

# Hebrews 12:1-2 (Teaching)

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. We'll be back in the book of Hebrews. I believe I preached from this book not too long ago, a couple of weeks ago maybe.
- ! Hebrews chapter 12. Said before, and I'll say it again, I can't teach you all or anybody else anything that has not been taught out of the pages of this book.
- I mean, we've had basically 2,000 years of closed canon of Scripture that men have taught and preached from. And I don't get into the Scripture trying to bring something out of it that maybe you've never heard before or anything along those lines.
- And I certainly don't dig for something that maybe the world's never thought of or the church world, for that matter, has never thought of. I've seen that get many teachers and preachers in trouble doing that very thing, even to the point of, you know, forcing them to resign because they've read something in a commentary or they read something in a pamphlet or something along those lines and they ran with it without comparing it with the rest of Scripture.
- And it's gotten them in trouble in the pulpit. So, again, I don't try that. I try to remind you all, and anybody that I teach or preach to, I try to remind you of the Gospel for one.
- [ 1 : 3 0 ]     But I try and convey to you what the Scripture means. This little part of Hebrews chapter 12 is going to be no different.
- The book of Hebrews, I believe I told you all the last time I preached from it, you know, there's a lot of doctrine in the book of Hebrews.
- A lot of doctrine and a lot of warnings. It was written to, of course, the Jewish people. The Hebrews are mainly a Jewish audience. But it was a Jewish audience that was experiencing a lot of persecution.
- And we gather that from what the writer wrote to them. But they were experiencing a lot of persecution and a lot worse persecution on the way. But not only that, but they were in danger of falling back to the law, falling back to what they had been saved from, really, which was, you know, they were kind of concentrating so much on laws and rules and regulations and the Ten Commandments and all the other commandments that we find in the Old Testament, plus a lot of other things that have been added that weren't even part of what God's commandments were.
- They were in danger of falling back into that. And we as Christians, we're no different. You know, Christians 2,000 years later, we're no different. We're in danger of the same thing.
- [ 2 : 5 4 ]     Well, you know, tradition has it this way or tradition has it that way. Well, tradition may very well be wrong. And we need to keep that in mind.
- But that was a lot of what the writer to the Hebrews was dealing with in this letter. Hebrews 12 begins with the word, wherefore.
- And wherefore is very important because that puts us back to what was just said, which is the entirety of the 11th chapter. And we should all know what Hebrews chapter 11 is. That's what some people call the Hall of Faith or the Hall of Fame or the Faith Hall of Fame.

Whatever have you, whatever you would like to call that. But it puts us back to that, namely the last couple of verses of Hebrews 11, which is speaking of others.

Because we go through many people in the 11th chapter of Hebrews. We see the faith of Abel. We see the faith of Enoch. We see the faith of Noah and Moses and David and several other people.

[ 4 : 06 ] Then there's others that are brought up in the last few verses. Well, the last three verses says, Of whom the world was not worthy, they wandered in deserts and in mountains and in dens and caves of the earth.

And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

And that's the immediate context. But the broader context is the entirety of chapter 11 of Hebrews. But the immediate context really is verse 39. These all having obtained a good report through faith.

That's the good report that they got. If you look at the beginning verses of Hebrews 11, it says, Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

[ 5 : 08 ] By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous. God testifying of his gifts, and by it he being dead, yet speaketh.

So, that's kind of the context we're talking about here. And I'm saying all this for a reason, I promise. I ain't just up here flapping my jaws. You know, I've said many times, I don't consider myself to be a great teacher.

I don't consider myself to be a great preacher. I'll never be a Jonathan Edwards. I'll never be a Charles Spurgeon. I'll never be, you know, more, I guess, up-to-date preachers and teachers.

I'll never be a John MacArthur, or a Justin Peters, or certainly never be an R.C. Sproul. And I don't aim to be those things.

But I aim to do what God has called me to do. So, with all this that we've read this morning in mind, we begin with wherefore, which puts us back to Hebrews 11.

