



The Voice of Truth



May 3, 2009

“If Ye Then Be Risen”

By Jimmy Pettigrew

“If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, (who is) our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory” (**Colossians 3:1-4**).

“If ye then be risen with Christ,” one does not have to imagine about when we are raised with Christ; this refers to their baptism into Christ. Notice **Colossians 2:12**, “Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” There is a marvelous working of God that takes place when people are baptized. One is raised to walk in newness of life (**Romans 6:3-4**). You will notice in these passages that the newness of life does not occur until one is baptized in Christ, the old man has been renounced, the old man has been put to death (**Colossians 3:5-10**); and the Christian is no longer living for self, but Christ (**Galatians 2:20**). Brethren, if we fail to live the new life, we are failing to live in harmony with one of the meanings of our baptism; we are raised a new creation; “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature” (**2 Corinthians 5:17**). No longer will we allow sin to reign in our bodies (**Romans 6:12-14**). We are to put to death the sin in our lives; “In whom ye were also circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in putting off the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ” (**Colossians 2:11**). “Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus” (**Romans 6:11**). As Christians we have died to the world, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (**Romans 12:1-2**). We must not fashion our lives to it (**1 Corinthians 7:31**). We are crucified from the world (**Galatians 6:14**). We are not to love this world (**1 John 2:15-17**). When we sank under the baptismal water, we disappeared forever to the world. We arose again it is true, but only to God. Our affections, thinking, must be fixed on things above, and not on this earth (**Colossians 3:2**). Are they? As Christians we make the shift from earthly to heavenly.

Put to death the things of the old man, “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God” (**Colossians 3:3**). We are to put on the new man (**Colossians 3:10**). The dead care nothing for things pertaining to the world they have left; Christians will no longer care for things merely belonging to earth, but having their affections fixed on things above! The Christian has been separated from an old sinful life (**Romans 6:14**). Question: Does your life show that you have been raised with Christ? The Christian is to seek, set his mind, on going to heaven. Our affections, thinking must be fixed on things above. As a child of God, one must live a Christian life. Is Christ, His church, first in your life since your baptism? Brethren, let the whole world see that a new man lives within; the old man has been put to death.

“Looking”

By Jarrod Jacobs

Our eyes are very necessary. Physically, our eyes can get us in trouble or can bless us, depending on where we direct them. At times in Scripture, we find where God referred to looking with our literal eyes. At other times, the “looking” under

consideration meant to perceive a certain thing. When we look into the Scripture, we find it to be the case with many Bible characters that where they directed their eyes, i.e., where they “looked”, often determined whether or not God considered them blessed or cursed people. Let us now “look” at some Bible characters and “see” (perceive, understand) what lessons we can learn from them when they looked at certain things.

Lot's Wife

Here is a lady who had a problem with her eyes. In the New Testament, she is referred to by Jesus only one time when He simply said, “Remember Lot's wife” (Lk. 17:32). What happened? Read **Genesis 19** where the angels came to deliver Lot and his family from the destruction coming to Sodom, Gomorrah, and the other cities of the plain. Not only were these folks commanded to go, but they were also told, “Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed” (v. 17). The next morning after they had entered the city of Zoar (v. 23), “The LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground” (v. 24-25). When this happened, Lot's wife “looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt” (v. 26).

Lot's wife disobeyed by looking where she should not have looked! As a result, she was punished by being turned into a pillar of salt. Just like Lot's wife, our eyes can get us into trouble, can't they? Especially when we realize that those eyes are controlled by a mind that was determined to do our own will and defy God! When this happens, the result is sin and punishment.

When we understand this, is there any wonder why Jesus would tell folks, “*No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God*” (Lk. 9:58). This is what Lot's wife did. She “looked” in fondness, longing, and memory, of what was being destroyed, and what she left behind, and was punished for it! We

ought not look back in fondness to our old lives of sin. This is not where life is! The Christian's life is in Christ (**Col. 3:4**)!

David

David had a similar problem to Lot's wife. That is, his mind controlled his eyes and made them look in a direction he ought not to have been looking. “*At the time when kings go forth to battle ... David tarried still at Jerusalem*” (II Sam. 11:1). One evening, “*David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon*” (v. 2). When David saw her, he had a choice to make. Would he turn away his eyes, or would he allow his mind to dwell upon her and lust after her? One trying to keep his mind and actions pure would have turned away, and not lingered on the image he saw. David did not do this. Instead, he looked, lusted, and then acted upon his lust (v. 3-4). His eyes and mind got him into trouble, and brought about consequences that extended far beyond that moment. He faced consequences he lived with for the rest of his life (see: II Sam. 12)!

This is not the only time when folks' eyes got them into trouble! We are aware that Potiphar's wife did a similar thing when she “cast her eyes” upon Joseph (**Gen. 39:7**)! Lust is not limited to one gender or the other, is it?

Let us learn from these wrong choices, these sins, as well as the consequences David faced because of his sin. John said that Satan uses “*the lust of the eyes*” as a way to tempt men to sin and be lost (**I Jn. 2:16**). The lust of the eyes is such a serious matter that Jesus said, “*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*” (**Matt. 5:27-28**). Let us beware and let us be like Job who made a “covenant with his eyes” not to look and lust (**Job 31:1**).

