

“Look At the Plan!”

Fixing Our Eyes on Jesus, Our High Priest

Hebrews 2:5-9.

Rev. Jeff Stivason

March 23, 2018

Jeff: Our heavenly Father, we are thankful for the day that You've provided. We know that each one is a gift from Your hand. And Father, help us to redeem the time. And help us to live according to Your glory. Father, we pray that Your kingdom would come. We pray that it would come more and more in our lives, and that it would overflow to the lives of others.

Father, we recognize that we belong to this Kingdom because we possess an alien righteousness, a righteousness not our own. For indeed we hungered and thirsted for righteousness once we discovered our lack by the Holy Spirit's work in our lives. And we rejoice in knowing that we possess the righteousness of Christ by virtue of our union with Him. And so, Father, we pray that that would overflow into the lives of others, that they might see the Kingdom in our lives. And we pray that they would desire to be a part of that Kingdom as the Spirit works in theirs.

Father, as we gather here this morning, we are mindful that we gather to study Your word and to involve ourselves in your revelation to the extent that not only would it be intriguing to our minds, but that it would be transformative to our hearts and our lives. And so, Father, we pray for the renewing of our minds. We pray for the renewing of our lives, that we might offer our hands and our feet and our very minds as instruments of righteousness, that we might do Your will. And when we fail, we give You thanks because we have a Savior who has forgiven us all of our sins and reconciled us to You, our Father. So God, as we come to You, we pray that You will bless us and strengthen us by Your grace.

And as we come, we think about Mark, and we are so glad for his successful surgery. And Father, we are perhaps more so because of the presence that You bore witness to while he was going through the process of surgery. Father, we pray that You will continue to sustain Him and heal Him. But we also pray that You would sustain that presence with him, that awareness of Your presence, that he might indeed be encouraged.

Father, we are thankful for the way in which technology has made it so that Jamie can come to a place like this and await a kidney transplant. And we pray, Father, that You will provide for him. And yet we know that if it is not a living donor, that means tragedy for someone else. And yet, Father, we pray that You would bless and strengthen all involved. And we pray that according to Your sovereign plan that things would work out to good ends and glorifying purposes.

And Father, we are thankful for Bob and for the good report that we heard of him. And even if we don't know him, we rejoice with him.

Father, as we come before You today, we are thankful. And if we are not, we pray that You will make us so, for we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Men: Amen.

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Jeff: Well let’s turn to Hebrews chapter 2 this morning. We’re going to be looking at verses 5-9. Hebrews 2:5-9. So let me read the text for you.

*“For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. It has been testified somewhere,
‘What is man, that You are mindful of him,
Or the son of man, that You care for him?
You made him for a little while lower than the angels;
You have crowned him with glory and honor,
Putting everything in subjection under his feet.’*

“Now in putting everything in subjection to him, He left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. But we see Him, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.”

Participant: The word of the Lord.

Men: Thanks be to God.

Jeff: On the night that Jesus was betrayed He went into the upper room with His disciples, and He broke bread. He celebrated Passover and the Lord’s Supper with them. But in John chapter 14 and following, one of the things that we are also told is that Jesus spoke to a group of men who were in much affliction.

Do you remember what He said? He said, *“Do not let your hearts be troubled.”* And He taught them. And one of the things that He taught them was about the Trinity, about His relationship to the Father, about the Father’s relationship to the Spirit, His relationship to the Spirit, Their relationship to the Spirit, how the Spirit would come upon them in power. He taught them theology.

Now I know that is not typically what we think of as most comforting in the dire situations of life. When we’re standing beside the casket, we do not appreciate someone coming up to us and putting their arms around us and quoting Romans 8:28, patting us on the shoulder and jovially walking away.

I’m not saying that we shouldn’t appreciate that. I’m just simply saying that we don’t appreciate that. And yet Jesus here is teaching us a very valuable lesson—that in the difficult situations of life, theology matters.

I’ll never forget reading a “Peanuts” cartoon. And it’s Linus and Lucy, and Lucy is looking outside. And it’s just raining cats and dogs. And Lucy says, “I think it’s raining so hard that it might flood the earth.”

