

# LOOKING TO JESUS AS... HEBREWS 12:2

-  This month's "Looking to Jesus As" article comes from Adam Miller as he shows us how to look to Jesus as the answer for everything.
-  Mark Jones explains how and why we should all behold the glory of Christ.
-  This month's book is titled "Knowing Christ" which also comes to us from Mark Jones. Find out more on the insert card provided.
-  We've included a poster for our conference! Hang it up at your Church or on your fridge as a reminder to pray and attend!



## LTJA: THE ANSWER BY ADAM MILLER

When I was in high school, I was on a Bible quiz team. Believe it or not, I wasn't any good at it. I may have known the answers, but I wasn't very quick. Everything was based on speed. The first student to buzz in got a chance to answer the question. This meant that in order to get a point you had to buzz in before the questioner even finished the sentence. Not knowing the full question, sometimes we had to guess an answer. Whenever this happened to me, I would say, "Jesus!" because Jesus is always the answer. Right? As convincing as I was, it didn't always work.

### JESUS IS THE ANSWER

Unlike high school Bible trivia, Jesus really is the answer. Like Jeopardy, we are given the answer before we even know the question. A complete understanding of Jesus as our answer will change how we approach

the questions of life.

What are the keys to a happy marriage? Jesus. How should one raise their children? Jesus. How does one become a better employee? Jesus.

You probably think this is a joke, but it's not. When Paul wrote to the Church in Ephesus he instructed husbands to love their wives as Jesus loved the Church and gave Himself up for her (Ephesians 5:25), he told fathers to raise up their children in the instruction of Jesus (Ephesians 6:4), and he called slaves to serve their masters as if they were serving Jesus Himself (Ephesians 6:5).

### LOOK TO JESUS

Now you are probably asking, "How does looking to Jesus

change us?" Really? How can we look to Jesus and not be changed? I am convinced that simply looking to Jesus will either give us the answers we are looking for or it will eliminate the need for the questions altogether.

If you want to know how to be a better Christian, a better father or mother, a better member of the Body of Christ, a better witness, etc. look to Jesus. Fully realizing what Christ has done for you will affect every other aspect

of your life. By looking to Jesus, your affection for Him will increase and as your affection increases, you will become more like Him.

If you simply want to learn about how to have your best life now, then looking to Jesus more thoughtfully will cause your desires to change. Once you begin to realize all that

"I AM CONVINCED THAT SIMPLY LOOKING TO JESUS WILL EITHER GIVE US THE ANSWERS WE ARE LOOKING FOR OR IT WILL ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR THE QUESTIONS ALTOGETHER."

Christ has done for you, you will become less concerned about your own kingdom and more focused on the Kingdom of God.

## WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN LOOKING?

This whole year we have been looking to Jesus through every aspect of our ministry. Have you been paying attention? Where have you been looking? Perhaps you are focused on this election

season and struggling to determine who deserves your vote. Look to Jesus. Maybe you are concerned about your finances and you are spending all of your free time worrying about the future. Look to Jesus. There are a lot of images constantly being placed before us, but we are called to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus.

We don't talk about politics on Songtime radio. We don't write

about how you should manage your finances. We don't tell you how you should parent your children, how you should show love to your spouse, or how many overtime hours you should put in at work. All we can do is talk about Jesus and tell you to focus on Him.



► Rev. Adam Miller is the President and Host of Songtime and can be heard daily on the Songtime Radio Broadcast.



## Help us celebrate *Christmas In July!*

We are so grateful that many of you give so graciously at the end of the year.

But now that we are in the middle of the year, we need your help.

Please consider a special donation to help us stay on budget in the middle of our year.

Use the enclosed card to send in your *Christmas in July* gift.

Thank you for your continued support.



## THE PRINCIPLE EXERCISE OF FAITH BY MARK JONES

*Q. What is the principal exercise of faith?*

*A. The contemplation of the glory of Christ is the principal exercise of faith.*

### EXPLANATION

John Owen referred to the contemplation of the glory of

Christ as the “principal exercise of faith.” This is a magnificent statement based on an equally magnificent truth. Those who wish to behold the glory of God in the person of Christ in the life to come by sight must, in this life, behold the glory of God in Christ by faith. For, as the Apostle Paul says, “for we walk by faith, not by sight”

(II Corinthians 5:7 ESV).

The life of faith cannot be adequately considered or properly understood until we come face-to-face (pardon the pun) with the reality that our lives consist in “beholding the glory of the Lord” (II Corinthians 3:18) by faith. In so doing we are “transformed into the same image [of



Christ] from one degree of glory to another" (II Corinthians 3:18).

## SEEING CHRIST'S GLORY

Satan blinds the minds of men so that in their unbelief they are blinded and unable to see the glory of God in Christ.

Conversely, the Spirit gives us "unveiled faces" (II Corinthians 3:18) in order to see Christ's glory in the gospel. This seeing is not a one-time event or even a future hope, but instead it is a daily reality that grips our souls as we consider why we live and how we are to live. Sadly, according to Owen, who wrote during the time of English Puritanism, most Christians are "strangers unto this duty."