The Priest, Levite, And Samaritan

I include these three men because Jesus mentioned them together in His parable of the good Samaritan in **Luke 10:25-37**. Jesus began His parable by speaking of a man who had been badly beaten, robbed, and left for dead on the road between Jerusalem and Jericho. After this, three men walked the same road and looked on him (v. **31-33**). Yet, only one had compassion on him! Three men saw; but while two men passed the man and went on their way, one man stopped what he was doing, allowed himself to be "inconvenienced," and took care of the man.

Just as in our earlier examples, we see a man, this Samaritan, whose mind was engaged. Unlike the others, though, once his mind was engaged, and he looked upon this beaten man, he would not allow him to be ignored and die on the road. No, he was not a "doctor." He was not a "paramedic." He just did what he could to assist a man who could not help himself. He looked upon someone who had no way of repaying or rewarding him, and had compassion. How this is needed today! In contrast with our first two examples who showed us things we ought not look at, the Samaritan is an example of something we ought to be doing! How considerate are we?

Us

We today are not excluded from the need for being careful what we look at! We need to be looking upon the right things, and what better to look upon than Christ? The book of Hebrews says, *"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, **Looking unto Jesus** the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (12:1-2).*

Is there any greater phrase than "Looking unto Jesus" in this study? We need to look to Jesus because He is the "author and finisher of our faith." In other words, He is the

beginning and the end! In truth, He is the beginning, the end, and everything in-between when it comes to our faith! When hard times come, where do we look? When the triumphs come in life, where do we look? Christians ought to be "looking unto Jesus" because He deserves the praise (I **Pet. 4:11**), the glory (**Eph. 3:21**), the love (**Jn. 14:15**), the worship (**Jn. 4:24**), the obedience (**Matt. 7:21**), and everything else in our lives (**Col. 3:17**)! When we look to Him, then we can enjoy spiritual blessings in this relationship (**Eph. 1:3**).

Conclusion

How are we, spiritually? Are we looking unto Jesus? Is our mind right? What has our attention right now? Don't we want these blessings mentioned in this lesson? Don't we want to avoid the sins mentioned in this lesson? It is possible. As we have learned, in order to avoid the sinful practices that come by looking at the wrong things, it requires us to get our minds right so that we can then get our eyes looking in the right direction!

In order to enjoy the blessings found in Christ, it demands that we become a Christian. This also demands our minds be in the right place because we begin by going from being a non-believer to being a believer in Christ (**Jn. 8:24; Heb. 11:6**). This faith is based upon what we read in the Bible (**Rom. 10:17**). Based upon our faith, we must repent of past sins (**Lk. 13:3; Acts 17:30**) and confess our faith in Christ (**Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:10**). Then, we must be baptized in order to be saved (**Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; I Pet. 3:21**). Following the Lord's plan of salvation puts us into Christ (**Gal. 3:27**), gives us a new name, Christian (**Acts 11:26**), and gives us a new relationship, wherein we are "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ" (**Rom. 8:17**). There is no other way but Christ's way! It is foolish to look anywhere else! Friend, where are you looking?

What Do I Owe My Congregation?

Author Unknown

I owe it my loyalty. I must help carry out every good work it undertakes. I should help other congregations in special efforts, but I should not neglect my home congregation. I owe it my dependability. I am depending on it for many things it does in my behalf. It is not fair and right for me to depend on it and not be such that it cannot depend on me.

I owe it my financial support. It takes money to operate the church and preach the gospel. I am responsible to the Lord to give as He has prospered me. My home congregation has first call on my financial ability, for if the members of the church do not support the work of the home congregation, it will not be supported. The expenses go on whether I am there or not, so I should make up my contribution when absent.

I owe it my presence. If everyone stayed home there would be no worship of God. I am responsible as anyone to attend all of my congregation's services. I must not be a parasite.

I owe it the influence of a godly life. The life I live either helps others to obey the gospel or makes it the harder for them. How I live affects the work of the church and the salvation of the lost. I should live in such a way that my life will be blessing to others.

"Which Church Should I Attend?"

One Where His Name Is Glorified

Acts 4:12 - No other name whereby we might be saved.

Acts 11:26 - God gave the name Christian

1 Peter 4:16 - We can glorify God in this name.

One Where His Teachings On Salvation Are Followed

John 14:6 - Only He is the way to heaven.

Hebrews 5:9 - All must obey Him to be saved.

John 8:24 - He said we must believe on Him.

Luke 13:3 - He said we must repent.

Matthew 10:32-33 - He said we must confess Him.

Mark 16:16 - He said we must be baptized to be saved.

One Where His Will Is Followed In Worship

John 4:24 - Worship must be sincere and proper actions.

Acts 20:7 - Lord's Supper on the first day of the week.

Colossians 3:16 - Singing praises to God.

Acts 2:42 - Prayer and teaching.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2 - Giving of our means on the first day of the week.

YOU SHOULD ATTEND THE CHURCH OF CHRIST. "The churches of Christ salute you." (**Romans 16:16**)

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3

Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24

Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30

Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21

Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27

Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

About the Hillcrest church of Christ

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Our Address

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Times of Assembly

Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month

www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com