

Proclaiming the Gospel

Message
of
Jesus Christ

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness;
But unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1.18).

Edifying the Body of Christ (Eph. 4.10-16)

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The Wise Still Seek Him

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Looking Back?

How distracted I become from living a life for the Lord Jesus Christ! The enemy knows just how to get my attention. Not only does he know how to get my attention, but he knows how to lead me down a path of distraction. He knows what will discourage me. He knows what will cause me to become angry. He knows what will cause grief in my life. He knows what will take me a few more steps from the Master, from Jesus Christ. It is called, "Looking back."

Oh, how *I could have* done better in my life. How *I could have* lived a life more closely to the calling of Jesus Christ upon my life. *I could have* walked in the righteousness and holiness of the Lord God Almighty in Jesus Christ. *I could have . . .* But! Sin!

I wonder if Adam and Eve looked back (Gen 3).

I wonder if David looked back (II Sam 12).

I wonder if Isaiah looked back (Isa 6.1-8).

I wonder if Peter looked back (Mt 26.75).

I wonder if Thomas looked back, each of the disciples (Jn 20.19-29).

I wonder if . . .

Some did look back:

Lot's wife did (Gen 19.26).

Demas did (II Tim 4.10).

Simon the Magician did (Acts 8.9-20).

Alexander the Coppersmith did (II Tim 4.14-15).

Those who looked back, turned back. Their hearts went after that to which they turned (or returned). Yes, they longed for what they used to be, where they used to live . . .

Let us look at some scriptures. Luke 17.22 says, "Remember Lot's wife." You respond by saying that is talking about someone who looked back with a longing. Yes, however, the bottom line is that she was distracted from the call of the Lord to go forward.

When this happens, when we are walking with Him, there is no looking back, there are no reviews to be done by us, you or me, by any who know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. You cannot stay on *The Way of the Cross*, walking forward with Jesus Christ, and look back at the same time.

Remember, one who is ploughing cannot plough straight furrows if he looks back. We are called to walk in Him, to dwell in Him and invite Him to dwell in us that we may go forth, go forward with our eyes focused on Jesus, to accomplish that to which He calls us.

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Co-laborers together for Jesus Christ

Come apart and rest (Mark 6.31).

Let us look at Philippians 3.13 which says, "...forgetting those things which are behind..." You respond by saying that he was speaking of those experiences of where he had been and what he had done for the Lord. Maybe, but he did not allow his mind to be diverted from that which would keep him walking on with the Master, the Lord Jesus Christ.

One will accomplish little who allows his mind to be distracted from the call of the Saviour. Looking back will bring sadness to us, will dishearten us, will discourage us from going on with the Lord Jesus Christ, will cause us to focus upon ourselves, may even bring despondency. It certainly will not encourage us to go forward with the Lord Jesus Christ. Anytime we look back, we are serving the Lord with half a heart, and know that half a heart is no heart at all for the Lord. We cannot walk with one foot with the Savior and one foot in the world, in the lane of memory of our lives. Looking back is what the enemy wants us to do as it takes our eyes off Jesus.

That which takes our eyes and hearts off the Savior, our Redeemer, is not of the Lord Jesus Christ. Looking back brings no good thing in your life. You are not the evaluator of your life. You are not called to review your life, but you are called to go forward with the Lord.

When we sin, we are to repent, to turn from the enemy, from Satan, and give our hearts anew to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us look at Luke 9.62, "And Jesus said unto him, **No man**, having put his hand to the plough, and **looking back**, is fit for the kingdom of God." One who looks back, for whatever reason, will not see the work which lies before him. Watch someone plough a furrow with his head turned back. You say, "But Jesus is talking about the heart being turned back." Yes, but you cannot separate the head and the heart. Just to take a glance, to look back, is to take your eyes off the calling upon your life by the Lord Jesus. It is to be distracted from the work of the Lord to which you are called. It is to take your eyes off Jesus. Remember Peter? When he took his eyes off Jesus, he began to sink. He looked down! (Mt 14.30).

I do not know about you, but the wind does not have to be very boisterous for me to be distracted. Satan can give just a poof of wind, and down I go, looking back over my life, reviewing it, being discouraged with all that I did wrong and what I did not do, how I could have done better, been wiser . . . No, when, in fact, I could have walked in the holiness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Looking back is to look down! Instead, we are called to press forward to the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Nehemiah is a giant in my understanding of those who press forward (Neh 6). He knew the calling of God upon his life. He not only knew the

calling of the Lord upon his life, but he responded with a "yes" to the Lord God. He was called to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and he did. He was not ashamed of the One Whom he served. He received the call of God as one who is in the army (II Tim 2.4).

Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *[this]* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, *[yet]* is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully (II Tim 2.1-5).

While re-building the temple, Zerubbabel refused to be distracted by the world's standards of joining forces with the enemy – the enemy who says, "Let us understand each other; let us work together; we all serve the same god . . ." (Ezra 4.1-3). It is easy to be distracted with the government saying that you need to understand those other religions and work together. No, hear the Word of the Lord and Zerubbabel's answer to the enemy, "Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God . . ." (Ezra 4.3).

Notice Nehemiah's response to the enemy when Nehemiah was re-building the wall of Jerusalem (Neh 6.1-12). He does not enter into counsel with anyone but the Lord Jesus Christ. When the enemy wanted to meet with him, he replied, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it and come down to you?" (Verse 3).

Satan says, "Come, let us take counsel together regarding your past – look back. It will help you to live better if you know what you have done and how you can improve . . ." No, it will distract you from the work to which God has called you. Walk on; walk on; walk on. Arise and walk on!!!

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin (I Jn 1.7).

When we no longer take counsel with the enemy; when we walk in the Lord; when the glory of the Lord is present; and we respond as did Isaiah (Isa 6), the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin. We walk in newness of life in Jesus Christ. We are called by Jesus to be a royal priesthood, an holy nation unto Him; the body of Christ is called to be an holy nation unto Him.