

Proclaiming the Gospel

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)

October, 2011

The Wise Still Seek Him

Vol. III.10

Looking Forward!

The Apostle Paul said, "I press toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Ph 3.14). God has called each of us to come into an intimate relationship with Him – a high calling, a calling to live in Him and He in us. It requires leaving our past, sinful way of life (or past "goodly" way of life), and counting it as nothing that we might follow the Lord Jesus Christ, living in Him.

Last month's message emphasized walking on in the Lord and His call upon our lives and – not looking back. Just how do we accomplish this?

When there is a pull (by our fleshly inclinations or by Satan himself) to slip back into old ways, how do we keep our minds centered on the goal ahead of us? When our failures in the past keep coming to mind, how do we overcome and rid our minds of such thoughts and the effects of them? Just how do we walk on in the Lord without succumbing to the pressures of the world and/or being affected by the ungodly atmosphere permeating the world today? Look forward!

Perhaps you are one who spent much of your past serving the Lord, seeing the power of God at work in changing lives time after time. Circumstances beyond your control make it impossible to carry on that ministry; you remember those days with longing. Satan attacks your mind, telling you how worthless you are, that you might as well give up. How do you "rise above" these attacks and walk on with the Lord? Look forward!

Looking back is what most of us spend our time doing when we are not daydreaming of a better tomorrow. Then we come back to the place and time where we are in the moment – with a feeling of defeat, all too often.

Then there are those who are taught to "fake it until you make it," those who live in la-la land while the rest of us sort of wish, at times, that we did – so as not to have to deal with our pain of failures and/or disappointments.

The question is, How are we to live a victorious life in the midst of failures and disappointments as we endeavor to walk with Jesus Christ and not look back? How do we take our harps down from the willow trees and sing the songs of Zion in a strange land, a land that we have not experienced before, a

Is there someone in need of encouragement in the Lord? Someone sick and needing prayer? One who needs to receive Jesus Christ as Savior? Do I need to do battle in prayer for someone?

Looking back will not change the past. We have been given a brand new day with new circumstances and new opportunities to serve the Lord. Starting each day anew, walk on in the Lord, always **looking forward** to each opportunity He has put before you **today**.

"Lord, what would You have me do **today**?"

Mrs. Bettie L. Lowery, M.R.E., Deaconess

The Rev. Mrs. Dr. C. S. Cole, Pastor, Ret.

Co-laborers together for Jesus Christ

Come apart and rest (Mark 6.31)

*Messengers
of
Jesus Christ*

land that is walking, if not running, from the ways of the Lord Jesus (Ps 137)? How do we go forward and not look back in our lives of disappointments personally – and as a people who have chosen Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

I know that you are asking for a one, two, three-step program. Not available. Clergy have even asked me for such programs on “How to . . .” The answer is, there is none available. The Lord Jesus demands that we walk by faith and not by sight.

No, the Lord does not offer to you what the “church(es)” offer. There is no such thing as mentoring to learn how to do “it.” The Lord Jesus discipled His followers. They were discipled by walking with Him on the *Via Dolorosa*. Discipling was a way of life as Deuteronomy 6.4-9 is the *Shema* (hearing and obeying), of which verses six and seven make clear the way of walking with the Lord.

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:
And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them
when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and
when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

Before we continue with how to go forward without looking back, let us briefly look at mentoring versus discipling. Satan has taught his followers some tactics that sound so good, and people are into goodliness – not godliness. Satan says, “Say, there is a program just for you to learn how to do good things, how to be better, how to have positive thoughts, how to look good to the people around you.” No program or mentoring will disciple us to walk with the Lord.

Satan says to you, “Seek out a mentoring program. There are all kinds, and many are found in the “church(es),” and they will encourage you, lift you up, make you feel good, and you will learn much about yourself. You will grow as you learn about yourself. People will think highly of you for entering into a mentoring program.”

Now, let us look at the word Mentor-ing. Where did this word come from? If you do your homework, you will find this word is far from contemporary. You will find that the story (*Illiad and Odyssey*) in which Mentor(ing) is found is less than acceptable to those who know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who have committed their lives to Him. Oh, how deceptive Satan is in his many disguises.

The point? If you desire to go forward and not look back as one whose life is committed to Jesus Christ, the only Begotten Son of God, you will find that you must be discipled by Jesus Christ; you must walk by faith and not by sight, trusting Him to redeem and use even your past when you have repented and

committed it to Him. I am reminded of the feeding of the multitude; the Lord wasted nothing (Mt 14.20).

So, let us begin by going to the Word of God for direction. He alone will guide us as the body of Christ and as members of Christ’s Holy Church as He calls us to surrender our will to His and walk in obedience to Him.

Psalm 119.11 says, “Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee.” Oh, how many times have we asked people, “Do you know my Jesus; are you walking/living for Him?” – to which people usually respond with a yes. But, when asked if they are hiding the word of God in their hearts, if they are reading it daily, the response all too often is, No. We then ask, “How do you know you are living for Him if you are not reading His Word?”

The Word of the Lord Jesus, the Holy Bible, is not to be *understood*, it is to be eaten. Jeremiah 15.16 says, “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.”

When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, it was the Word of the Lord that strengthened him. Oh, Satan quoted scripture as so many do, but out of context. Jesus, being the Word as well as knowing the Word, spoke with authority the true Word to defeat the enemy. I say to you, that we cannot do this unless we truly have the Word of the Lord in us and allow it to flow through us as the enemy comes. The Word gives us a holy boldness to speak forth the Truth of God in Christ Jesus when the enemy comes that we might not look back, but go forward. When we have the Word of the Lord in us, our thoughts will be on Jesus and His will for us in the moment.

The Holy Bible teaches that we are to abide, to dwell in Jesus and He in us. This is through the Word of the Lord as well as in our prayer life, which is a dialogue – not a monologue. We need to do more listening than talking when with Jesus. You see, I can recall what it was like to be in love, though I have been widowed for quite some years. When you are in love, you want to be with the one you love; you want to just be in his presence and hear him, listen to him. You want to be one with him. Oh that we might love Jesus this much!

How do we walk on in the Lord and not look back? How do we press toward that high calling of oneness with our Lord Jesus and continue in His will moment by moment?

It is essential that we live in His presence, in the written Word of God daily and in the Living Word constantly. Press into Him by feasting on His Word and by being aware of His Presence in everything you do as you go through the day. Begin every day with His Word and with the request, “Guide me today, Lord, even when I am not aware of Your guidance, and show me what you would have me do **today**.”