

Hebrews 11, 12 (Conrad Bowman) (March or April 2005)

Chapter 11. Hebrews chapter 11 please.

My mom's in her early nineties, and I was speaking to her yesterday. She said, how do you feel. That's what she always asks me. How do you feel? And if I tell her I feel good, she tells all the rest of the boys, Rad's doing great. And if I tell her I'm feeling bad, she says, oh, I feel so bad. So I don't like to tell her that I feel bad. So, I try to find some neutral words. I'll say, how are you feeling mom? I just don't feel good Rad. I don't feel good. I'll say, well, do you hurt? No. I don't hurt. Well, what's wrong. Well, I just don't feel as good as I used to. [Laughter]. I can't do the things I used to do. So I think I'm just ready to go home. I said, well, you can't do that until I

Gentleman. [Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. I said, well, you can't go home until I get there. You've got to wait until I get better and get there before you can go. Isn't it great to be able to say that between believers.

Ann Butler – I want to say that while you're here – I've said it a couple of times while you're gone. You are the source of some of the most amazing literature that I read. She brings me books every once in a while. A couple by Brother Andrew's association. I always took Brother Andrew as a kind of a trivial fringe character in Christianity. That's not. That whole organization is dedicated to praying for people who are our enemies. Right. It changed my whole perspective on prayer to read the book by the President of the organization. And it reminded me – he wormed his way into the Palestinian organization and into a meeting with Arafat to present the Gospel. Not to search for peace, but to present the Gospel, realizing that's the only source of peace there is. I took that as a personal rebuff, because that just held my feet to the fire, when I think of how little I pray for that. And it was marvelous. And then the book on Fenelon, the archbishop of England – of London. It was absolutely amazing. I've looked up and read some history on Fenelon. And I've mentioned him I think in this class once before. Under Louie the Fourteenth. Louie the 14th had a child who was as wild ...

Ann Butler. [Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. And he turned him over to Fenelon, because Fenelon was a man filled with grace. He knew Madame Guyon. Fenelon and she were close.

They were probably the last voice of spiritual reason in France in the 1600s. Both of them – they died within two years of one another. Fenelon was shuffled off to an obscure little parish, and Madame Guyon died. She was a very Christian searer. And they corresponded with one another. France went into spiritual decline at that point, and has never recovered. The darkness in France today is the end product of turning a deaf ear to those voices. And it reminds us how important it is to stick by our guns and pray for these people. Pray for these people. And – well, enough of that. I wandered, but I wanted to tell you how much I appreciate the stuff you put in my hands. It's been remarkable.

Hebrews chapter 11. We finished the first half of this last week, and we're going to continue today. Let's start with – well, just to get a running start on it, Hebrews chapter 11 is a recitation of people of faith. And as you start going through this list, you start thinking about the things they did in response to the faith. Abel offered to God a better sacrifice, in verse 4. Enoch walked with God in faith so closely that God took him took him, translated him, to heaven without his facing death. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him," in verse 6. By faith Noah preached for 120 years that it was going to rain. And remember, it had never rained before. Man had not seen rain. He didn't know what rain was. It went up a midst, Genesis tells us, and watered the whole face of the earth. There was not such thing as rain or direct sunlight. Sunlight was indirect, the whole earth was tropical, and here went up this midst. Just like a tropical hothouse, that watered the whole face of the earth. That's what Genesis tells us. And Noah keeps telling these people, it's going to rain. There's going to come a flood, and they didn't believe him. He preached for 120 years, without a single convert. Now, when we start feeling bad about the ministry of our church, because we don't have all the calls, people who come to know the Lord under the ministry of this church usually are invisible to the congregation at large. It's a personal thing, which it should be. It's a private thing, which it should be at first. And then you just see people growing and becoming more active and more activated, and you realize the change that's been wrought in them. That's the way it ought to be. That's the way it ought to be. Okay. But we need to remind ourselves, Noah preached for 120 years without a single respondent. He did it in response to God's instruction. That's the governing force in our life. What God has given you to do, do unwavering. Don't waver in it. And do it consistently. And keep on doing it where you are until God gives you instructions otherwise. One summer in Jackson, I was on the Board of Elders at Riverwood. And we had, like 20 to 25 young people. Freshman, sophomores in college, who would come to us, come to the Board and say, we want to contact some people in the church about support for our ministry. And for the most part, they would shunt those

