

## Overcoming This World's Obstacles

"Faith" is a fascinating word! Have you ever tried to define "faith"? It's not easy ... somewhat in the same category as "love". But, we have help with both words in Scripture. As far as "faith" goes, Hebrews 11, often referred to as the "faith" chapter begins with a description of faith as **"being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we don't see."** The rest of the chapter explains that all the saints in the Old Testament live by faith in what God had promised. Then, Hebrews 12, verse 2 says, **"We look to Jesus, the Founder and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."** Hebrews 12 follows Hebrews 11 and that's important not to forget, because understanding Hebrews 11, helps us to read and understand Hebrews 12.

Hebrews 12 begins by alluding back to the faith of those who have gone before and the faith of those who believe now, but a fundamental shift occurs in verse 2. That's the verse I'm focusing on now. Here, we're told to fix our eyes not on those who have faith but on the One **in whom** they have faith, so let's fix our eyes on Jesus. The point is not just having faith, but focusing on the One in whom we should put all our trust.

There's a lot of talk about faith nowadays and folks do put their faith in many things, so what does it mean to fix our eyes and our faith on Jesus? It means that Jesus is the only true and worthy object of our faith. It's not faith in ourselves or in our favorite sports team. It's not faith in government or our country. It's not even faith in faith, or the power of positive thinking. Now, those things may or may not be good at a certain point, or helpful, but they're not worthy of our ultimate faith. Jesus is the only One and the only thing, the only Person, who deserves our faith.

We all also put our faith in those other things ... we may use the language of faith to say that we depend on those things or hope those things will help us, but the true object of faith, ultimately, is Jesus. He's God in the flesh. He's the only One who can promise and deliver eternal life. He's the only One who can conquer our enemies of sin, death, and the power of the devil. Only Jesus is worthy of, and deserves, our faith.

Jesus is the Founder and Perfecter of our faith. This is one of those places where the English translation really doesn't reflect the original Greek. It actually makes more sense in the Greek. The words here are really, **"He's the beginning and the goal, or the end of our faith."** Think about it. Jesus, the beginning of our faith, He's the goal, He's the endpoint of our faith. Basically, what the Hebrew's writer is saying, "He's **everything**. He's the **content**. He's the **object**. He's our **hope**. He's our **promise**. He's our **life**. He is **everything**." And He's more ... He's also the Founder and Perfecter. The Founder of our

faith, fully God. He's always been, will always be, so faith begins in Him. He is also the Perfecter. He's the only One who has ever had perfect faith. He fully trusted in God during His earthly life, but again, there's so much more than just founding and perfecting. This verse really says that Jesus is all of that, and more.

The second part of this verse 2 of Hebrews 12 gets to the heart of why true faith is faith in Christ. The writer of Hebrews says, "**He endured the cross, scorned and shamed, and is seated at the right hand of God.**" That's the reason we fix our eyes on Jesus. He suffered death on the cross, rose again on the third day, as only He could. He ascended into heaven where He reigns as King, and He will return one day as judge of the living and the dead. He is the King of kings. He's the Lord of lords.

In Him alone we find forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life. He's everything, and that's why we fix our eyes on Him. That's why we trust in Him alone.

That's the View from Here

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