

Looking To Jesus
by R. A. Torrey (1856-1928)

If we are to run with patience the race that is set before us, we must always keep looking to Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-3). One of the simplest and yet one of the mightiest secrets of abiding joy and victory is to never lose sight of Jesus.

1. First of all, we must keep looking at Jesus as the ground of our acceptance before God. Over and over again, Satan will make an attempt to discourage us by bringing up our sins and failures and thus try to convince us that we are not children of God, or not saved. If he succeeds in getting us to keep looking at and brooding sins, he will soon get us discouraged, and discouragement means failure. But if we will keep looking at what God looks at, the death of Jesus Christ in our place that completely atones for every sin that we ever committed, we will never be discouraged because of the greatest of our sins. We shall see that while our sins are great, very great, indeed they have all been atoned for. Every time Satan brings up one of our sins, we shall see that Jesus Christ has redeemed us from its curse by being made a curse in our place (Galatians 3:13). We shall see that while in ourselves we are full of unrighteousness, nevertheless in Christ we are made the righteousness of God, because Christ was made to be sin in our place (2 Corinthians 5:21). We will see that every sin that Satan taunts us about has been borne and settled forever (1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:6). We shall always be able to sing,

Jesus paid my debt,
All the debt I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow.

If you are this moment troubled about any sin that you have ever committed, either in the past or in the present, just look at Jesus on the cross; believe what God tells you about Him, that this sin which troubles you was laid upon Him (Isaiah 53:6). Thank God that the sin is all settled, be full of gratitude to Jesus, who bore it in your place, and worry about it no more. It is an act of base ingratitude to God to brood over sins that He in His infinite love has canceled. Keep looking at Christ on the cross and walk always in the sunlight of God's favor. This favor of God has been purchased for you at great cost. Gratitude demands that you should always believe in it and walk in the light of it.

2. In the second place, we must keep looking at Jesus as our risen Savior, who has all power in heaven and on earth and is able to keep us every day and every hour. Are you tempted to do some wrong at this moment? If you are, remember that Jesus rose from the dead, remember that at this moment He is living at the right hand of God in the glory; remember that He has all power in heaven and on earth,

and that, therefore, He can give you victory right now. Believe what God tells you in His Word, that Jesus has power to save you this moment "completely" (Hebrews 7:25). Believe that He has power to give you victory over that sin that now besets you. Ask Him to give you victory; expect Him to do it. In this way, by looking unto the risen Christ for victory, you may have victory over sin every day, every hour, every moment. "Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead" (2 Timothy 2:8).

God has called every one of us to a victorious life, and the secret of this victorious life is always looking to the risen Christ for victory. Through looking to Christ crucified we obtain pardon and enjoy peace. Through looking to the risen Christ we obtain present victory over the power of sin. If you have lost sight of the risen Christ and have yielded to temptation, confess your sin and know that it is forgiven because God says so (1 John 1:9), and look to Jesus, the risen One, again to give you victory now, and keep looking to Him.

3. In the third place, we must keep looking to Jesus as the One whom we should follow in our daily conduct. Our Lord Jesus says to us, His disciples today, as He said to His early disciples, "Follow me." The whole secret of true Christian conduct can be summed up in these two words "Follow me." "Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did" (1 John 2:6). One of the commonest causes of failure in Christian life is found in the attempt to follow some good man whom we greatly admire. No man and no woman, no matter how good, can be safely followed. If we follow any man or woman, we are bound to go astray. There has been but one absolutely perfect Man on this earth--the Man Christ Jesus. If we try to follow any other man we are surer to imitate his faults than his excellencies. Look to Jesus and Jesus only as your Guide.

If at any time you are in any perplexity as to what to do, simply ask the question, What would Jesus do? Ask God by His Holy Spirit to show you what Jesus would do. Study your Bible to find out what Jesus did do, and follow Him. Even though no one else seems to be following Jesus, be sure that you follow Him. Do not spend your time or thought in criticizing others because they do not follow Jesus. See that you follow Him yourself. When you are wasting your time criticizing others for not following Jesus, Jesus is always saying to you, "What is that to you? You must follow me" (John 21:22). The question for you is not what following Jesus may involve for other people. The question is, What does following Jesus mean for you?

This is the really simple life, the life of simply following Jesus. Many perplexing questions will come to you, but the most perplexing question will soon become as clear as day if you determine with all your heart to follow Jesus in everything. Satan will always be ready to whisper to you, "Such and such a good man does it," but all you need to do is to answer, "It matters not to me what this or that man may do or not do. The only question to me is, What would Jesus do?" There is wonderful freedom in this life of simply following Jesus.

This path is straight and plain. But the path of him who tries to shape his conduct by observing the conduct of others is full of twists and turns and pitfalls. Keep looking at Jesus. Follow on trustingly where He leads. This is the path of the righteous, shining ever brighter till the full light of day (Proverbs 4:18). He is the Light of the world, anyone who follows Him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life all along the way (John 8:12).