people off to me. And I'd say, Okay, lets meet and we'll talk about this. And my approach was always the same. I'd ask them, what is it you feel called to do. Well, I'm going to the home office of Campus Crusade in Colorado. Or I'm going to the college in Florida. Or I'm going to the headquarters in California. What are you going to do there? I'm going to be a groundskeeper. Okay. You feel called to be a groundskeeper in the organization. Yes, I do. I would say, fine. How many yards did you cut here last week? You know. We've got a dozen people, older couples, who find it very difficult to do that kind of thing. If you feel called to be a groundskeeper, how many grounds did you keep here where you are? You feel like you're being called to California, or you're called to Colorado. Don't confuse location with vocation, as directed by God. Make sure you understand what your call is. I feel called to go to so-and-so as a missionary. That's great. What kind of missionary work are you involved in here? You know. Don't confuse – you don't have to go China. You don't have to go to Mexico. You don't have to go to Europe to be a missionary. If you feel God has called you into missions work, are you involved in missions work now? If you're not, let's pray together and clarify your call before we start putting you in touch with people that are going to give you the means to go to a place where God may not intend for you to go. Let's be sure about this. I never read that anywhere until I got a paper by Gaebelein that he'd printed in 1938 that said pretty much the same thing. And I only found that paper last year. There's some of that old stuff I've wandered through. It confirmed that the tack I was taking about 30 years ago was probably right.

Now, when we went through the first of this chapter, we keep reading by faith, by faith, by faith, by faith. When we get to the end of this chapter which we're going to today, when we get to the end of this chapter we've going to find it's not your faith that's being exercised. Who is the perfector, the author and perfector of faith? Jesus Christ. That's what it said back in Hebrews chapter 5.

Although He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered, and thereby became the author and finisher or perfector of faith.

It's His faith that's being applied. We make too much of the fact that this faith enumerated in these verses in this chapter are the faith of the individual. It's not. It's not. Their trust has been vested in the Son of God. Their trust has been vested in the answer to their salvation. It's His faith pouring out through them that led them to do what they did – you remember the conclusion from last week? **God does not want your deeds. He wants your life.** If He's got your life here, and you've given it to Him, He'll work His deeds in your life, and you'll be rewarded

for it. And it'll be His work, and you'll quit trying to take credit for it, which we do instinctively. Remember that hand creeping over the shoulder. It gets back there. [Conrad patting himself on the back]. What a good boy you are. What a good job you did. [Laughter]. See that column of smoke rising when you just burn that one up. That's what happens.

Alright. Abraham, remember, never was able to take possession of the land that was promised to him. He moved out, finally, after God's instructions, but imperfectly, he took his dad with him. He took Lot with him. He took Lot's dad with him, Nahor, which was his uncle and Lot's dad. And he took them with him when he was instructed to leave his family and kindred behind. So God watched him as he went. He had trouble with Lot. Terah died in a dried up place. Instead of going into the land of promise, he ended up in a dried up place, a wilderness, until Terah died off. That's a picture of the Christian life. God gives us instructions and He says, here's what I want you to do. And we say, okay, okay, and I've got a great idea about how to do that. You know. And so we take off with our great idea and we strike out, believing that we have enhanced God's plan. Well, where we end up is in Haran, the dried up place, until our idea dies on the vine. And when God's corrected that and moved that human reasoning out of the way, then progress can be made again. So that was Abraham's story. And he ends up going into Canaan and moved into Canaan. And back in Genesis it says, when he moved into Canaan, there's Bethel on the right and Ai on the left. Ai means a place of ruin. Bethel means a place of blessing. The House of God. That's the way it is in the Christian life. In the Christian life, you've got God's place of blessing on one hand, but you've got that old nature on the other hand. That's the place of ruin. Okay. Now we're going to see where God dealt with that in Christ in just a little bit. The Christian life is not without challenges, because it gives us God's place of blessing. That's here. That's here. That's in the sanctuary which is Christ where I retreat, every time I get my mind wrapped around it. I can retreat into Jesus. Retreat into Him. And take my union with Him, and it becomes a conscious reality all over again. And I can bask in that, because there is where the love of the Father is poured out on us without measure, is when we retreat into Christ. In Christ, all things become His work, not my work. All opportunity becomes His opportunity to present Himself to a lost world. Not my opportunity to present Him. The extent to which it becomes my opportunity is the extent to which it's flawed. That's difficult, because we're called to service. But understand, Christian service, at its highest peak, is moving ourselves out of the way and letting the Lord Jesus loose in our circumstance, and not hindering Him, and then watch Him work His work. It doesn't matter whether it's in your body. Or whether it's in a friend's body. Or

whether it's in a friend's, friend's body. Or whether it's in their mind. Or whether it's in their circumstance, or whatever it is. We prayed today – Martin reminded us a few minutes ago, let's pray. And in the circumstances we face, that Christ will be glorified in everything. That the testimony would be real to the physicians that treat us. And the patients that are in the next room. And the nurses that are watching. And the friends of ours who gather around – feel sorry for us. Some do. Others glory with us, understanding that every circumstance is an opportunity to turn the Gospel loose. And the Gospel in the hands of the Lord Jesus grows and grows with power. Because it's His good news.