[ 6 : 18 ] And we hear about all these people of faith, and their great faith. But we just read in that fourth verse, how Abel's faith, his faith was a testimony.

It says, He being dead, yet speaketh. So we need to keep that in mind as we read this. Wherefore, Hebrews 12, verse 1. Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

So, wherefore, seeing we are also compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses. What does that mean? What have we all heard that that means? I know what I've heard that it means.

But, given the context, that's not what it means. I've heard that this means that all those that have gone on to be with the Lord, all those that have died in faith, and they are now with Jesus, they're up there cheering us on.

Well, folks, in all honesty, that's a great thought, but it goes contrary to what Scripture teaches us. What does Scripture teach us? They're with the Lord. They're at rest in the Lord.

[ 7 : 34 ] They're at peace in the Lord. They're praising God if it's gotten that far yet. I don't know what your view of heaven is, but folks, there's a coronation day coming, but it's not happened yet.

What John saw in the book of Revelation, all those people that are around the throne, that ain't happened yet. And it's not happening right now. It's not present tense. That's all future. So, but they are with Christ, and they are Christ's in the possessive form.

But to say that Brother Paul and Brother Peter and John and all the other apostles and these people from the Old Testament, Noah and Daniel and Abel and Enoch, some of them that we read about in chapter 11, to say that they're up there on the edge of a cloud with a bag of popcorn watching us.

That goes contrary to what Scripture says. So I don't think that's what this means when it says that we're compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.

We are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses. But what is their witness? Their witness is their testimony. They are not witnesses of us.

[ 8 : 48 ] Could you imagine us being in heaven, a place that's supposed to be perfect, a place that's supposed to be happy, a place where there's supposed to be no sadness. There are no tears there. There's no death there.

No disease. No sickness. None of those things. But looking down on us and our struggles, what would that cause? That would cause sadness. That would cause grief.

So to say that they are up there looking down upon us and cheering us on, it is contrary to what the rest of Scripture teaches about heaven. So it says, Wherefore, seeing we are also compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, we are.

But folks, they are not witnesses of us. They are witnesses to us. Their faith witnesses to us. Their faith and their testimony is what cheers us on.

Just as I read a little while ago in verse 4, where it's talking about Abel. He being dead, yet speaketh. His faith is what speaks. Not the sacrifice that He made.

[ 9 : 55 ] Not the fact that His sacrifice was better than Cain's. But His faith is what testifies to us. And folks, it is no different than us.

Whenever we stand up in church, in a service, or whenever we're out in the workplace, or we're out in the world somewhere, whatever the case is, and we're testifying of Christ, we're testifying of our faith in Christ.

We're testifying of our faith in the Word of God. We're testifying of all those things. And those things are witnesses. And that's what witnessing really and truly is.

It is testifying of Jesus Christ. It's testifying that, I was once lost, but now I'm found. I was once blind, but now I see. And that is a testimony of the goodness of God.

And there's a testimony of what God can do in the life of an individual. But our testimony is our witness. Abel's testimony was his witness. And that's why he being dead for thousands of years now, he still speaks today.

[ 10 : 59 ] Because he had a testimony. Daniel is no different. Noah is no different. But something I want you to notice, in Hebrews 11, the very first one individual that's brought up, as far as their faith is concerned, is Abel.

Where's mom and dad? Where's Adam and Eve and all that? Now, I'm not telling you Adam and Eve didn't have faith. I fully anticipate to see Adam and Eve in heaven.

Granted, the fleshly part of me wants to walk up to Adam and punch him in the nose. Because of the mess that we're in now, and all that began with sin, and sin began with Adam and Eve.

But, Adam and Eve are not brought up. Why? It's because of the context that we are in here. We are compassed with so great a cloud of witnesses. And it's talking about these other people, beginning with Abel, had people's testimony as their witness.

Adam and Eve's testimony was a witness unto Abel. But Adam and Eve had nobody to be a witness to them, other than God. God Himself.

