

## WEEK 8 — OUTLINE

### Cooperating with Christ in His Heavenly Ministry by Running with Endurance the Race Set before Us, Looking Away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of Our Faith

Scripture Reading: Heb. 11:1, 6; 12:1-2; Rom. 10:17

#### « DAY 1 »

- I. “Therefore let us also, having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, put away every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us and run with endurance the race which is set before us” (Heb. 12:1):
- A. The cloud is for leading people to follow the Lord (Num. 9:15-22), and the Lord is in the cloud to be with the people (Exo. 13:21-22); in Greek witnesses implies the sense of martyrs (Acts 1:8):
1. With the people of faith, we can have the Lord’s presence and His leading; all the people of faith, the church people, are the cloud; the best way to seek the Lord’s presence is to come to the church.
  2. If anyone is seeking the Lord’s leading, he must follow the cloud, the church; the Lord is in the cloud, meaning that He is with the people of faith.
  3. Since we are the people of faith, we are today’s cloud, and people can follow the Lord by following us; those who seek Him can find His presence with us (cf. 1 Cor. 14:24-25; Psa. 36:8-9; 16:11).
- B. The Christian life is a race; every saved Christian must run the race to win the prize (1 Cor. 9:24), not salvation in the common sense (Eph. 2:8; 1 Cor. 3:15) but a reward in a special sense (Heb. 10:35; 1 Cor. 3:14); the apostle Paul ran the race and won the prize (9:26-27; Phil. 3:13-14; 2 Tim. 4:7-8):

#### « DAY 2 »

1. An encumbrance is a weight, burden, or impediment; the runners of the race strip off every unnecessary weight, every encumbering burden, that nothing may impede them from winning the race.
  2. The unique entangling sin in this context was the willful sin of forsaking the assembling together with the saints, of giving up the new covenant way in God’s economy, and of going back to Judaism (Heb. 10:26); both the encumbering weight and the entangling sin would have frustrated the Hebrew believers and restrained them from running the heavenly race in the new covenant way of following Jesus.
- C. We need to run with endurance, asking the Lord to direct our hearts into the love of God and into the endurance of Christ (2 Thes. 3:5):

1.This is our love toward God, issuing from the love of God (1 John 4:19), which has been poured out in our hearts (Rom. 5:5).

2.This is to endure with the endurance of Christ that we have enjoyed and experienced (cf. Rev. 1:9).

## II. “Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:2):

A.We need to look away unto Jesus with undivided attention by turning away from every other object; Jesus is the Author of faith, the Originator, the Inaugurator, the source, and the cause of faith:

1.The wonderful Jesus, who is enthroned in heaven and crowned with glory and honor (2:9), is the greatest attraction in the universe.

2.He is like an immense magnet drawing all His seekers to Him (S.S. 1:4; Hosea 11:4; Jer. 31:3):

a.It is by being attracted by His charming beauty (loveliness, pleasantness, delightfulness) that we look away from all things other than Him (Psa. 27:4).

b.Without such a charming object, how could we look away from so many distracting things on earth?

### « DAY 3 »

B.The faith of the believers is actually not their own faith but Christ entering into them to be their faith (Rom. 3:22 and footnote 1; Gal. 2:16 and footnote 1):

1.Our believing is our appreciation of Christ as a reaction to His attraction (Rom. 10:17).

2.In our natural man we have no believing ability; we do not have faith by ourselves.

3.The faith by which we are saved is the precious faith that we have received from the Lord, the God-allotted faith (2 Pet. 1:1; Col. 1:12).

4.When we look away unto Jesus, He as the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b) transfuses us with Himself, His believing element.

5.This faith is not of ourselves but of Him who imparts Himself as the believing element into us that He may believe for us.

6.Hence, Christ Himself is our faith; we live by Him as our faith, that is, by His faith (Gal. 2:20), not our own.

### « DAY 4 »

C.Faith is a substantiating ability, a sixth sense, the sense by which we substantiate, give substance to, the things unseen or hoped for (Heb. 11:1):

1.Substantiating is the ability that enables us to realize a substance.