And Linus simply says this to her. He says, “Lucy, God has promised that He’ll never flood the earth again. And He’s put a rainbow in the sky in order to testify to that promise.”

And Lucy says, “Wow! That takes a load off of my mind.”

And Linus says, “Good theology has a way of doing that.” *(Laughter)*

But I want to say that not all theology does that. I’ve been reading a book by Rob Lischer, and he was a Lutheran. He graduated from seminary with his Ph.D. During the ‘60s he was exposed to a lot of liberal theology—Paul Tillich and these kinds of men.

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And he went to a small parish, and he stood up to give his first sermon. And his congregation could tell; they could recognize a man in the throes of difficulty. He was telling them about Tillichian existentialism, and they weren't getting it. And he heard this woman in the congregation say, “Lord, help him!” (*Laughter*) “Help him, Lord, help him!”

Not all theology is helpful. But theology that is rooted in the Scriptures is preeminently helpful.

Participant: Amen.

Jeff: I think that the pastor of the book of Hebrews learned from the Lord, because he is speaking to a group of people who are in grave difficulty. And he teaches them theology. He teaches them about Christ. And that's what we've been looking at. And I think we have to keep that in mind at this point. It's crucial.

I also want you to understand that we've been looking at exhortations. In 1-4 of chapter 2 not only is he teaching them theology, but he's telling them. “Come, stand beside me. Listen to me. As I stand beside Christ, stand with me.”

Now if you think about it, if you boil it down, what have we so far? We have theology and we have exhortation. That's what we really have so far in the book of Hebrews.

Now having those things, our preacher anticipates a question. The question is coming. And what is that question? Well first of all, let me tell you where we're going before we get to that question. We're going to look at *an introduction*, which I've been doing. Why I didn't use the Power Point I don't know. (*Laughter*) We're going to look at *The Lord's battle plan*. We're going to look at *a little caveat*. And we're going to look again at *the battle plan*.

We've been looking at textually grounded questions. And there's a good question that's anticipated by the author to the Hebrews. What is it?

Well, Pastor, you've been telling us certain things. You've been telling us how Jesus is greater than the angels. You've been telling us that He's the Son of God. You've been telling us that He is immutable. And you've been telling us about his session. In other words, you're telling us that he has sat down at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, that He rules all things by the word of His power. But if He's ruling, then why don't we see it?

That's the question our text is dealing with. If he's ruling, then why don't we see it? In other words, think about it like this. You have this group of people who are meeting in house churches, or any house church. They're being persecuted. They remember persecution from bygone days. They have people in their congregation who have been persecuted and who've experienced it. They recognize that they may be persecuted again.

And yet, depending on the time period, you have these people who look out from their house church, and they see the Mosaic administration continue. So in other words, there's still a temple. And there are still synagogues.

“And so wait a minute, Preacher! The Romans are persecuting us. And the Jews are still receiving special dispensation from the Romans. And the Jews don't believe that the Messiah you've been telling us about is their Messiah, the fulfillment of their Scriptures.

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So Pastor, help us! We just don't see it! What we see is persecution. What we see is difficulty on every side. Can you help us?"

And that's what the Preacher does. He helps them. He first of all takes them to *the Lord's battle plan*. And what he does is that he says, "I want to give you guys an invitation. I want to give you an invitation to look."

Now what is he asking them to look at? Well, he's asking them to look at *the world to come*. And this is obviously very important when you think about this particular section and the last section.

And you remember what I told you the last I don't know how many times ago. But if you go back to Hebrews chapter 1 and look in verse 6, it says, "*And again, when He brings the Firstborn into the world.*" But, if you look at our text in Hebrews chapter 2 verse 5, "*For it was not to the angels that God subjected the world to come.*"

And so remember what I said to you when we looked at 1:6. What you find is the same word that we find in 2:5. And if they're the same word, then why is it that the one is translated "world" and the other is translated "world to come?"

Well, I argued at that time that we ought to look at it as the world to come. In other words, Christ the Messiah came into the world to come, into the age to come, and received all that was due to Him by virtue of His work, and sat down at the right hand of the Father. And so, in other words, what we find is that Jesus brings with Him the age to come into the present evil age.