[ 12 : 10 ] Now, does God have faith? Does God have faith? Christ showed faith. Christ showed faith in God the Father. Christ showed that.

When, in John chapter 4, when the disciples, when they go to the woman at the well, Christ meets the woman at the well, the disciples go off into town to buy food, they come back, and Christ tells them, He says, My meat is to do the Father's will.

He had faith in the Father. He had faith that the Father was going to carry Him through, going to see Him through. Christ is, that's why it called, here in just another verse, it calls Him the author and the finisher of our faith.

He is the beginning of faith. He is the perfect example of what our faith walk should be. We haven't gotten that far yet, but hopefully we will here in a few minutes.

But yes, Christ had faith. Christ had faith that God would carry Him through. And He is our perfect example of that faith. He is the author and finisher of it.

[ 13 : 14 ] So wherefore, seeing we also are confessed about with so great a cloud of witnesses. Again, the imagery that's given here is a stadium or an arena.

And I get that. And I understand that. And to an extent, that's the imagery that I think that the writer to the Hebrews was trying to convey to us, trying to get across to us.

But, He is not saying that all these that have gone on in faith are around us, cheering us on. Their testimony, though, is a witness of them and should be a witness to us.

And their testimony is what should drive us on. You think about Noah. Noah got drunk. I mean, we all know what David's sin was. We know that Enoch, you know, just from what little bit we have of Enoch in the Scripture, which is a very little bit, but evidently, he lived a pretty humble life, but he walked with God.

We know all these things about them. And every one of these people, though, have got something attached to them that shows their imperfection. But, they were saved, they were redeemed, and they were brought to heaven by a perfect God.

[ 14 : 34 ] Although we are imperfect, God is perfect. And His plan is perfect. His salvation is perfect. And our faith, quite frankly, in God, does not have to be perfect.

And I thank God for that because my faith ain't perfect. And your faith ain't perfect. But it's not, it's not the, how perfect or imperfect our faith is, it's the object of our faith, which is God.

And it is trust in Him, and in His Christ, and in His Word, and in the promises within this Word. That's where our faith, that's the object of our faith.

But our faith is far from perfect, and mine goes right along in there. And that's something else that we need to see here. Wherefore seeing we, the author to the Hebrews here, is including Himself in this.

He has not put Himself upon a pedestal. He has not said, I'm better than you. He has not said, my faith is better than you. He is including Himself in this.

[ 15 : 36 ] Therefore we, wherefore seeing we also. Now there's different English translations of the Bible. We're all well aware of that. This word also is the Greek word kaia.

Transliterated into English, it's K-A-I. Very simple word. However, in Scripture, in Greek, it's got five different meanings. It can mean and, it can mean be, it can mean but, it can mean also, as we have here.

What determines the meaning of it is the context that it's given in. Therefore, I think that this is the best translation of it. the word also that's being used here.

Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, because that puts us back to 11, where we had all those people that had other people testifying of the goodness of God.

And therefore, we have people that testify. We have people right now living that are good testimonies to the goodness of God. And we can draw off of their faith.

[ 16 : 46 ] We can draw off of their testimony. I'm not saying their testimony saves us. Far from it. But, we as fellow Christians, we can draw strength from their testimony.

And they can draw from ours. You know, if they start talking about hardships that they've had, and they say, but God brought me through it. We can talk about hardships that we have had in our own lives. And say, but God brought me through it.

And we are witnessing of God to one another. And that helps build our faith. It helps strengthen us. And it encourages us to do such things.

So, wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us.

So, this is very important here. Let us lay aside every weight comma. That comma wasn't there in the original Greek. The Greek didn't use punctuation or anything along those lines.

[ 17 : 45 ] So, it was put here for our help by the translators. But, let us lay aside every weight comma and the sin. So, it is differentiating between whatever this weight is and the sin.

It's talking about two separate things here. So, the sin is not the weight that we're talking about here. We all know sin is going to weigh us down. We all know that sin will burden us down. If we're true children of God, we know that.