Now, in verse 9,

9. Abraham lived as an alien in the land of promise as in a foreign land dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise;

10. but he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

11. By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive [I'm reading in the New American Standard, by the way], even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised.

Sarah's faith was that God was faithful and able to do what He said He would do. But the idea was so foreign to her, it was so far beyond her, that she laughed about it. Okay. And that hindered. That hindered.

12. Therefore there was born even of one man, and him as good as dead at that [that's Abraham], as many descendants AS THE STARS OF HEAVEN IN NUMBER, AND INNUMERABLE AS THE SAND WHICH IS BY THE SEASHORE.

13. All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

Okay. They believed in the promises even though they did not have the fulfillment in their hands. Abraham was allowed to move into the land, but he

never, ever, possessed it as his own. What happened the first time trouble came? Down to Egypt. Down to Egypt. Let's get out of here. We're going to Egypt. And there's a pattern that followed that. We studied it in Genesis, when all the sons, when all the sons, they sent Joseph, sold him into slavery. The first time trouble and famine came into the land, all his brothers – down to Egypt they went. They found Joseph already there. Already there. Now, there's a picture there. There's a picture. Even when we are driven outside of fellowship by the circumstances we face, the Deliverer is already there where we're going. There is no place that we can – Paul said it, Paul said it, in Romans 6 – no height, no depth, nor any creature – there's nothing that can separate us from the love of God. That's the restatement of that in Gentile terms. But they have it right here in their history with their fathers.

All these act in faith without receiving the promises

14. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own.

15. And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return.

And you remember when Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt and they cried. Have you brought us out here to starve us to death? We really want the flesh pots of Egypt back. You know, we like the leeks and the garlic and the onions, and that sort of thing. Mediterranean food is really spicy. And they longed for the spiciness and savor of the country from which they were delivered. **They preferred, under Moses, they preferred to be well fed rather than free.** That's a mark on human nature. God has declared His Church of the New Testament free from Law. Not just free from "the Law" of Israel, but free from law altogether. We are governed by grace. The majority of the Church would rather have a set of rules to go by rather than to live free exposed to the God of heaven. Give us rules. Tells us what we can do so that we know we are spiritual. Tell us what we can do so that we know we are acceptable to God. Well, what you can do is live by faith in your life. That's so private, isn't it? Hmm. How does that faith have to be displayed publicly? Well it doesn't. Not really. It will be discovered. But it doesn't have to be lived publicly, displayed publicly. It's a personal contract between you and God – the faith that you live by. Okay. And that's what he wants. That's the nature of the Church.

16. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

17. By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son;

That's as pattern for what the Lord is going to do, God is going to do, with His own Son. Four hundred, six hundred, or one thousand years later.

18. it was he to whom it was said, IN ISAAC YOUR SEE SHALL BE CALLED."

19. Now, he considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead ...

That's Abraham. Remember when he told them at the bottom of the mountain – the boy and I are going up to worship, and we'll both be back down in a little bit. He knew, but he expected to offer Isaac up, and that God would raise Isaac – resurrect him. Right there on the mountain.

20. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau ...

Notice that Jacob blessed both brothers, even though God would say later, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I loved less, or have I hated in the *King James*.

20. By faith, Isaac blessed both, even regarding things to come.

21. By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and worshiped, leaning on the top of his staff.

So as he approached the end of his life he still clung to the promise of the land that was made to Abraham. And he gave instructions that his bones were to be carried into that land of promise and buried there. He wanted to be resurrected there, because he believed in the resurrection too.

22. By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave further orders concerning his bones.

23. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a fair child [beautiful]; and they were not afraid of the king's edict. [They had faith that God would preserve him, and them].
24. By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter [he exercised the same faith],
25. choosing rather to endure ill-treatment [here's the cost of obedience. Endure ill treatment] with the people of God rather than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,

Now this is not sins. It's Sin in the singular. And anytime you see "Sin" in the singular, it's talking about the nature of sin within you. The old sin nature within you that drives you in opposition to God. So "Sin" is in the singular.

26. considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

He considered the reproach of Christ. Now, we're talking now about Moses. And the writer to the Hebrews is referencing Moses and he introduced Christ. Because these Hebrews have seen – remember now who he's writing to – these Hebrews who are considering the Gospel. They have seen the Messiah come and rejected. And crucified. And buried. And raised and ascended. And glorified by the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. They've seen all of that. They've been witnesses to all of that. So, when the writer to the Hebrews references the faith of Moses, he references that he considered the reproach of Christ, or Messiah, greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, where he's looking to the reward. And the word there is Messiah in the text. Okay.

27. By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.

That's the very expression of faith. Looking forward and declaring to be real that which you cannot see. Evidence of things hoped for. Right? Evidence of things hoped for – that's the un-seeable declared to be seen. We do that all the time. I envision the day when Christ Himself, for His own purposes, will make me well. I'm looking forward to that. I don't see it on the horizon yet, except by faith. And that faith is not mine. It's the faith of the Lord, borne in me. Okay. When I consider that His work in me is finished, it's done. It's done. My faith then is in

the heavenly hope of seeing Him face to face. So it's just a transference of that same faith.

27. By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.

28. By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood [on the doors], so that he who destroyed the firstborn might not touch them.

And that would be the Israelites. He took the blood of the sacrifice, put it over the door, and when the death angel passed over the land, it passed over the son's of Israel who were marked by the blood and gathered in the houses. Any questions? Okay.

29. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though they were passing through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned.

30. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days.

I'm moving rapidly toward the end of this chapter because I want to get to the first verses of the next one.

31. By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace. You remember, she hung a red ribbon, a red cloth, a string, out the window, so that they would know where it was safe to enter the walls of Jericho.

32. And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets,

Now, let me get over here on another page. Barak, who was called by Deborah, who was a prophetess. Deborah sat in judgment over Israel at the time of the Judges. God had told her that the oppressing Canaanites were to be delivered into the hands of the sons of Israel. Barak believed her account, and with his army pursued and killed every single one of the Canaanites. They had a superior army. That was Balak.

Sampson was the only judge over Israel who never used an army against the enemies of Israel. He was a man of great contrast. He was a Nazirite. He took the vows of a Nazirite. Let his hair grow. Drank no alcohol. Gave himself to a life of denials – self-denial. Except for women. He chose to breach his vows in that regard with alliances. He was Spirit lead, but it was from time to time. And in your outline you've got several references in Judges for that. Yet he constantly consort with prostitutes. It was a habit of his. His strength derived from God's enablement, and when he trusted God's leading, his actions were virtually unmatched by anybody. And we know the stories of his strength. We don't know the stories of his weaknesses, and we need to look carefully at that. God chooses men who are inherently weak in order that His strength might become evident.

Jephthah became a judge over Israel at the request of the Elders because he was a mighty warrior. Dwight Eisenhower comes to mind. After wars, we tend to elect as politicians men who learned to win their way by virtue of a sword or armament. By might. And these are examples of that. In just a few years, we forget what they did. And we tend then to go to men who have a mighty tongue, and talk a good game. And invariably, they end up getting us into alliances which bring us back to the mighty warriors to clean up their act. Patten comes to mind. MacArthur comes to mind. All men who were lauded and honored in a conflict and after a conflict, and are soon discredited because their views didn't fit the political climate of the day. That's the kind of world we live in. What's a believer's position in all of that? Where are we? There was a paper that was written in 1862 called, "Can a Consistent Believer Dabble in Politics?" And his conclusion was, there's no way. They're absolutely in conflict with one another. That if you involve yourself with the well-being of the nation other than with the ministry of the Gospel and the Ministry of Reconciliation, you've compromised your entire life's purpose. You can't do it. You can follow good politics and accept it as a blessing from God. And we vote, and we support that, and we support things that move in freedom. But, our cast is the Ministry of Reconciliation, Paul tells us back in Romans. That's our job. It's to reach the world with the message that God has reconciled the world to Him in Christ. It's done. There's a condition of peace that exists between He and the world. And that's the message we need to be taking to the world. Okay. Which brings me back to some of the stuff that Ann gave me, because there're people that are involved in operating on that basis without qualification. And every time I read that, it just blows me away. I have to go back and read it all over again. So what drives these men to do that? To go into very dangerous places. To put themselves at risk in order to reach those that we consider our enemies with the