So let me stop here and just talk to you about that, because that's important. One of the things that we have to understand is that *we are people of two ages*. The Bible talks about "*the present evil age.*" And we are a part of that present evil age.

The Bible also talks about "*the age to come.*" The age to come was brought by virtue of the resurrection of Jesus Christ into our lives. In other words, if we are believers we belong to the age to come. And yet we live in the present evil age.

I want you to think about that in terms of a space suit. Think about the man on the moon. The man on the moon is living in a hostile environment. If he goes outside without a space suit on, the environment will kill him. It's an environment of death. He would be a dead man. And yet he puts on his space suit and he walks out, and he's surrounded by an environment of death. And yet he's living in a different atmosphere, a different sphere altogether.

Think about that in relationship to our relationship to Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ we live, though we walk in the present evil age characterized by death. And so by virtue of Christ's resurrection He has brought the age to come into our lives in such a way that we are people of two ages.

But here's the point that he's wanting to make. The point that he's wanting to make is that neither the angels nor the prophets are the inheritors of the age to come.

Now what does he mean by that? Well, I'll tell you what he means by that. He means that Jesus Christ is the One upon whom all of the promises have come to fall. Or in Jesus all of the Old Testament promises reach their fulfillment and their climax. And what he's saying is this. He says, look! There is not one promise that the angels fulfilled. The promises don't fall in climax upon the angels.

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That would be like saying this. That would be like saying that the fulfillment of prophecy came to climax in the prophets themselves. That's what he's saying.

He is saying, rather, that despite the prophets prophesying about the future, the future fulfillment falls on the Lord Jesus Christ, who happens to be the Omega of those promises anyway. And he's saying that because the angels were involved in the mediation in the giving of the Law from one dispensation to the next, then well, that doesn't mean that the fulfillment of those laws in the curse on Christ falls on those angels. It falls on Christ.

And so the age to come falls upon Jesus Christ. It reaches its fulfillment and climax in Him. And if we are in Him, then we belong to that new age, though we live in the present evil age. I'm going to stop right here and ask if there are any questions, because I realize that's a little bit heavy. Yes; go ahead.

Participant: Is that the same as “the fullness of time?”

Jeff: The “fullness of time” expression used in Galatians chapter 4 has mainly to do there with everything being exactly the way God wanted it as He brought His Son into the world, right? So it's everything from the revelation of God reaching its zenith in the appointment of Christ's coming. And not only that. I think there is that idea that all things had been prepared for the distribution of the gospel after the Resurrection. I think there are a number of things involved in that saying that is not necessarily talking there about the age to come. There are other passages that are a little more explicit that talk about the age to come.

Participant: Thank you.

Jeff: Anybody else? No? Okay. All right. So what we're saying is that only in the Messiah are the promises “*Yes and Amen.*”

Now he's going to go on. And he's going to employ Psalm 8 in order to help us see the battle plan. And the battle plan really comes in three stages. And if you look at it, you can really see that it's broken up into theology that we already know.

Psalm 8 is one of those Psalms where you can read Psalm 8 and say that oh, this is talking about God and the creation of man and where man is in the creation. And yet the writer of the Hebrews takes it and says, “I want you to think about this. This Psalm was inspired by the Holy Spirit and it had the Messiah in mind. And as I'm prompted by the Holy Spirit to write, the Holy Spirit is bringing to my mind Psalm 8. And He's helping me to see what He has embedded in the Scriptures long ago about Christ. I'm bringing that out to you.” And so Psalm 8 really becomes a help to us in understanding God's battle plan, as we see it carried out and brought to fruition through Jesus Christ. So let's just look at it.

First of all, there's *the Incarnation*. Do you see what he says?

*“What is man, that You remember him,
Or the son of man, that You care for him?”*

You know, the interesting thing is that he starts there. In order to prove what he's saying, he doesn't necessarily have to begin there in Psalm 8. He could have let that verse out of Psalm 8 and started with the very next one. But he begins with that verse. Why?

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Because he is helping us to understand something about the rescue effort of God in the life of fallen man, right?