But, he says, let us lay aside every weight. Every weight. Why? What is the imagery that's being painted here? Again, it's an arena.

It's an event. It's a run. We see that here at the end of this verse. But he says, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us.

And let us run with patience the race that is set before us. So, what weight would we be setting aside? Well, that's a good question for all of us to ask.

[ 18 : 49 ] That's a good question for me to ask myself. And it's a good question for you to ask yourself. What weight, sinful or not, and there's many weights that you and I could stand to lay aside that are going to hinder this race that's been set before us.

So, what weight do you have? You don't have to answer me. But you ponder on that. What weight do you have? What burden do you have? What is hindering your walk with God?

What is hindering this race that you are in? What's hindering that? It could be any number of things. And like I said, most of these, as far as this weight is concerned that the rider is talking about setting to the side, aren't even sinful.

Really, they can become that way. But, you know, we've all heard the phrase let go and let God. And, I agree with that. But folks, there's some effort that God expects out of us as well.

Right. And this shows it. Let us run with patience the race that is set before us. So we can let go and let God all we want to, but folks, God expects us to take our own footsteps.

[ 20 : 03 ] God, God completely expects us to do that. And Scripture teaches that over and over and over and over again that we're to put forth our own effort as well.

Not in salvation. God saves. The Bible teaches in more than one spot, salvation is of the Lord and the Lord is salvation. I can put forth zero effort into getting saved.

It is all of God. God convicts me. He shows me who I am. God shows me the door in Jesus Christ that I have. God gets me through that door.

God saves my soul. And God keeps me. And God takes me home. I have nothing to do with that. I have zero to do with that.

But after that, after that, to let go and let God, I get that and I understand that people mean well when they say that.

[ 21 : 07 ] I even understand scripturally where they get that idea from. But it does not license us to be a lazy Christian. God expects us to put forth effort.

And if we're going to be putting forth this effort, if we're going to be running this race and running it with patience, we need to lay aside whatever is going to be hindering us in that race.

anything that we know is getting between us and God, anything that we know is going to hinder our relationship, hinder our prayer life, hinder our Bible reading time, hinder anything between us and God, we need to lay it to the side.

He is the object of our faith. He's the object of our affection. He's the object of our love. He's our everything, is He not? So why would we not voluntarily and readily get rid of this weight and the sin that so easily besets us?

We need to get rid of both of those things. And I said, sin, we know that. We know that. But we don't ponder very much on the weight part of it. What else could I lay aside?

[ 22 : 20 ] That's not necessarily sinful in my life. I dare say, most if not all of us are guilty of spending too much time on our cell phones. I am, and I have been, when I could be praying, I could be reading, I could be doing any number of things to help in my walk with God.

I could be putting forth my effort toward my relationship with God, but instead I'm looking at the latest news, or whatever the case is.

And I said, folks, that may not be sinful in and of itself, but it can turn into sin real fast. Real fast. Once that takes priority above Almighty God.

But that's one weight that we can all afford to remove from ourselves, to set aside, so that we can do what? So that we can run the race with patience.

End of that verse, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. run with patience, folks. This ain't a hundred yard dash. Most, well, I dare say all of y'all have been in this run longer than I have.

[ 23 : 37 ] I told y'all just a few nights ago, I guess, I got saved in 2009, when God saved my soul. So, less than 20 years. I dare say most of y'all have been in here double that, and some of you more than that.

And that's fine, that's great. I don't look down on you, you shouldn't look down on me, I don't care if somebody has been saved for a week, or for a hundred years, or a brother or sister in Christ.

But we're all in what? We're all in a race. But notice how this is phrased. We're foreseen, we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight in the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race.

That's singular. the race, not the races. You don't have a different race than what I have. We're all in the same race. Therefore, we're all in the same arena.

We all have the same great cloud of witnesses. We all know the same testimonies from Hebrews chapter 11. It's all the same.