2. The function of our five senses is to substantiate the things of the outside world, transferring all the objective items into us to become our subjective experience.
3. As the eye is to seeing, the ear to hearing, and the nose to smelling, so faith, our spirit of faith, is the organ whereby we substantiate everything in the unseen spiritual world into us (2 Cor. 4:13):
  - a. We must exercise our spirit of faith, our mingled spirit, to believe and to speak the things we have experienced of the Lord.
  - b. Faith is in our spirit, which is mingled with the Holy Spirit, not in our mind; doubts are in our mind.
4. We do not regard, look at, the things which are seen but the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal (v. 18):
  - a. The Christian life is a life of things unseen (Rom. 8:24-25; Heb. 11:27; 1 Pet. 1:8; Gal. 6:10).
  - b. The degradation of the church is the degradation from unseen things to seen things.
  - c. The Lord's recovery is to recover His church from things seen to things unseen.
5. Faith assures us of the things not seen, convincing us of what we do not see; therefore, it is the evidence, the proof, of things unseen.

## « DAY 5 »

D. Faith is to believe that God is:

1. Without faith it is impossible to please God, to make God happy (Heb. 11:6a).
2. "He who comes forward to God must believe that He is" (v. 6b; cf. Gen. 5:22-24):
  - a. To believe that God is, is to believe that He is everything to us and that we are nothing (John 8:58; Eccl. 1:2).
  - b. To believe that God is implies that we are not; He must be the only One, the unique One, in everything, and we must be nothing in everything (Heb. 11:5).
  - c. To believe that God is, is to deny our self; in the whole universe He is, and all of us are nothing (Luke 9:23).
  - d. I should not be anything; I should not exist; only He should exist—"It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ" (Gal. 2:20).
  - e. At his conversion the Lord told Saul of Tarsus, "I am Jesus" (Acts 9:5):
    - (1) The Lord was saying, "I am the great I Am; I am the One who is; you must believe that I am and you are not."

(2) Eventually, Saul was over, and Paul came up (13:9).

f. This is faith—“O the joy of having nothing and being nothing, seeing nothing but a living Christ in glory, and being careful for nothing but His interests down here” (J. N. Darby).

## « DAY 6 »

E. Jesus is the Perfecter, the Finisher, the Completer, of our faith (Heb. 12:2a):

1. As we look away unto Him continually, He will finish and complete the faith that we need for the running of the heavenly race (v. 1).

2. We all have the same faith in quality, but the quantity of faith we have depends upon how much we contact the living God so that we may have Him increased in us (Rom. 12:3):

a. Faith in the progressing stage comes through our contacting the Triune God, who is faith in us (1 Thes. 5:17).

b. The way to receive such a faith is to contact its source, the Lord, the processed and consummated God, by calling on Him, praying to Him, and pray-reading His word (Heb. 4:16; Rom. 10:12; 2 Tim. 2:22; Eph. 6:17-18; Heb. 4:2).

c. When we contact Him, He is overflowing within us, and there is a mutuality of faith among us; we are encouraged through the faith that is in one another (Rom. 1:12; Philem. 6).

3. Our regenerated spirit, our spirit of faith, is the victory that overcomes the Satan-organized-and-usurped world (1 John 5:4; John 3:6; 2 Cor. 4:13; 1 John 5:18).

4. The great irrepressible and unlimited power of faith motivates thousands to suffer for the Lord, risk their lives, and become overcoming sent ones and martyrs for the carrying out of God's eternal economy, which is in faith (Luke 18:8; Phil. 2:20; Rom. 16:3-4; Acts 20:24; 1 Tim. 1:4; Heb. 12:3; cf. Judg. 8:4).

F. According to Hebrews 12:2, for the joy set before Him, Jesus endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God:

1. The Lord Jesus knew that through His death He would be glorified in resurrection (Luke 24:25-26) and that His divine life would be released to produce many brothers for His expression (John 12:23-24; Rom. 8:29); for the joy set before Him (John 16:20-22), He despised the shame and volunteered to be delivered to the Satan-usurped leaders of the Jews and Gentiles and condemned by them to death.

2. Therefore, God highly exalted Him to the heavens, seated Him at His right hand (Mark 16:19; Acts 2:33-35), gave Him the name above every name (Phil. 2:9-10), made Him both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36), and crowned Him with glory and honor (Heb. 2:9).

3.If we look away unto Him as such a wonderful and all-inclusive One, He will minister heaven, life, and strength to us, transfusing and infusing us with all that He is, that we may be able to run the heavenly race and live the heavenly life on earth; in this way He will carry us through all the lifelong pathway and lead and bring us into glory (v. 10; 2 Cor. 3:16, 18; 1 Pet. 5:4; 2 Tim. 4:8).