Man is fallen and in need of redemption. And Jesus Christ comes to take upon Himself and so restore that which He took upon Himself—humanity.

Now I want you to think about this for a minute. I mean, when you think about what it was that was affected by the Fall, when you think about the whole man, the whole man was affected by the Fall. Depravity is pervasive. But when we think about pervasive depravity, or what we say as total depravity, I want to just talk about pervasive depravity, because when we talk about total depravity, oftentimes we think to ourselves, “Well, that must mean that a person is as depraved as he could possibly be.”

And that’s not what we mean, right? Somebody could always be worse than he is. But when we talk about pervasive depravity, we mean that sin has touched every aspect of a person’s being, right? And we also know that regeneration has touched every part of our being.

And yet that pervasive depravity is, as it were, lifted, but not entirely. Why? Well, because we need to grow into what we are. Now this raises some questions that I want us to just think about and get a context for before we start talking about the Incarnation and what it accomplishes on our behalf.

What is man’s dilemma? Man’s dilemma is that he’s fallen in Adam. Adam’s sin was imputed or reckoned or counted as his sin. And he’s in a dilemma because Adam, his federal head, acted in an unrighteous way. And so his posterity is counted as unrighteous.

So think about this. When Christ comes, he comes to die for our sins,. To take upon Himself the curse of the Law. He comes to impute righteousness to us. And we call that what? Justification.

But when we think about sanctification, we think about God taking us and delivering us decisively from the kingdom of darkness and placing us in the kingdom of the Son of His love. And when we think about that we also have to think about becoming what we already are in Jesus Christ.

Think about *The Prince and the Pauper*. Think about Tom and Edward switching places. Edward is the prince. Tom is the pauper. And when Tom switches places with Edward, he goes into the kingdom.

And the people in the kingdom who naturally wait upon Edward think that Edward, who is now Tom, has lost his mind, that he’s dealing with some sort of mental insanity, because the prince no longer knows what to do.

And the point that I’m making is that though we have been decisively delivered from the kingdom of darkness and placed into the kingdom of the Son of His love, there is some growing up into the new kingdom that we need to do. And that’s the progressive aspect of our sanctification, okay?

So now, this is all that Jesus comes to do in the Incarnation. He comes to take upon Himself humanity, that humanity might be justified and sanctified in Him. “What is man that You remember him, the Son of man, that you are concerned for him?” And Jesus becomes the Man, the second Adam in whom all men who believe in Him are redeemed.

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And then there's *the humiliation of Christ*. And we know about this. We've talked about this. This is Christ from His incarnation all the way up to His burial. This is the humiliation of Jesus Christ. And He has to come and be under sin's dominion even unto the point of death on the cross, that we might be rescued from sin's dominion.

You see, this is that whole idea that I was telling you about, being under sin's dominion. Here it is. We find that Jesus is under sin's dominion even unto death. Why? Not for His own sin, but so that He could rescue us from sin's dominion. And that's the humiliation. He retrieves us from the domination of sin.

And then there's *the exaltation of Christ*. And in the exaltation of Christ He has put everything in subjection under His feet! This is Psalm 8! Psalm 8 is just rehearsing for us the work of Jesus Christ in order to redeem us. That's all he's saying.

He knows what he's done. But before he asks the question, he's asking them an important one. This is the word proclaimed in the Old Testament about Jesus Christ. Do you believe it? Contrary to what you see going on around you, do you believe it?

And you see, if I can get practical, if I can get very pastoral with you for a minute, the question that we have to ask ourselves is this. Though we may not see Christ's dominion in our lives, though we may not see all things under His subjection as of yet, the question is this. Do we believe the word of God that tells us these things? That's the question that we have to ask ourselves. That's the question he's driving at with them.

But there's *a caveat*. Do you know what the word *caveat* means? *Caveat emptor* means *buyer, beware*, right? Buyer, beware! This is the *caveat emptor*, the pastor's warning. There are not all who are persuaded by God's word. Don't be fooled. Not everyone is going to be persuaded by what I'm saying, and they are going to say things that are contrary. They're going to say things to you like, "If you believe the resurrection of Christ, you're a fool."