[ 24 : 41 ] We are all in the same race, and we're running it with patience. Again, this ain't a hundred yard dash where the gun fires and people take off and see how few of seconds they can reach the finish line.

We're running it with patience. There's a huge difference between a quarter mile race and a 500 lap race. You have to do it with patience when you're in a longer race, and we're all in a longer race.

Now, granted, some Christians live longer than others. Some are seemingly snuffed out quicker than what others are, if you'd like to phrase it like that. But nevertheless, it's all a race, and we're to run the race with patience.

Not hastily, not hurriedly. We're to run it with patience. Don't push yourself faster toward that finish line is what I'm trying to get at.

I ain't afraid to die, but I ain't no hurry to get there. Right. In other words. But let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

[ 25 : 50 ] That's another important part to this verse. It's a race that is set before us. Who said it there? I didn't. You didn't. This great cloud of witnesses didn't said it there.

Almighty God said it there. And I find an incredible deal of comfort in knowing that. No matter if it's like the imagery that the writer give here in an arena where there's a track or whatever the case is or a stadium or if it's a race out on the water somewhere you're sailing for it.

Whatever the case is. It's a race that has been set before us. And that is comforting because God put the path there.

What is Hebrew? What does Ephesians chapter 2 verse 10 teach us? It teaches us that we are created His workmanship in Christ Jesus.

And that He has ordained the path that has been set before us. That's what Ephesians 2.10 teaches us. He has ordained that path. And we are to walk on that path.

[ 27 : 02 ] And why is that so comforting? Because God already knows what's around every bend. If it's a hilly track God already knows what's above every hill. He already knows what's down in every valley.

He knows what's around every curve. He knows the dangers that may be on one side of the road or the other. God knows all these things. And He takes all that into account when He sets me upon that path.

But you, my brothers and sisters, are on the exact same path. We're all on the same path. Now, we've got different walks of life. I understand that.

We've all got different gifts. I understand that. The Bible backs that up. But it's the same race. And we're to run it with the same amount of patience.

We're to do as Brother Paul wrote. We're to set our heart and our mind and our look upon the prize that we have in Christ Jesus.

[ 28 : 04 ] That's the prize at the end of the race. that's the prize at the end of the track. He says, let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Verse 2, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Now, again, the imagery that's given here is a stadium, and I get that, or an arena type setting, and passed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, we've covered all that.

But folks, what are athletes tempted to do? What are those in such circumstances tempted to do? What were the gladiators back in this time tempted to do?

They were tempted to look up at the witnesses. They were tempted to look up at the spectators, those looking down upon them. That's not what the author of Hebrews tells us to do here.

While the witnesses, or while they're witnesses to us because of their testimony, and that is important. That's not what we're to rely on.

[ 29 : 09 ] We look unto Jesus. We don't look at Noah for salvation. We don't look at Abel for salvation. We don't look at Daniel. We don't look at David. We don't look at any of these.

We look unto Jesus. Why? He tells us. The author and the finisher of our faith. It all began with him.

It will all end one of these days with him. He is the author and the finisher of our faith. Or the perfecter of our faith as far as the finisher goes.

It begins with him. He is our perfect example of what our faith should be. That's why when the mobs came against Jesus Christ, when they chased him out because they were going to throw him off the mountainside, when they come at him to kill him, Jesus didn't worry about him.

One part of the gospel says he passed right through and kept on going. He wasn't worried about the cause. He is our wonderful example of faith. He had faith that God's plan would completely culminate to its end that God had ordained in eternity past.

[ 30 : 23 ] God ordained every bit of that and Christ had faith in that. He wasn't going to die one moment sooner than what had already been predetermined by Almighty God.

That's the kind of faith that we should have, that we fail to have, but that's the kind of faith that we should have. People told me you don't talk about yourself like you have a whole lot of faith.

I don't. I don't have a whole lot of faith. I wish I did. Now, do I have faith? Absolutely. Absolutely I have faith.