## « WEEK 8 — DAY 1 »

### Morning Nourishment

Heb. 12:1 Therefore let us also, having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us,...run with endurance the race which is set before us.

1 Cor. 9:24 Do you not know that those who run on a racecourse all run, but one receives the prize? Run in this way, that you may lay hold.

2 Tim. 4:7 I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have kept the faith.

Hebrews 12:1 says, "Therefore let us also, having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, put away every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us and run with endurance the race which is set before us." The cloud is for leading people in following the Lord (Num. 9:15-22), and the Lord is in the cloud to be with the people (Exo. 13:21-22). The children of Israel followed the Lord by the pillar and enjoyed the Lord's presence in the pillar of cloud. All the witnesses of faith, even the martyrs of faith, are a cloud. By this cloud of witnesses we follow the Lord and enjoy His presence. (Life-study of Hebrews, p. 550)

### Today's Reading

The saints of the old covenant were only witnesses of faith. None of them was the author, source, perfecter, or finisher of faith. In verse 1 of Hebrews 12 the witnesses of faith are considered as "a cloud of witnesses surrounding us." The Lord was in the cloud to be with His people (Exo. 13:21-22). The children of Israel followed the Lord according to the move of the cloud. Where the cloud was, there the Lord was also. Furthermore, the cloud is for leading people in following the Lord. If you have a heart to seek out the Lord and you read Hebrews 11, you may immediately have the sense that by the people of faith you can have the Lord's presence and His leading. If you have the cloud, you will have the Lord. But if you miss the cloud, you will also miss the Lord. All the people of faith, the church people, are the cloud. The best way to seek the Lord's presence is to come to the church. If anyone is seeking the Lord's leading, he must follow the cloud, the church. The Lord is in the cloud, meaning that He is with the people of faith. Since we are the people of faith, we are today's cloud, and people can follow the Lord by following us. Those who seek Him can find His presence with us. The Lord is where we are, and where we are is the direction in which the Lord is moving in these days.

The Christian life is a race. Every saved Christian must run the race to win the prize (1 Cor. 9:24). This prize is not salvation in a common sense (Eph. 2:8; 1 Cor. 3:15) but a reward in a special sense (Heb. 10:35; 1 Cor. 3:14). The apostle Paul, who has run the race and won the prize, was nearly the only one who likened the Christian life to a race. In the book of Hebrews he charged the Hebrew believers to run the race, saying, "run with endurance the race which is set before us" (12:1).

What is this race? [It is not]...perfection or glorification, for that is the goal of the race. Neither is the race the inward working of the law of life, for that is the process of the race. The race is not even the losing of the soul, because that is the way to run the race; it is not the race itself. In order to answer this question, we need to consider the Lord's word in John 14:6: "I am the way." A race is a way, a course. Because Christ is the way, He is also the race. The race we are running is Christ. Our way is our race. These are not two things, one the way and the other the race.

Because Paul's background was exactly that of the Hebrew believers, he was qualified to be an example in running the race. Galatians 2:2 and 1 Corinthians 9:26 and 27 show how he began to run the race. Philippians 3:5-8 and 12-14 show how he was still running the race. In Philippians 3 we see that Paul was a typical Hebrew believer running the race away from the old Jewish religion. In 2 Timothy 4:7 and 8, written shortly before his martyrdom, he told us that he had finished the race. (Life-study of Hebrews, pp. 551, 559, 566-567)

Further Reading: Life-study of Hebrews, msg. 49

## « WEEK 8 — DAY 2 »

### Morning Nourishment

Heb. 12:1 Therefore let us also, having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, put away every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us and run with endurance the race which is set before us.

