



John's Schedule

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Focus on God



Part 31 (080720AM)

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Jesus said that if our eye is single ([Mat. 6:22](#)), all of our lives will be filled with His light. Jesus went on to say that we can't have two masters, we must focus upon one ([Mat. 6:24](#)). James warns us of the dangers of being double minded ([James 1:8](#)), because it destabilizes every part of our lives.

This morning, Paul tells us through Titus (2:7), that God desires every man to keep a singular focus upon God and His way. A focused life is what each of us should desire to give to God today.

Focus light and you get a laser burst.
Focus water and you get some commercial cutting applications.
Focus atoms and you get some momentary atomic power.
Focus on money and you get a passing fortune like a Rockefeller, Morgan, or Buffet.
Focus on conquest and you get a short-lived Alexander or Hitler.

But—focus your life on Jesus Christ and you get an eternal reward, and endless delights.

We come to the fourth quality, "reverence" that God is looking for in younger men ([Titus 2:7](#)). The call goes out through Christ's Church—God wants grace-energized men who choose to keep a singular focus upon Him in a horribly blurring world.

Paul reintroduces us to the quality we have already seen for older men (it was also the second quality listed in v. 2). All men whether older or younger, are called to have a singular focus upon a godly, reverent lifestyle. This word "reverence" describes a man with a "seriousness about life, a dignified lifestyle, and a goal of pursuing whatever honors God". Reverence doesn't mean never laughing, showing humor, or enjoying life—rather it means checking in first with God, to be sure that the laughter, humor, and enjoyment are pleasing to Him. This grace-energized reverence leads to constant choices to avoid the trivial and pursue the eternal.

Tomorrow's Godly Men Start Today

Paul tells Titus that God put the spotlight on the next generation of leaders for Christ's church. The young men, who want to grow up to be the godly and mature servants of God must begin while they are young to cultivate these six qualities. Do you have them noted? Here they are again:

v. 6 "Likewise exhort the **young men**":

1. "to be sober-minded": First in any godly man's life is a firm resolve to **Live a Restrained Life in an Unrestrained World;**
2. v.7 "in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works": Next, these men seek to **Become Representations of Christ In A Christ-less World;**
3. "in doctrine showing integrity": Then is the constant desire to **Un-enslaved to Corruption in a Corrupted World;**
4. "reverence": And the vigilant attitude of **Keeping A Singular Focus In A Blurred World;**
5. "incorruptibility", v. 8: This means that God wants His servants to shine before our sin-darkened world by **Keeping an Incorruptible Life in a Decaying World;**
6. "sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you". (NKJV):And finally, the whole reason God left His servants here was to go and "tell", so godly young men are **Speaking God's Words In A Godless World.**

Whether young or old, God wants men who think deeply about God in an amused, shallow-thinking culture. This man lives a life that is marked by grace-energized convictions:

- This man chooses to not be entertained by sensuality; and
- This man chooses to never be amused by vulgarity.

This quality of godly character means a grace-energized choice to:

- understand the brevity of life;
- experience the gravity of God's Word; and
- live in the reality of eternity.

This morning, may I challenge every young man in this place to God's call that you keep a singular focus upon God in an increasingly blurred world.

One of the greatest joys of life is going through this dark world of sin and decay—seeing God. This singular focus means living like the great models of the Old Testament. Living by grace like Moses in Pharaoh's court, Abraham in Canaan's tents, Joseph in Potipher's house, and David on Israel's hillsides.

Some of the greatest promises found in God's Word are to those who see and follow the Lord. Let's open to just one of the countless promises offered to the band of those who set their sights upon seeing God, in Hebrews 11. Please stand with me as we read starting in v. 13.

*Hebrews 11:13-12:2 v.13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having **seen them afar off** were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. 23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command. 26 esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he **looked to** the reward. 27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; **for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible**. 12:1 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 author and 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. NKJV*

Seeing God as Our Greatest Delight

How is your vision this morning? I recently was struggling seeing with my new glasses. They were made by the best doctor, prepared in the best lab as a special gift for me heading out in ministry—but they were a bit fuzzy. I went in and found that the blurred vision was neither the glasses nor my eyes, it was just one of the nose pads had gotten bent. Just a tiny correction and the world was clear again.

How is your sight of God these days? Crystal clear, bright, and empowering, or has God gotten blurred over the days and weeks of life that has gone by?

One great benefit of grace-energized choices to focus upon God is how clear He becomes.