Could I stand to have more? Absolutely. 100%. All of us could stand to have more faith. But we look unto Jesus. While we're doing what?

What separates this from the previous verse? A comma. Let us run with patience the race that is set before us. While we are running with patience this race, we look unto Jesus.

[ 31 : 27 ] Jesus because He is the author and the finisher of our faith. Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

So we look unto Jesus. And Jesus who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross. That's what we're talking about here. His endurance.

Running with patience. patience. Again, we don't start out at full throttle if we're running a four-mile race. We start out with patience.

We start out at a set pace. And we continue in that pace until the last maybe lap of this race. Y'all ever watched them in the Olympics when they do that?

My goodness, it gets plum hypnotic watching them run around that track so slow. And it doesn't get exciting until about the last lap. Sometimes the last half a lap.

[ 32 : 27 ] And that's when it gets exciting. That's when everybody throws it into full gear. But folks, this takes conditioning to do that. It takes an incredible amount of conditioning.

It's not something they just wake up in the morning and say, I think I'm going to run a race today. No, it takes months of conditioning. Sometimes years of conditioning. It takes training. And what does all that entail?

Discipline. Self-discipline. And you and I have got to be self-disciplined in our walk with God. I can't depend on you and you cannot depend on me for us to discipline one another.

Now, do I believe in accountability to one another? Absolutely. Yes. The Scripture teaches that. Right. But, I cannot depend on you for my own discipline.

I need to depend upon myself for that. If I'm being tempted or an attempt is being made to ensnare me in some sort of sin, I need to have enough self-discipline about myself to say, no, that is not me.

[ 33 : 41 ] And the Holy Ghost is on the inside telling me, that's not you. But folks, we can still give in to that sin. We can give in to that temptation. Don't take my word for it.

Read David's account. Read David's account with Bathsheba. David was a man after God's own heart. You're reading the books of Kings. But David, basically, I understand he was sinful.

He was a sinful man. He had sin in his life. I get that. But you're reading Kings that David had almost a perfect life up until the sin with Uriah the Hittite, which is the same sin with Bathsheba.

So he did everything that the Lord wanted him to do. That's what the Scripture teaches until that point. But folks, there was redemption there, was there not?

There was restoration there. Much with Peter. The same with Peter. When Peter denied the Lord three times, Jesus didn't just leave him out there to rot.

[ 34 : 47 ] He restored him. Why? Because Peter had genuine repentance. But folks, it takes self-discipline to run a race and to train for said race and to build endurance.

It's an endurance and it is an enduring thing that we have to do. It's an enduring race that we are running. But it's a path that was set before us.

It's a race set before us by God. And that's the most comforting thought that we can have about this whole thing. But we look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross.

You and I have not endured a cross. Now, do we take up our cross and follow Christ? Yes. We're talking about a physical endurance of a physical Roman cross that Jesus Christ endured.

Not only did he endure the cross, he endured the nails that held him there. He endured the weight of your sin upon himself. He endured the weight of my sin upon himself. He endured it all. That's why he's our perfect example.

[ 35 : 53 ] If he could endure all that, I promise you, those nails, yes, they hurt. But the weight of our sin upon him, I guarantee that was more suffocating to him than having to hold himself up on that cross.

trying his best to breathe because that's what the human body is designed to do and not being able to. That's what crucifixion did.

We won't get into all that. But most times it was death by asphyxiation or suffocation because you couldn't breathe because you didn't have the strength because of all the pain in your body.

You didn't have the strength to hold yourself up. But anyway, we won't get into all that. But Christ endured, all of this. We look unto him, the author and finisher of our faith, who endured the cross.

In other words, you and I have to endure very little here. You and I honestly have it easy compared to what Christ went through and compared to what other Christians around the world go through.

[ 37 : 01 ] You and I have it easy and yet we complain. And I include myself in that. We complain. for the joy that was set before him.

What was that joy? I've already said it. John chapter 4. My meat is to do the Father's will. It was the word of Jesus Christ. That was the joy. What was the Father's will?