So who's right? I mean, if you look at it in one sense, isn't it true that right now we do not see all things in subjection under Christ's kingdom.

Participant: But we do see some things, because He's given us faith. That's our vision.

Jeff: Absolutely.

Participant: But on the whole, you are right, because we don't see these things. We see them in part. But the fact of the matter is that the part we see—I mean, basically, Ashurbanipal and the Assyrians were killing people and slaughtering them. And we see the same things even in the churches. The very things that Paul talks about in those churches are still continuing to be the exact same problems. And so it's not like we're kind of getting better, though we might personally experience it.

Jeff: Yes.

Participant: And I think that maybe that was one of the reasons for the attraction of the Pentecostal movement, because they promised that you could see extraordinary changes.

Jeff: Yes, absolutely.

Participant: And I like what Sig said earlier, and I think this ties in—patience—patience to wait upon the Lord to do it in His timetable. And that takes real faith.

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Jeff: Yes. You know, you’re right, because think about not some, not all of the aspects of the word/faith movement, or the charismatic movement, or the Pentecostal movement. But some of those movements placed real emphasis on the ability of our works to bind, right, and to have dominion.

Participant: And to see the results now.

Jeff: Yes. If we have enough faith, we can make things subject to us, right?

Participant: We can’t do that.

Second Participant: And there’s a sense, where I think that things *are* subject to Him now. But we don’t see it because it isn’t perfect.

Jeff: But He’s on the throne, isn’t He?

Participant: He’s on the throne. He’s working all these things to accomplish His purpose,. Right?

Jeff: That’s right. Okay, let’s press on a bit, then. The Pastor was actually ready for this objection. He’s actually ready for this objection. And he says, “Look again at the battle plan for just a minute.”

He says, “Look. I want you to understand something.” He says, “Right now you have cold feet. Right now what can happen to you is that you are facing persecution.”

You know how this is. You know the advice to people. If you have a tragedy in your life, don’t make a decision for a year, right? You know, after her husband dies, somebody says, “I’m going to move.”

And you say, “I’d caution you against that. And if you can’t stay here because of financial reasons, we’ll help you through that. We’ll do what it takes. You can obviously do whatever you want. But we think that you ought to remain intact for a year. Settle down. Let yourself work through the emotions,” right?

And so what the pastor is saying is, “Look. Right now you’re experiencing an intense amount of difficulty in your life. And you’re getting cold feet. And your inclination is to run. Your inclination is to say, ‘I see the temple. I see the Mosaic dispensation. I see the Roman dispensation. They’re providing for them. I see persecution for us. I know what the Word says, but I know what I see. And I’m going with what I see.’”

And the Pastor is saying this. He’s reminding them that the life of faith is not the life of sight. We need to see with our ears. What does the Word say? That’s what He’s saying, right?

So this is an issue of getting cold feet and making this difficult decision to go back. And what does he say? What do you do in that situation? Tom said it. You focus on the plan. You point to past successes. And you provide a lens for the future. And that’s exactly what the Pastor does here, isn’t it?

Let’s look at this. Look at verse 8. Verse 8 is true. Look at verse 8. Verse 8 is absolutely true. *“Now in putting everything in subjection to Him , He left nothing outside of his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him.”* He acknowledges that. “I acknowledge this; it’s true. We don’t see it yet.”

But look at what he says in verse 9. *“At present, we do not see everything subject to him. But we see Him.”*

We do not see everything in subjection to Him, but what do we see? We see Him.

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What’s he doing? He is helping them to get focused again. Bring your eyes into the right field of vision.

Have you ever heard this story? You may or may not have; I don’t know. You know, there’s a story about a famous theologian named Robert Dabney. He was dying. He had a friend who was another famous theologian. And Dabney wrote to his friend. Vaughan was his name.

And he wrote to him and he said, “You know, I’m near death and I’m having a little trouble. I’m struggling.”

And the friend wrote back to him and said something like this. He said, “Now look. Bob, if you were walking and came to a bridge, and you stopped at that bridge and you were uncertain about it, would you say, ‘Do I have enough faith to cross that bridge?’ Or would you go over to the bridge? Would you inspect its joints, the quality of the wood? Would you look it over and determine whether or not the bridge was worthy of your trust?”