Gospel of Peace. Was he successful? I don't know. He doesn't know either? He has no way of knowing. But whether or not he was successful is not the point. His job is to minister the Gospel of Peace to everybody he can. And he feels uniquely called to do that to some of our political enemies. God bless him. He's worthy of my prayers. He's worthy of all the support I can generate. Those kinds of people are the missionaries of Christ to the world. And they set a high standard. And so Jephthah – pressed by the Amorites – Jephthah was called, the warrior was called back to serve, and his appeal to God for victory, he made God a vow. And on his return from victory, he would go into his house, and the first thing that walked through the door of his possessions, he would dedicate to God. He thought it was going to be an animal. One of his sheep, or oxen, or something. Lo and behold, he marches into his house and takes his seat in the place of honor, and the first thing through the door was his own daughter. She was dancing in celebration of his return. It took him a couple of months to deal with it, but he gave her to the Levitical order as a servant. He kept his word.

Samuel was the last of Israel's judges, and like Sampson he was a Nazirite. Which again, in abstinence and alcohol and sexual promiscuity, which condemned Sampson for his dalliance with prostitutes, and absolutely no contact with a dead body. Which is probably the reason Sampson didn't lead an army against the enemies of Israel. Because there was a lot of death there, and Sampson as a Nazirite was prohibited from coming into contact with anything dead. It would render him unfit. Samuel served as the Lord's prophet – he served as an intercessor into the sin not to pray for others, in 1st Samuel. When he offered sacrifices and anointed kings, though Samuel was a judge, he acted like a priest. Now you remember the period of time when Abraham honored Melchizedek as a priest of Salem and a king of Salem. And, established the pattern of Christ on the priesthood. Because Christ was a priest not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedek. Melchizedek was not under the Law of Israel. He was outside the Law of Israel. Christ's priesthood is outside the Law of Israel. He satisfied the Law and was condemned by the Law. But His priesthood originated outside the camp of Israel. So the Church is called – as are these Hebrews, are considering the Messiah's claim on their life, are called to meet the Messiah outside the camp of Israel. What that says is, you can't stay under the Law and meet the Messiah. Because the Law governs within the walls of the Law. And the call is to come outside the camp where Christ was crucified and meet the Messiah outside the camp. Think how significant that is. [The call to the Church is to meet as an assembly, a sacred body, not governed by Law, but by Grace. Our standard is the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. Not the life He lived on His way to the cross. The life that He lives now on the throne on high.](#)

Our pattern is the ascended, risen, enthroned Christ. Not the Christ that walked in Bethany. The world at large, most of evangelical Christianity, would have us pattern our lives after the Messiah who was on His way to death, offending the Law, and condemned by the Law. The only way you can do that is to move to the other side of the cross, in approach to it. Where you live, our entire life is spent on this side of the resurrection. On this side of the ascension. The Church began at Pentecost, ten (10) days after the ascension. He ascended on the fortieth (40th) day. On the fiftieth (50th) day, Pentecost began. That's when the Church had it's genesis. We live empowered by the ascended Christ, not by the victorious Christ on His way to the cross. That's done. When He said it's finished, the finished accomplished work of Christ was in fact done, and provides life for us. Now that means one thing to us. Can you imagine what this message had to have meant to a Hebrew who had grown up under the Law, had seen all these things take place, and now into the Church Age, they're being faced with the message. This is the last appeal that's made to a nation that was born under the Law. And you have to read Hebrews with that in mind. We were never born under the Law. Not any of us. Okay. This has a different context for us than it did for them. But the call to their heart had to be strong, because they didn't even ask you about their tradition. The life of their family. The Law that governed their life. And step out into faith in grace with its uncertainty, all its uncertainty. The only thing guaranteed to us is union with Christ. We are in God's family. They were never offered that before. The Law didn't bring that to them. Didn't offer it to them. Only to those from Pentecost forward. The Church is so unique. So unique, we can spend the rest of our lives defining the uniqueness of life in Christ, and all that God has done for us. We can spend the rest of our life doing that.

Now, let's move to chapter 12. I'm skipping a few verses there, but that's okay.

Gentleman. We can always get back to them.

Conrad Bowman. Probably will. Probably will. Chapter 12 starts out with therefore. "Therefore" means, based on the entire preceding list. Okay. It incorporates everything that we've just said in chapter 11.

1. Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance ...

The great cloud of witnesses is most often spoken of as being the angelic hoard who watches everything we do. But it also, based on what it's saying right here,

the great cloud of witnesses incorporates all the faithful who are watching us. And all of those who are being called to faith who are watching us. The great cloud of witnesses is not only an angelic cloud of watchers, but also an earthly cloud of watchers. Because we are all – present tense – on the ground testimonies to what God is doing in the human race.

1. Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin ...

Singular. Not “sins.” It’s not talking about you dealing with “sins” individually, it’s lay aside that old sin nature. You have been given victory over that old man by virtue of having been raised to newness of life with Christ. That’s Romans 6. Okay. You’ve been raised in victory over this. **You can allow that old sin nature to direct your life, or you can claim the victory that Christ won for you by His death, burial, and resurrection. And we claim that victory.**

... the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with patient endurance the race that is set before us [there’s individual opportunity],

2. fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith [that’s going back to Hebrews chapter 5, just before it gets to chapter 6], who for the joy set before Him ...

Remember His prayer in the Garden?

Father, if there’s any other way, let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done.

That speaks to the humanity of Christ. The anguish that He was going to face.

... He, who for the joy set before Him, endured the cross, despised the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Look at what he offers to these Hebrews? An ascended, enthroned Christ. That’s who we fix our eyes on. That’s an act of will.

3. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.

Okay. That word "heart" is *psuche*. It's not *kardia*. *Kardia* is the word they use for "heart." The Greek word for "heart." *Kardia*. See, "not lose heart to us" says, don't become faint hearted. Don't lose your hope. Don't lose your energetic support of God's idea. That's not what this verse says. The word for heart there is *psuche*, which is the word for "soul." Don't lose soul. Now understand, you have three things going for you: Body, soul, and spirit. Spirit is that part of man that communicates with God. Spirit is enlivening – you are made spiritually alive. Soul is everything you are that relates to the world in which we live. What this verse says is, consider Him who has endured such – if you don't fix your eyes on Jesus, you will lose your inner soul's ability to orient itself to grace. There's no way you can stay oriented to grace and grace's provision without fixing your eyes on Jesus. If He's not the object of your gaze. The object of your affection. The object of your response to God. If you don't have Him clearly in front of you, every day, your soul is going to grow weary and you will not be able to see His grace at work in your life. You'll lose your orientation to grace. This is a strong, strong admonition. It's not that you'll just become weak hearted and discouraged. No, no. That's not what it's talking about. It's talking about losing your orientation to God. Okay. Now that's a serious consequence. But that's how important fixing your eyes on Jesus is. If we don't keep Him firmly in front of us, our soul begins to wander. And then we'll start taking on as a church, as a body, we'll start taking on the world's system. We'll begin to run a church around here that looks like a Madison Avenue company. What can we do to attract the next crowd? And what can we do to attract the next crowd? And when we do that we start worrying about the empty seats rather than the empty heads that are teaching what needs to be taught. Our message will be weakened, because we don't sense the grace of God at work. Okay. That needs to be alive in each one of us. Everyone of us. We do what we do because our eyes are fixed firmly on Him. Our suffering means nothing when compared to His suffering. Our pain is nothing compared to what He experienced for us. So let's quit that. **Let's get our gaze off the cross and on to the enthroned Christ. If we stop at the cross, we miss the empowerment of the Church. And most of evangelical Christianity wants to stop at the cross. And bathe in the suffering. And bathe in the price He paid. And they never get through that to the resurrection and the ascension. And the ascension is where victory was won. And after the ascension was where our empowerment took place. We can't stay on that side of the cross. We've got to move to this side. Through the resurrection. Through the ascension. And to the empowerment by the Spirit of God.**

3. Consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and loose your soul's orientation.
4. You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin;
5. and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons ...

You can read those next two verses and that admonition for yourself. They'll come back up next week. Thank you so much. Let's pray.

Father, it's a constant source of amazement that what You did in the Son You did for me as an individual. And for each one of us. We glory, Father, in what You've made available to us, and the fact that You've raised us into a relationship with Yourself. It just – we can hardly wrap ourselves around that, though we see the evidence of it every day, in our own circumstance. Give us Father a sense of the enablement, the Spirit of God within us this week, that our walk might truly display the life of the Lord Jesus, in His name. Amen.

[This recording was transcribed on a tape recorder, and transmitted to a digital format. The earlier recordings, of which this is one, were made on a tape recorder. Some are more audible than others].