Mankind had been cast off from him. Mankind had been accursed. We've been basically thrown to the side. that. But God's will was that mankind be reconciled back unto him.

That his creation, whom he created to serve him and to worship him would do that very thing. That was the will and is the will of the Father.

And that was the joy that was set before Jesus Christ was accomplishing the Father's will. Now, did Christ get joy in performing miracles?

[ 38 : 05 ] Sure that he did. Did Christ get joy in healing the lepers and opening blind eyes and raising the dead? I'm sure he did. But those particular things were signs of whom he was.

That he was Messiah while he was here and that he is Messiah now. There were signs of that. his joy, the joy that was set before him was to do the Father's will and to reconcile man, God's creation back unto him, back unto God, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Despising the shame. He endured the cross. He took upon the shame. That's what despising the shame he's talking about. What shame though? Christ had nothing to be ashamed of.

He had no sin. So what shame are we talking about? He endured the cross for whose sake? For my sake and for your sake.

And he despised or took the shame upon himself, not for his own sake, but for your sake and for my sake. sake and this is why we should happily run this race that is set before us because Christ has done all these things for us.

[ 39 : 39 ] He done it to accomplish the Father's will. He done it on our behalf to the glory of God the Father. He done all these things. Enduring the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

That's something that I love to talk about when I teach and preach. Where is Christ now? He is at the right hand of glory. He is at the right hand of the Father.

He is at the right hand of majesty. He is at the right hand of perfect royalty. At the right hand of God. What is so great about that?

Two things. One, I know what he is doing there because the Bible tells me what he is doing there. He is making intercession. He is mediating on my behalf. He is saying, Spencer Baumgartner is one of mine.

And he is calling out your name saying you are one of his. But he is at the right hand of God. The right hand in the scripture talks about power and strength.

[ 40 : 48 ] That's all I need to know about the right hand. He is at the right hand of power and the right hand of strength. And I also know at the end of the gospel of Matthew, he says, all power has been given to me in heaven and in earth.

So not only is he at the right hand of power and strength, but he is the power and he is the strength. And he's all I need to run this race that's been set before me by God.

He's all I need. Do I appreciate the help of brothers and sisters in Christ? Absolutely. But folks, if you all didn't exist, I would still have Christ.

If I didn't exist, you all would still have Christ. Are we to help each other? Are we to encourage one another? Are we to exhort the brethren? Absolutely. Are we to admonish one another?

Yes. Per the scripture. But if we had none of those things, we would still have Christ. And Christ is all we really need.

[ 41 : 55 ] Do I appreciate you all? Yes. I don't mean to sound like I don't. But, you know, I heard this explained as far as scripture goes.

The same way. Basically the same way. I believe it was R.C. Sproul that said it. Him or John MacArthur, one of the two. But they were talking about people saying, reading a passage of scripture and saying, what does that verse mean to you?

That's not the question to ask. The question to ask is, what would that verse mean if you never existed? Once you ask yourself that question, then you start to get into what God meant by it.

Because when we start dealing with our own emotions and our own feelings as far as scripture goes, we're going to have a God that is not a God of the Bible.

We're going to have a false God when we start thinking about our own feelings and our own expectations and what a verse means to us in general.

[ 43 : 02 ] That is not the question. The question is not what does it mean to you. It is what did God mean by this scripture? scripture. And here in this verse where Christ is set down at the right hand of the throne of God, he is all we need to run this race.

And we look unto him. I appreciate the witnesses. I appreciate those whose faith has been a testimony. Not only in my lifetime, but those that we have here in Hebrews 11.

Those that we have throughout the rest of the Old Testament and the New Testament. I appreciate the testimony I've heard some of you all give. I appreciate all of that. But you are not who I look to.

We look unto Christ, the author and the finisher of our faith. And I think I'll end right there. Anybody got any questions or any comments on any of that?

Alright, God bless you all. I appreciate your attention.