Isaiah 33:14b-17 "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" 15 He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, He who despises the gain of oppressions, Who gestures with his hands, refusing bribes, Who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed, And shuts his eyes from seeing evil: 16 He will dwell on high; His place of defense will be the fortress of rocks; Bread will be given him, His water will be sure. 17 Your eyes will see the King in His beauty; They will see the land that is very far off. NKJV

Choosing to Focus on God For a Lifetime

1. **Grace-energized Men who Focus on God will choose to: Starve their Flesh (Romans 13:14).**

Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. NKJV

Cut all supply routes. If there are websites, TV shows, magazines, videos, and so on, that are less than Christlike, destroy them. If there are avenues that defile, such as cable TV/HBO and ungodly internet access, get rid of them. Do whatever it takes to starve the evil desires of your flesh, and those of your family. **Put on Christ by starving your flesh!**

- ⇒ Have a *no-television* week or month.
- ⇒ Read God's Word before email or online news each morning.
- ⇒ Pray in the car or meditate on a verse instead of listening to the radio.
- ⇒ Cancel the newspaper or magazine.
- ⇒ Create an intentional solitude.

2. **Grace-energized Men who Focus on God will choose to: Walk in the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18-19).** Let the Word of God fill your life, and then pass it on to your family! **Walk daily!**

Please turn with me to [Ephesians 5:18-19](#) :

And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, NKJV

Those biblical commands are meant for each of us, as Christians, to obey. They are not something to simply pray about, and then get around to doing one day. No, they are for us to actively grab hold of and obey—right now!

So God Almighty commands:

**All of Us
To Let His Spirit
Continuously Be Filling You!**

3. **Grace-energized Men who Focus on God will choose to: Stay in Constant Touch with God (1 Thessalonians 5:17).** Prayer is the best, greatest, and most powerful way to touch your family's lives! **Pray without ceasing!**

Pray for wisdom, and seek God's direction for how to promote your growth in Christ's mind. Do not let another day go by without praying for your mind. Plan for purity; expose your mind only to the right things. Read the Bible to your family, and discuss it, so they also learn how to draw practical life applications from God's Word. It is by your walk with the Lord that you demonstrate that you love the Holy Scriptures yourself.

Pray for grace to stop the indiscriminate and endless watching of TV and videos, and starting systematic, prayerful reading and studying of God's Word. We all have the time to do what is right—we simply have to make it a priority. Today, let us each choose to cultivate the mind God has willed us to have!

4. **Grace-energized Men who Focus on God will choose to: Make Little Choices of Self-Restraint (1 Timothy 4:7).** This is a daily pattern of saying no to specific temptations, and saying yes to the Holy Spirit as He prompts you. One small choice is to turn your monitor so those behind you can see what you are viewing. If you struggle with images online this is a great accountability step. **Discipline yourself!**

Grace teaches this serious spiritual life. Today we can make little choices to give to God what He desires from us.

- **Give Him your un-blurred devotion. Mark 12:33** “And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.” NKJV

Have we offered our devotion up to Him irretrievably, completely, and lovingly—by giving Him time each day because we love Him; by giving Him our complete attention as we focus upon Him in His Word and in prayer?

- **Give Him your un-blurred life. Romans 12:1** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. NKJV

Have we recently renewed that offering of all we are to Him? Have we repeated those simple words of the child Samuel, that the Lord so delights to hear from us, “Speak Lord, for your servant is listening!”

- **Give Him your un-blurred service. Philippians 2:17** Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. NKJV

Are we pouring out what we cannot keep—to Him so we cannot lose? Each time you serve, look up in your heart from the classroom, nursery, choir room, AWANA room or where ever you offer that service, and say to the Lord, “I am giving this time to you. I can't keep it, I could selfishly squander it, but instead I give it to YOU as an act of devotion and worship!”

- **Give Him your un-blurred gifts. Philippians 4:18** Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. NKJV

What is the aroma ascending from our living before Christ's eyes today? Make more of your offerings by praying over each check, hold it in your hand as you mail it or place it in the offering and breathe out to God, “I give this to YOU as an offering of love and gratitude!”

- **Give Him your un-blurred worship. Hebrews 13:15** Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. NKJV

When is the last time we stopped and launched a wave of praise filled worship toward His Throne? Plan to burst forth in your car, or on a walk, or when you are all alone into a cry of love to the Lord. Say something like you

sing, "I love YOU Lord and I lift my voice to WORSHIP you...!"

