

Keep Your Eyes on Jesus Christ

(By Rev. Anthony Menzel, November 8, 2020)

Hebrews 12:1-2

12 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **2** looking unto Jesus, the [a]author and [b]finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Regardless of which party you support in the United States, these are uncertain times:

We don't know the final results of many elections...

Legal challenges and runoffs may make final decisions weeks or months away...

All of this is in the midst of a global pandemic...

It is very easy to be anxious and fearful...

It's more important than ever before that we anchor ourselves in Jesus Christ...

“On Christ the Solid Rock”

We need more than ever before to run to the Lord Jesus and make our refuge in Him...

Proverbs 18:10

10 The name of the Lord *is* a strong tower;
The righteous run to it and are [e]safe.

Sometimes we go through perilous times...

Psalms 23:4-6

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
For You *are* with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.

6

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will [d]well in the house of the Lord
[e]Forever.

We can expect to be protected in our spirits and souls and often in our bodies even though sometimes the Lord Jesus will not protect our bodies, at least not on a short-term basis...

Matthew 11:28-30

28 Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. **29** Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am [f]gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **30** For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light.”

The two witnesses were protected in their bodies for a time; then their bodies were killed.

Revelation 11:3-11

3 And I will give *power* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.”

4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the [b]God of the earth. **5** And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. **6** These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.

The Witnesses Killed

7 When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. **8** And their dead bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also [c]our Lord was crucified. **9** Then *those* from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations [d]will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies

to be put into graves. **10** And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

The Witnesses Resurrected

11 Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. **12** And [e]they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here.” And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them.

***I feel that the Lord Jesus is ministering to me that our focus needs to be on the mission of our church:

Matthew 22:35-40

35 Then one of them, a lawyer, asked *Him a question*, testing Him, and saying, **36** “Teacher, which *is* the great commandment in the law?” **37** Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ **38** This is *the* first and great commandment. **39** And *the* second *is* like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ **40** On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

Loving God involves just spending time with Him:

Luke 10:38-42

38 Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. **39** And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at [k]Jesus’ feet and heard His word. **40** But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.” **41** And [l]Jesus answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. **42** But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”

The good part that was not going to be taken from Mary was to listen to the Lord Jesus Christ...

Jeremiah 2:13, 32

13 “For My people have committed two evils:
They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters,
And hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water.

32 Can a virgin forget her ornaments,
Or a bride her attire?
Yet My people have forgotten Me days without number.

God simply wants us to remember Him and not put other people and things in front of Him.

The other part of our mission is to love other people...

1 John 5:20-21

20 If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, [d]how can he love God whom he has not seen? **21** And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God *must* love his brother also.

1 John 2:9-11

9 He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. **10** He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. **11** But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

We can't hate other people...

It doesn't matter if they hurt us or have different views from us...

1 John 3:16-18

16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. **17** But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

18 My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

***One of the most important ways we show love to other people is by facilitating their salvation.

We can facilitate salvation by:

Showing acts of kindness, such as mentioned above...

Prayer...

Sharing the Word...

Praying with people to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior...

We need to focus on finishing the race that the Lord Jesus has set before us...

2 Timothy 4:7-8

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. **8** Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Our ultimate goal should be to love the Lord Jesus and to complete the plan He has for our lives.

Matthew 7:21-23

21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. **22** Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ **23** And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

Revelation 14:13

12 Here is the [g]patience of the saints; here[h] *are* those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

13 Then I heard a voice from heaven saying [i]to me, “Write: ‘Blessed *are* the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ”

“Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.”

When we have finished our race the way the Lord Jesus wants, then what we have done for the Lord Jesus will follow us for all eternity.

Remember that our main success in life should not be making money or even having a big ministry...
It should be to do what the Lord Jesus wants us to do so that we can hear these words when we leave this earth...

Matthew 25:14-21

14 “For *the kingdom of heaven is* like a man traveling to a far country, *who* called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. **15** And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. **16** Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. **17** And likewise he who *had received* two gained two more also. **18** But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord’s money. **19** After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. **20** “So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ **21** His lord said to him, ‘Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’