2 Thes. 3:5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the endurance of Christ.

The Greek word translated “encumbrance” [in Hebrews 12:1] may also be rendered “weight,” “burden,” “impediment.” The runners in a race must strip off every unnecessary weight, every encumbering burden, that they might have no impediment to winning the race. Notice that here Paul says “us,” not “you,” including himself in this matter. (Life-study of Hebrews, p. 563)

### Today’s Reading

Hebrews 12:1 mentions “the sin which so easily entangles us.” “Sin” here refers mainly to the thing which entangles us from running the race, just as the willful sin mentioned in 10:26 would keep the Hebrew believers away from the new covenant way in God’s economy. Both the encumbering weight and the entangling sin would frustrate the Hebrew believers and restrain them from running the heavenly race in the new covenant way of following the Jesus who was rejected by Judaism. To the staggering Hebrew believers, the thought of shrinking back and returning to Judaism was an entangling sin. The sin mentioned in 12:1 is particular and unique, for Paul uses the definite article, saying, “the sin.” This unique, entangling sin was the willful sin of forsaking the assembling together with the saints, of giving up the new covenant way, and of going back to Judaism.

There is much opposition to this race. Thus, we must run it with endurance (v. 1). This means that in order to run the race of Christ, we must suffer the opposition with endurance, never growing weary or fainting in our souls. (Life-study of Hebrews, p. 564)

In 2 Thessalonians 3:5 Paul concludes, “And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the endurance of Christ.” The Lord directs our hearts by the leading of the Spirit, through whom the love of God has been poured out into our hearts (Rom. 8:14; 5:5). The love of God in 2 Thessalonians 3:5 is our love toward God that issues from the love of God (1 John 4:19) that has been poured out into our hearts. On the positive side, we need to enjoy the love of God so that we may love Him in order to live for Him. On the negative side, we need to participate in the endurance of Christ so that we may endure the sufferings as He did to stand against Satan, the enemy of God. (Life-study of 2 Thessalonians, p. 37)

In Hebrews 12:2 Paul told the Hebrew believers to look away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of faith. The Greek word translated “looking away unto” means to look with undivided attention by turning away from every other object. The runners in a race, such as the hundred yard dash, turn away from everything else and look at the goal with undivided attention. In this verse Paul seemed to be saying, “Hebrew brothers, do not stand there considering and looking around. You must turn away from everything other than Christ and look to Him with undivided attention. This is the way to run the race.” The Hebrew believers had to look away from all the things of their situation, away from their old religion and its persecution, and away from all earthly things that they might look unto Jesus who is now seated at the right hand of the throne of God in the heavens. (Life-study of Hebrews, pp. 564-565)

Jesus is the Author of faith. He is the Originator, the Inaugurator, the source, and the cause of faith. (Heb. 12:2, footnote 3)

The wonderful Jesus, who is enthroned in heaven and “crowned with glory and honor” (Heb. 2:9) is the greatest attraction in the universe, like an immense magnet drawing all His seekers unto Him. It is by being attracted by His charming beauty that we look away from all things other than Him. Without such a charming object, how could we look away from so many distracting things on this earth? (Life-study of Hebrews, p. 566)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 17, pp. 229-240

## « WEEK 8 — DAY 3 »

### Morning Nourishment

Rom. 3:21-22 But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been manifested,...even the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ to all those who believe...

Gal. 2:16 And knowing that a man is not justified out of works of law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, we also have believed into Christ Jesus that we might be justified out of faith in Christ and not out of the works of law...

Faith in Romans 3:22 refers to the faith of Jesus Christ in us, which has become the faith by which we believe in Him.

Faith has an object, and it issues from its object. This object is Jesus, who is God incarnate. When man hears Him, knows Him, appreciates Him, and treasures Him, He causes faith to be generated in man, enabling man to believe in Him. Thus, He becomes the faith in man by which man believes in Him. Hence, this faith becomes the faith in Him, and it is also the faith that belongs to Him.

In God's New Testament economy, God desires that man believe in Jesus, who is God incarnate. If man does not believe in Him, he commits the unique sin before God (John 16:9). However, if man believes in Him, he is righteous to the uttermost before God, and God reckons this faith as his righteousness. At the same time, this faith brings its object, that is, this One who is God incarnate, into those who believe in Him. He is God's righteousness, and God has given Him as righteousness to those who are indwelt by Him (Jer. 23:6). All this is out of, and depends on, the faith that is in Him and of Him (Heb. 12:2). (Rom. 3:22, footnote 1)

### Today's Reading

[In Galatians 2:16] faith in Jesus Christ denotes an organic union with Him through believing. This is related to the believers' appreciation of the person of the Son of God as the most precious One. The believers are infused with the preciousness of Christ through the gospel preached to them. This Christ becomes in them the faith by which they believe and the capacity to believe through their appreciation of Him. This faith creates an organic union in which they and Christ are one. (Gal. 2:16, footnote 1)

In our natural man we have no believing ability. We do not have faith by ourselves. The faith by which we are saved is the precious faith that we have received from the Lord (2 Pet. 1:1). When we look unto Jesus, He as the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45) transfuses us with Himself, with His believing element. Then, spontaneously, a kind of believing arises in our being, and we have the faith to believe in Him. This faith is not of ourselves but of Him who imparts Himself as the believing element into us that He may believe for us. Hence, He Himself is our faith. We live by Him as our faith; that is, we live by His faith (Gal. 2:20), not by our own.

