attacks.

Praise God. I was very blessed today and just thank you for both messages. It was very encouraging to me.

A song that's been going through my mind a lot lately is about, yeah, about values and I feel like I've been going through some. And I just, it's when I find myself turning to God that that's when I find the most joy and just find that He's there for me. And the words I can remember, it goes, When you lead me to the valley of vision, I can see you in the height.

Though my humbling wouldn't be my decision, it's here your glory shines so bright. So let me learn that the cross is to the ground, that to be low is to be high, and that valley is where I'm close to you. I forget all the words.

And then it goes on to say that in the daytime there are stars in the heavens, but they only shine at night. And the deeper that I go into darkness, the more their radiance shines. And that's been my prayer lately.

Is there another one who'd like to share your heart? I was very blessed by the message also and it rang true in my own heart with some of the things that I've been walking through in the past month. It feels at times that God is asking me to walk on water and I look around and I see the storm, my feet start to go under, and He calls me back to look back at Himself again. And I was just very blessed by the message this morning and had to think of one of my favorite quotes in this book of Touching the Invisible is the quote of faith in the time of adversity makes the serpent swallow itself.

And I feel like God has used that little quote as a key truth in my life in this past month to continually look to Him instead of what is visible and what's around. Yes, Wes? Yeah, I'd just like to use this time to give a testimony of the Lord's goodness. We've been back here for about a week now and I went to the doctor on Tuesday and Charity and I had been feeling in the week prior to that in my journeys coming back here that God was doing a healing work in the foot.

And going to the doctor seems to have confirmed that and he does not see the fracture there that seems so evident just two weeks ago in Ghana. And the torn ligament looks like an issue that can be worked with through therapy and not through surgery. So we're just very, very thankful.

I know a lot of you are praying and we believe that God has worked. So I will be around for a little while. I'm not sure how long doing therapy and trying to get it working again.

But we're giving glory to the Lord and really praising God for what He's done there. I ask you to pray for, especially for our people back in the villages who it's hard to get this report back to them. So while we're encouraged, let's pray that God will encourage them as well and keep up their faith.

Thank you. Amen. That's a good report.

Is there anybody else? A scripture that's been ministering to me lately is in Chronicles there, I believe it is, where Jehoshaphat was facing three enemies. The children of Moab, Ammon, and Mount Seir. And it

looked pretty hopeless.

It looked like there was no way. What are they going to do? There's a little verse in there that so ties in with this message today. In Jehoshaphat's prayer, he said to the Lord, we have no might against this great army that's come against us.

He says, but our eyes are on Thee. He said, we're not looking at them. Our eyes are on Thee.

I believe God was delighted when He heard that. And based upon what happened after that, we know that's true. He gave them the most unusual military strategy in the history of the world, I believe.

He said, you send the singers out in front of you tomorrow to face the enemy. You put them in front and stand and see what the Lord's going to do. And so they did that.

They obeyed. Their eyes were on Him. And they sent the praisers and worshipers out.

And they praised the Lord for His mercy endureth forever. And it says that confusion came on the enemy. And they started killing each other.

In fact, the children of Moab killed the children of Ammon and then they turned against the other ones and then they each turned against themselves until everybody was dead. All the enemies were dead. And then it goes even further.

For some reason, these people brought a bunch of jewels with them. I never heard of that in military strategy. You don't usually bring your jewels with you, but these people brought all their treasures with them to the battle and so there they lay dead with all their jewels on them.

And the children of God walked up and took all the jewels with them. It took them three days. And that too is a picture of how God uses the enemy.

The enemy doesn't know, but he's got jewels on him. That after he's disposed of and confused, as we put our trust in the Lord, we get to come and take the jewels. That patience that we didn't have before.

That jewel of loving the Lord deeper than we loved Him before. Think about Job. Job, the jewels that he took and for some reason the enemy is confused and he brings these jewels with him and then God lets us take them home.

And that's a beautiful picture of how God wants to use trials. But the key is their eyes were on Him. If they weren't, they never would have gone for that strategy, would they? Come on, this is no way to win a fight.

But when your eyes are on the Lord, it'll work. It'll work out. Praise God.

Is there anybody else that has something to share? I was really blessed this week with a verse and I'm not exactly sure where I found it, but it was talking about how when the fig tree will not bear and there are no grapes on the vine, yet I will trust in the Lord or I will rejoice in the Lord or something like that. And that so blessed me. And I just had to think of, you know, we don't maybe always understand the situation or whatever trial we're going through, but just to say, yeah, not everything is maybe totally perfect around me, but I will trust the Lord even though my circumstances might not be what I think they should be.

That really, really blessed me. One over here. I was very blessed as I was reading through Psalms here just recently.

And there's a verse in Psalms 34. In verse 4 it says, I sought the Lord and He heard me and delivered me from all my fears. Sounds like deliverance.

Amen. I wonder if I could put my girls on the spot this morning. We have a family of verses and songs that we were working on for next week.

Would you girls be willing to sing that? The Everlasting Arms? I believe it was A.B. Simpson, is that right? Who wrote the poem. And then Hannah really enjoyed it and appreciated it. And the Lord gave her some music to put to that.

I think it flows with what God is saying here today. The sorrow Way no arms can reach so low But in her loose arms almighty Reach beyond our deepest woe God's eternal is our refuge In her chill our wild alarms Underneath our deepest sorrow Are the everlasting arms Other arms grow faint These can never faint nor fail Others reach arms not so blue These are low as O that all might O that all might As beneath them Jesus' everlasting arms Underneath our We have naught to But to sink into his fullness And in trustful weakness lie And we find our Save us from the strength it harms We may fail but un Are the everlasting arms Dearest Jesus To thy strong and loving breast Till my spirit Finds its sever And when times Shield my heart Are the everlasting arms Praise the Lord. Thank you for being willing.

Praise God for those everlasting arms.

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