Christians today are by and large not only ignorant of some of the most important truths of Christ's person and work, but they are grossly ignorant. Solid, intense, soul-devoting study of Christ is absent from the lives of

many Christians today. The unsearchable riches of Christ, who is the visible image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15), are not proclaimed from the pulpits of Bible-believing churches as they should be. What is the

result? God's people are defective in the principal exercise of faith: contemplation of Christ's glory.

So, in Owen's estimation, and I am inclined to give my own "Amen" to his view,

"Did we abound in this duty, in this exercise of faith, our life in walking before God would be more sweet and pleasant unto us – our spiritual light and strength would have a daily increase; – we should more represent the glory of Christ in our ways and walking than usually we do, and death itself would be most welcome unto us."

That last sentence gets to the heart of the issue. Why are so many afraid of death? Why are so many *Christians* afraid of

death? Because we have not sufficiently grasped, in the exercise of our faith, the glory of Christ that awaits God's people. In some of the most splendid words ever uttered in the history of the world, Christ prayed:

"Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24 ESV).

Christ desires that we see His glory, but we do not desire adequately what He Himself wishes for us. God shines into our hearts the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Corinthians 4:6). That is to say, God has bestowed upon us this unique dignity, but perhaps we do not understand how blessed we are and so we do not make the most out of this blessing as we should?

## CONTEMPLATING CHRIST'S GLORY

Think of the things you give your attention to.

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CAPE CODDER RESORT

A SONGTIME CONFERENCE

# LOOKING TO JESUS

PLEASE HANG THE POSTER ON YOUR CHURCH'S BULLETIN BOARD OR ON YOUR FRIDGE SO THAT YOU CAN PROMOTE AND PRAY FOR THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE

SEE THE ENCLOSED POSTER FOR MORE DETAILS

## ► THE PRINCIPLE EXERCISE OF FAITH <CONTINUED>

How do you exercise your mind? In the contemplation of money, possessions, friends, and prestige? What are we obsessed with? This may sound shocking, but only those who contemplate Christ's glory are those who will see Christ's glory. Why? Because true faith can have no other end (or goal) than to be with the one who is the object of our faith. Our faith is not ignorant of itself. We look to Christ, not to our faith. In looking to Him we are living the life of contemplation on Him in the hope of being with Him. The prospect of seeing Christ, in His peculiar glory as the God-man, should ravish our hearts with an anticipation that fills us with daily delights.

We know and love God's attributes in and through Christ. Therefore, to know God we must know Christ. The contemplation of Christ brings us to the contemplation of God. God's wisdom, power, justice, goodness, mercy, faithfulness, and patience are nowhere better displayed than in the life, death, resurrection, ascension, and enthronement of Jesus. So when we contemplate these aspects of Christ's work we are brought to love the holy properties of our great God. God and Christ are the objects of our faith: "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come

into judgment, but has passed from death to life" (John 5:24 ESV). Faith in Christ necessarily brings us to God and faith in God necessarily brings us back to Christ.

As a result, Thomas Watson called faith an "assimilating grace." Why?

"Because it changes the soul into the image of the object; it makes it like Christ. Never did any look upon Christ with a believing eye, but he was made like Christ. A deformed person may look on a beautiful object, and not be made beautiful; but faith looking on Christ transforms a man, and turns him into his similitude. Looking on a bleeding Christ causes a soft bleeding heart; looking on a holy Christ causes sanctity of heart; looking on a humble Christ makes the soul humble. As the chameleon is changed into the colour of that which it looks upon, so faith, looking on Christ, changes the Christian into the similitude of Christ."

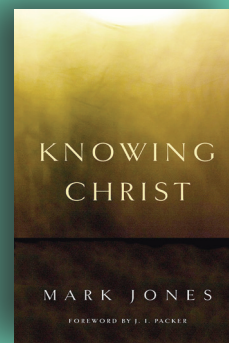
Beautiful lack of humility, for example, is a failure to adequately look upon the humility of Christ. No wonder John Owen said the principal exercise of saving faith is to behold Christ in His person and work.



► Rev. Dr. Mark Jones is the Pastor at Faith Vancouver Presbyterian Church and the author of "Knowing Christ".



## ► MONTHLY OFFER



We strongly believe that by looking to Jesus we will become more like Him and by becoming more like

Him we can point others to Him.

This is every Christian's primary calling.

That is why we have committed this entire year to "Looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2).

Every believer, new and old, needs to make a conscientious effort to learn more about our Savior. Each month we offer a book to help you grow closer in your walk with Jesus.

Don't miss out on this month's book, *Knowing Christ* by Mark Jones, as an opportunity to go deeper than you have ever been in your understanding of who Christ is, what He has done for you, and what promises you have to hold onto for the future.

See the enclosed card for more details on how to order this month's offer.

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