- **Give Him your un-blurred good works.** **Hebrews 13:16** But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. NKJV

What acts of kindness have we premeditated and carried out this week? Plan to do intentional sacrificial acts of kindness for others. Do things unasked, unseen, and not expecting any thanks. As you do that act (like the trash, laundry, sweeping, mowing, what ever) lift your eyes above and say, "I am doing this in YOUR Name Oh Lord because I love YOU and I want to serve like You served!"

- **Give Him your un-blurred prayers.** **Revelation 8:3-4** Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.⁴ And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. NKJV

What do we have in the bowl of our collected prayers? If God loves our prayers so much that He collects them all (like notes from my wife & kids) why don't we send more? Up your times of prayers. Invite God into every praise and problem, every fear and frustration...your life will be revolutionized as you say to the Lord, "I need YOU in every part of my life!"

- God says that His grace-energizes us into being focused upon spiritual things;
 - His grace teaches us how to focus on living a disciplined life: which means self-controlled and not addicted to anything;
 - Believers energized by God's grace focus their choices upon seeking out God's priorities;
5. **Grace-energized Men who Focus on God will choose to: Live like Pilgrims and Strangers here on earth.**

1 Peter 2:11 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, NKJV

The grace-energized man never gets intoxicated by the error of the world that this world is my home and this is what I live for. Peter explains for us the focused-mind that God wants and that Paul instructs Titus to train up. Peter uses five, very targeted exhortations, in **1 Peter 1:13-16**, in the form of 2 imperative commands surrounded by three participles. The NIV renders them all as commands, and that is the direction we will go this morning. The singular, reverent focus on God is governed by these truths.

- (1) **UNHINDERED: "gird up the loins of your mind"** (NKJV) or **"Prepare your minds for action"** (NIV). In Bible times men often wore long, flowing robes. When strenuous work or running was required they would pull up and cinch into their belt that robe to make what we would call shorts. Obedience is a conscious act of the will. Christians in conflict need a tough-minded holiness that is ready for action. The ancient practice of gathering up one's robes when needing to move in a hurry; here, it is metaphorically applied to one's thought process. The meaning is to pull in all the loose ends of one's thinking, by rejecting the hindrances of the world and focusing on the future grace of God (cf. **Eph. 6:14; Col. 3:2**).
- (2) **UNINTOXICATED: "be sober"** (NKJV) or **"Be self-controlled"** (NIV) Is our word from **Titus 2:2** is word from **Titus 2:2** via the verb **νεφρομ** ("be sober") which is always used figuratively in the New Testament. This word describes a person free from every form of mental and spiritual "drunkenness" or excess; and one who resists the control of outside circumstances. God wants believers to be directed from within. As we've seen, this form of spiritual sober-mindedness includes the ideas of steadfastness, self-control, clarity of mind, and moral decisiveness. The sober Christian is correctly in charge of his priorities and not intoxicated with the various allurements of the world.

"The opposite of "be sober-minded" is "frenzy, madness." It is the Greek word mania, which has come into our English vocabulary via psychology. If we are sober-minded, we will be intellectually sound and not off on a tangent because of some "new" interpretation of the Scriptures.

We will also face things realistically and be free from delusions. The sober-minded saint will have a purposeful life and not be drifting, and he will exercise restraint and not be impulsive. He will have "sound judgment" not only about doctrinal matters, but also about the practical affairs of life. [1]

- (3) **UNWAVERED: "rest your hope fully"** (NKJV) or **"Set your hope fully"** (NIV). This balanced mind and holy life demands great determination. A believer's hope is to be set completely, unwaveringly, and without reservation solely by faith upon **God's grace**. Only His grace can energize an anchored mind.
- (4) **UNSQUEEZED: "not conforming yourselves to"** (NKJV) or **"do not conform to"** (NIV). Here we see Peter using that famous word from **Romans 12:1** (schematicized "not squeezed into the mold of") **the evil desires** of their past sinful lives. Rather **as obedient children** (lit., "children of obedience") they were to mold their characters to God's Word and the renewed mind's desires implanted through the Spirit of God.
- (5) **UNTAINTED: "be holy in all your conduct"** (NKJV) or **"all you do"** (NIV). Grace-energized living brings a denial of the old life (their former

ignorance), and a new walk in the Spirit that is set apart to the desires and wishes of God who gave us new birth and called us to be His own.