As the Author and the source of faith, Jesus is also the Leader, the Pioneer, and the Forerunner of faith. He cut the way of faith and, as the Forerunner, took the lead to pioneer it. Hence, He can carry us in His footsteps through the pathway of faith. As we look to Him as the Originator of faith in His life and in His path on earth, and as the Perfecter of faith in His glory and on His throne in heaven, He transfuses and even infuses us with the faith that He originated and perfected. (Heb. 12:2, footnote 3)

From Hebrews 1:3, this book points us continually to the Christ seated in heaven. In all his other epistles, Paul mainly presents to us the Christ who dwells in our spirit (Rom. 8:10; 2 Tim. 4:22) as the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45) to be our life and our everything. But in Hebrews, he points us particularly to the Christ seated in heaven with so many aspects to care for us in every way. In Paul's other epistles, the indwelling Christ is versus our flesh, self, and natural man. In this book, the heavenly Christ is contrasted with the earthly religion and all earthly things. To experience the indwelling Christ we need to turn to our spirit and contact Him. To enjoy the heavenly Christ we need to look away from all things on earth unto Him who is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Life-study of Hebrews, p. 565)

Further Reading: Life-study of Hebrews, msg. 50

## « WEEK 8 — DAY 4 »

### Morning Nourishment

Heb. 11:1 Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

2 Cor. 4:13 And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke"...

18 Because we do not regard the things which are seen but the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

After presenting in the first ten chapters a thorough comparison of Judaism and God's economy, this book charges the Hebrew believers, who were in danger of shrinking back, to live, to walk, to go on, by faith (10:38-39), that is, not by appearance (2 Cor. 5:7). Then, in Hebrews 11 it goes on to define faith according to the history of faith. Both the eternal inheritance (9:15) and the great reward (10:35) promised by God are things hoped for and things not seen. Faith is the substantiation of things hoped for. Hence, it is the assurance, the confidence, the confirmation, the reality, the essence, the supporting ground, of things hoped for, the foundation that supports the things hoped for. Faith is also the conviction of things not seen. It convinces us of what we do not see. Hence, it is the evidence, the proof, of things not seen. (Heb. 11:1, footnote 1)

### Today's Reading

The same Greek word [for substantiation in Hebrews 11:1] is used for substance in 1:3, assurance in 3:14, and confidence (in which one knows that he has a sure foundation) in 2 Corinthians 11:17. Moreover, it can be translated confirmation, reality, essence (which denotes the real nature of things, as opposed to the appearance), foundation, or supporting ground. The word means, primarily, substance, but in Hebrews 11:1 it denotes the substantiating of the substance (of the things hoped for); hence, it is translated substantiation. The word substantiate is substance in verb form; to substantiate is to give substance to the reality of the substance not seen. This is the action of faith. Therefore, it says here that faith is the substantiation of things hoped for. (Heb. 11:1, footnote 2)

[In 2 Corinthians 4:13] the spirit of faith is the Holy Spirit mingled with our human spirit. We must exercise such a spirit to believe and to speak, like the psalmist, the things we have experienced of the Lord, especially His death and resurrection. Faith is in our spirit, which is mingled with the Holy Spirit, not in our mind. Doubts are in our mind. Here spirit indicates that it is by the mingled spirit that the apostles lived a crucified life in resurrection for the carrying out of their ministry. (2 Cor. 4:13, footnote 2)

[Faith] is a divine ability which has been infused into us...Whenever we contact God or listen to His word, the substantiating ability which has been infused into our being by God Himself spontaneously begins to realize the things of God, the things hoped for, and the things not seen, and we simply believe...Faith is a special sense in addition to the five senses derived from our natural birth. This sense substantiates the things of God, things which we do not see. (Life-study of Hebrews, p. 535)

We acquired this substantiating sense through the preaching of the gospel. Proper gospel preaching is not merely a matter of teaching; it must also be a matter of transfusion. In order to preach the gospel to sinners, we must first receive something of and from the Lord. Then, as we are preaching, what we have received of the Lord will enter, like electricity, into those who are listening. While we are speaking and the people are looking at and listening to us, something spontaneously and unconsciously will be transfused into them. Although they may shake their heads, not consenting to our preaching, deep within they will believe what we are saying. Although some may say to themselves that it is silly to believe, something within them will continue to react and bring them to the point where they say, "Lord Jesus, thank You. You are so good. Lord, You are my Savior." Because some element has been transfused into their being, they will be able to believe in the Lord. This is the result of the transfusion of faith by God through a preacher. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3827, 3829)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 380

## « WEEK 8 — DAY 5 »

### Morning Nourishment

Heb. 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

John 8:58 Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Before Abraham came into being, I am.

Hebrews 11:6 says that without faith it is impossible to please God. This is a very strong word in the whole universe. To please God is to make God happy. Without faith it is impossible for you and me to make God happy. God could not and would not be happy with anyone without faith. This shows us the importance of faith.

He who comes forward to God must believe that God is (Heb. 11:6b). This is very simple. God requires you only to believe that He is. The verb to be is actually the divine title of our Triune God. In Exodus 3 Moses asked God what His name was. God answered that His name is I AM WHO I AM (vv. 13-14). Our God's name is the verb to be. He is "I AM WHO I AM." He is the only One. (Crystallization-study of the Epistle to the Romans, pp. 71, 73)

### Today's Reading

When Jesus came, He declared that He was the I Am three times in John 8 [vv. 24, 28, 58],...indicating that He is the very Jehovah. This is why Paul said in Hebrews 11:6, "He who comes forward to God must believe that He is." God is always, eternally, in the present tense.

Do you need God? God is. Do you need food? God is....He told us, "I am...the life" (John 14:6a). "I am the resurrection" (11:25). "I am the door" (10:7, 9). "I am the good Shepherd" (10:11). "I am the bread of life" (6:35). He is the real food....He is the breath (20:22), the living water (4:10, 14), and the tree of life (15:1; 14:6a; Rev. 2:7)....He is everything to us.

What is faith? Faith is to stop yourself from doing anything. You are nothing. Faith joins you with God to make God the only One who is. I am not, so I should not be the one who loves my wife. It should be Christ loving my wife. He is; I am not. I should not be the one to go shopping. He should be the One.

Faith is to stop you from doing anything but to make God everything to you. This equals Paul's word in Galatians 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." Who lives? It is no longer I. I do not exist. I was terminated. I was crucified. I am finished. It is no more I, but Christ lives in me. Christ lives. Christ is. Christ exists. I do not exist. This is the very essence of the short word believe that God is. To believe that God is implies that you are not. He must be the only One, the unique One, in everything, and we must be nothing in everything.

The Lord Jesus said, "If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself" (Luke 9:23). This word is the same as what Paul said: "He who comes forward to God must believe that He is" [Heb 11:6]. To deny yourself equals to believe that God is, and to believe that God is equals to deny yourself. This is because you believe that only He is. In the whole universe He is, and all of us are nothing. I should not be anything. I should not exist. Only He should be everything. Only He should exist. So Paul says, "I have been crucified. It is no more I, but Christ."

When the apostle Paul was Saul, he was a very aggressive young man. Everything with him was "I, me, my, and mine."...Everything was Saul of Tarsus. But the Lord Jesus knocked him down on the road to Damascus, and Saul asked, "Who are You, Lord?" (Acts 9:5). The Lord said, "I am Jesus" (v. 5). The Lord was saying, "I am the great I Am. I am the One that is. You must believe that I am and you are not." Eventually, Saul changed his name. Saul was over, and Paul came up (Acts 13:9 and footnote 1).

Darby said: "O the joy of having nothing and being nothing, seeing nothing but a living Christ in glory, and being careful for nothing but His interests down here." This is faith. We care for nothing but His interest. (Crystallization-study of the Epistle to the Romans, pp. 73-77)

Further Reading: Crystallization-study of the Epistle to the Romans, msgs. 7-8

## « WEEK 8 — DAY 6 »

### Morning Nourishment

Heb. 12:2 Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.