Remember the recent tomato scare, as hundreds were sickened and some died from possible tomato borne disease. Remember how some of you looked at anything remotely resembling a tomato in your food? That is how a grace-energized man looks at anything that displeases God!

We live in the most intoxicating time in history. We live around the constant allurements of wealth, comfort and the false promises of security. When we give in to the “Canaanite virus” we slowly detach from the closeness to Christ and His church He calls us to and we drift around seeking our goals, plans, and ambitions.

Whether young or old, God wants men who think deeply about God in an amused, shallow-thinking culture. This man lives a life that is marked by grace-energized convictions:

- This man chooses to not be entertained by sensuality; and
- This man chooses to never be amused by vulgarity.

This quality of godly character means a grace-energized choice to:

- understand the brevity of life;
- experience the gravity of God’s Word; and
- live in the reality of eternity.

This morning, may I challenge every young man in this place to God’s call that you keep a singular focus upon God in an increasingly blurred world.

What would be one the strongest intoxicant this world has to offer? To understand, lets use the Bible to illustrate for us the dangers we face from this world. One of the strongest tugs on most peoples lives is a spirit of independence. Most humans, and even believers seek to live as independently as we possibly can. We ponder personal goals, personal dreams, and cultivate personal ambitions—often without even realizing that as we do so that we are often just doing what we have decided is right. Note the very last verse of Judges with me.

[Judges 21:25](#) In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes. NKJV

Living Among Canaanites Today

Without a life anchored by God's Word self-determination and self-driven lives are the norm. Think about what you know about Israel entering the Promised Land. As the Jews entered Canaan they found it unbelievably lush, green, and productive. God had warned them repeatedly about the evil of the people of the land, the Canaanite pagans who God asked them to drive out and destroy.

Rather than get rid of them, Israel slowly began to think that maybe they knew more than God. Maybe their gods made the Land so fruitful. Slowly Israel conformed to think and act like the Canaanites. This whole decline is explained in Psalm 106. Look there with me at [Psalm 106:34-36](#):

They did not destroy the peoples, Concerning whom the Lord had commanded them,
35 But they mingled with the Gentiles And learned their works; 36 They served their idols, Which became a snare to them. NKJV

Canaanites seemed nice, they looked harmless, they made great neighbors. But they did have bad habits, they did worship fertility gods and engage in sexual promiscuity, and they did reject the truth of God...but maybe the Canaanite gods really did bring prosperity and success. So Israel mingled and blended in with them.

God's Word warns us that each of us who know Jesus are...

The Canaanite snare to Israel that is played out in the book of Judges is probably a good picture of the autonomous lifestyles many American professing Christians are living these days.

Grace-energized Men are not Independent of God

The online source for many Americans named Wikipedia really does capture the essence of the current American's thinking:

"In general, the American dream can be defined as being the opportunity and freedom for all citizens to achieve their goals and become rich and famous if only they work hard enough."

This statement of the "American Dream" is the most frank definition of what may actually be our deeply rooted national form of idolatry. As believers we have become so American that we think God and the American dream somehow fit together. We are so steeped in our culture and life that we fail to fear the "Canaanite" danger all around us. We are in the very same dangerous place as Israel in the times of the Judges.

Our society offers us all manner of consumer goods, pleasure, travel and enjoyment, the good things of life—but we are asked to be "tolerant" of (and eventually to buy into) the pagan idolatry which is everywhere around us. And when we do so, and the more we do so—then the terrible sickness and blindness of Revelation 3 takes hold of our lives.

Look with me at Christ's last letter to His church, the ones in Laodicea:

[Revelation 3:14-22](#) "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:15 "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.16 "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.17 "Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—18 "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.19 "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.21 "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.22 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." "' NKJV

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The Evidence of the Spirit Filled Walk

Being filled with the Holy Spirit is both an initial event and an ongoing experience of God that takes place as we yield our lives completely to His control, confessing and repenting of any conscious sin. We also open our lives to the Holy Spirit when we spend time with God, praying and reading His Word. As ³being filled with the Spirit² becomes a normal, moment-by-moment part of our daily walk with God, gracious virtues known as ³fruit of the Spirit² will be produced in our lives ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)). It is only as the Holy Spirit works within the believer that the following can be realized:

- Putting off of your old self ([Eph. 4:22](#))
- Being made new in the attitude of your minds ([Eph. 4:23](#))
- Putting on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness ([Eph. 4:24](#))
- Putting off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor ([Eph. 4:25](#))
- In your anger not sinning ([Eph. 4:26](#))
- Not giving the devil a foothold ([Eph. 4:27](#))
- Stealing no longer, working, doing something useful with your own hands, that you might have something to share with those in need ([Eph. 4:28](#))
- Not letting any unwholesome talk come out of your mouth, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen ([Eph. 4:29](#))
- Not grieving the Holy Spirit of God ([Eph. 4:30](#))
- Getting rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice ([Eph. 4:31](#))
- Being kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you ([Eph. 4:32](#))
- No hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people ([Eph. 5:3](#))
- No obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving ([Eph. 5:4](#))
- Not deceived with empty words ([Eph. 5:6](#))
- No partnership with deceivers ([Eph. 5:7](#))
- Finding out what pleases the Lord ([Eph. 5:10](#))
- Having nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather exposing them ([Eph. 5:11](#))
- Being very careful how you live (not as unwise but as wise ([Eph. 5:15](#)))
- Making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil ([Eph. 5:16](#))
- Not being foolish, but understanding what the Lord's will is ([Eph. 5:17](#))
- Not getting drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, being filled with the Spirit.² ([Eph. 5:18](#))
- Speaking to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Singing and making music in your heart to the Lord ([Eph. 5:19](#))
- Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ ([Eph. 5:20](#))
- Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ ([Eph. 5:21](#))
- Wives, submitting to your husbands as to the Lord ([Eph. 5:22](#))
- Husbands, loving your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ([Eph. 5:25](#))
- Children, obeying parents in the Lord, for this is right ([Eph. 6:1](#))
- Honoring your father and mother ([Eph. 6:2](#))
- Fathers, not exasperating your children; instead, bringing them up in the training and instruction of the Lord ([Eph. 6:4](#))
- Employees, obeying your employers with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ ([Eph. 6:5](#))
- Serving wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men ([Eph. 6:7](#))
- Employers, treating your employees in the same way. Not threatening them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him ([Eph. 6:9](#))
- Being strong in the Lord and in his mighty power ([Eph. 6:10](#))
- Putting on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes ([Eph. 6:11](#))
- Putting on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand ([Eph. 6:13](#))
- Standing firm with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place ([Eph. 6:14](#))
- Taking up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one ([Eph. 6:16](#))
- Taking the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God ([Eph. 6:17](#))
- Praying in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests; being alert and always praying for all the saints ([Eph. 6:18](#))
- Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love ([Eph. 6:24](#))

What exactly has Christ done for you? What is there in your life that needs Christ to explain it, and that, apart from Him, simply could not have been there at all? If there is nothing, then your religion is a sheer futility. But then that is your fault, not Jesus Christ's.

For, when we open the New Testament, it is to come upon whole companies of excited people, their faces all aglow, their hearts dazed and bewildered by the immensity of their own good fortune. Apparently they find it difficult to think of anything but this amazing happening that has befallen them; quite certainly they cannot keep from laying almost violent hands on every chance passer-by, and pouring out yet once again the whole astounding story. And always, as we listen, they keep throwing up their hands as if in sheer despair, telling us it is

hopeless, that it breaks through language, that it won't describe, that until a man has known Christ for himself he can have no idea of the enormous difference He makes. It is as when a woman gives a man her heart; or when a little one is born to very you; or when, after long lean years of pain and greyness, health comes back. You cannot really describe that; you cannot put it into words, not adequately. Only, the whole world is different, and life gloriously new. Well, it is like that, they say.

... A. J. Gossip, *From the Edge of the Crowd*

The redeemed in Heaven crying continually, "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood," give, say the scriptures, an adoration which, in depth and fullness, no angel of them all can ever equal. Yet even then, we have not reached the centre. For when we worship, we are in God's presence, and it is what He says and does to us that is the all-important thing, not what we say and do toward Him. Since He is here and speaking to us, face to face, it is for us, in a hush of spirit, to listen for and to His voice, reproof, counseling, encouraging, revealing His most blessed will for us; and, with diligence, to set about immediate obedience. This and this, upon which He has laid His hand, must go; and this and this to which He calls us must be at once begun. And here and now I start to it. That is the heart of worship, its very core and essence.

... A. J. Gossip, *Experience Worketh Hope*

[1] Wiersbe, Warren W., *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books) 1997.

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