2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Faith is simply the Lord Jesus Christ. He is not only the Author, the Originator, of faith but also the Perfecter, the Finisher, of faith. He will finish what He originated; He will complete what He inaugurated. If we look to Him continually, He will finish and complete the faith that we need for the running of the heavenly race. Once Christ has originated this faith within us, He will never let it go....As the Completer of faith, He is continually infused into us as the believing element and ability when we pray to the Lord, fellowship with Him, pray over the Bible, attend church meetings, listen to spiritual messages, and read spiritual books. Hence, our faith in Jesus Christ comes from Him; in fact, it is Christ Himself continually infused into us. Such faith brings us into an organic union with Christ; it also continually increases this organic union. The increase of our organic union with Him is the increase, the growth, of Christ within us....This is our faith being perfected by the Lord. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3831-3832)

### Today's Reading

The way to receive such a faith is to contact its source, the Lord, the processed and consummated God, by calling on Him, praying to Him, and pray-reading His word (Heb. 4:16; Rom. 10:12; 2 Tim. 2:22; Eph. 6:17-18). We have to come forward to God's throne of grace to receive mercy and grace. This means that we have to contact God to receive faith....At any time, anywhere, you can contact Him. Just call on Him and say a little word to Him. Then you will receive faith. This faith links you with God and imparts, transfuses, God into you. In this way you will have the living faith. (Crystallization-study of the Epistle to the Romans, pp. 100-101)

According to Hebrews 12:2, for the joy set before Him, Jesus endured the cross, despising the shame. The Lord Jesus knew that through His death He would be glorified in resurrection (Luke 24:25-26) and that His divine life would be released to produce many brothers for His expression (John 12:23-24; Rom. 8:29). For the joy set before Him, He despised the shame (Heb. 12:2) and volunteered to be delivered to the Satan-usurped leaders of the Jews and condemned by them to death. Therefore, God exalted Him to the heavens, seated Him at His right hand (Mark 16:19; Acts 2:33-35), gave Him the name which is above every name (Phil. 2:9-10), made Him both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36), and crowned Him with glory and honor (Heb. 2:9).

By His death and resurrection He accomplished everything that is needed by both God and man. Now in His ascension He is sitting in the heavens, in the person of the Son of God (Heb. 1:5) and the Son of Man (2:6), in the person of God (1:8) and man (2:6), as the appointed Heir of all things (1:2), the anointed One of God (v. 9), the Author of our salvation (2:10), the Sanctifier (v. 11), the constant Succor (v. 16), the instant Helper (4:16), the Apostle from God (3:1), the High Priest (2:17; 4:14; 7:26), the Minister of the true tabernacle (8:2) with a more excellent ministry (v. 6), the surety and the Mediator of a better covenant (7:22; 8:6; 12:24), the Executor of the new testament (9:16-17), the Forerunner (6:20), the Author and Perfecter of faith (12:2), and the great Shepherd of the sheep (13:20). If we look to Him as such a wonderful and all-inclusive One, He will minister heaven, life, and strength to us, transfusing and infusing us with all that He is, that we may be able to run the heavenly race and live the heavenly life on earth. In this way He will carry us through all the lifelong pathway and lead and bring us into glory (2:10). (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3832-3833)

Further Reading: Crystallization-study of the Epistle to the Romans, msgs. 9-11

## « WEEK 8 — HYMN

### Hymns, #656

1

“Consider Him,” let Christ thy pattern be,  
And know that He hath apprehended thee  
To share His very life, His pow’r divine,  
And in the likeness of thy Lord to shine.

2

“Consider Him”; so shalt thou, day by day,  
Seek out the lowliest place, and therein stay,  
Content to pass away, a thing of nought,  
That glory to the Father’s name be brought.

3

Shrink not, O child of God, but fearless go  
Down into death with Jesus; thou shalt know  
The power of an endless life begin,  
With glorious liberty from self and sin.

4

“Consider Him,” and thus thy life shall be  
Filled with self-sacrifice and purity;  
God will work out in thee the pattern true,  
And Christ’s example ever keep in view.

5

“Consider Him,” and as you run the race,  
Keep ever upward looking in His face;  
And thus transformed, illumined thou shalt be,  
And Christ’s own image shall be seen in thee.