He said, “Bob, don’t look inward and ask yourself, ‘Do I have enough faith in Jesus?’ Go to Jesus and look at Jesus. Examine Him and ask yourself, ‘Is He worthy of my faith?’ And Bob, you’ll find Him to be worthy.”

You know, that’s such good advice. The problem is that we are so introspective these days that we are always asking ourselves, do we have enough faith? Do we have enough faith? Do we have enough faith? And you know, Thomas Watson said that for every question you ask yourself like that, ask ten about Jesus Christ.

Participant: Yes.

Jeff: And that’s the proper way to think about it. Yes?

Participant: The previous meeting to this I got an acrostic from I think his name was Tom Schmidt. If he’s here, I haven’t seen him. But it’s an acrostic for Bible. Basic information before leaving earth. *(Laughter)*

Jeff: Can I make that a Stivasonism? *(Laughter)*

Participant: I’ve already written down three Stivasonisms. *(Laughter)* I’m starting a list.

Jeff: I’m afraid to hear what they are. I really am. *(Laughter)*

Participant: Another one is *federal head*.

Jeff: Federal head.

Participant: I was thinking about Donald Trump. *(Laughter)*

Second Participant: We need to see with our ears.

Jeff: Yeah, that’s good. You know, there used to be a guy at seminary and he was the funniest guy. I used to keep track of all his sayings, and they were just the funniest thing in the world. But they were really true. His eyes were just opening to the world of theology. And if you showed him what it said in the Bible, he’d say, “If it says it in the big fat book, I believe it!” *(Laughter)* You know, that sort of thing.

My favorite one, though, is when he came out of a test. Right across from the seminary there was a bar. And it was known to be a really rough place; there were shootings there and everything. It’s not there now.

But we came out of a test and I said, “How did you do?”

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He said, “I’m going over to Just Jake’s.” (*Laughter*) I just walked out the door.

Participant: Good one.

Jeff No, I’m sorry.

Participant: I think I figured it out.

Jeff: All right. So what does he do? He gets them focusing in the right direction. We do see Him. And then we have the parts of the plan that have been realized, right?—the suffering and death of Jesus Christ, His humiliation. He says that here, doesn’t he?

Look at verse 9 again. He says, “*But we see Him, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death.*” So we do see parts of the plan realized.

So he’s not only focusing in the right direction. He’s saying, look. There are parts of the plan that have come to fruition. But what about His exaltation and His rule? That’s the question.

And here’s what I would say to you. Look at verse 9 again. “*But we see Him, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.*”

Now it’s that phrase “He tasted death” that I want you to think about for just a minute. I think that we have a tendency to rewrite over that. But what is he saying? I think that what the Pastor is saying is this. When you think about tasting death, you think about one experiencing something, taking it in through one’s bodily senses, in this case taste. So when the Biblical writers want to describe the bible and what the Bible is, they say that it tastes sweeter than honey from the comb.

What is he doing? He’s describing Jesus’ experience. And I’ll tell you what I think he’s doing. I think he’s saying this. I think he’s saying that you need to focus on Jesus. You need to look at the parts of the plan that you do see. And you need to stop focusing on your own experience, and you need to start thinking about Jesus and His experience.

And you know, I think the Biblical writers take this up. When Paul says this in Romans chapter 6, what does he say? He said, “We died in Him. And we live in Him.” I think the idea then is to stop focusing on your own experience. Stop looking and asking yourself, “Do I have enough faith?” Look at the bridge. Look at Jesus Christ. That’s what He’s saying. Take your eyes off of yourself. Lord, help me to trust Christ and in His experience of death for me. I think that’s what he’s saying.

And I think that what he is once again helping us to do is to put our eyes squarely on Jesus Christ. And I think that’s so much of the problem today, isn’t it? So much of the problem today is that God has given us means by which we are to set our eyes on Jesus Christ. And we have decided that those means haven’t worked over the centuries. Forget centuries; over the years. They haven’t worked in my life. That’s what we’ve decided. And so we’ve decided what will work in my life.

And I think that the author of Hebrews is just reminding us once again that it’s on the means of grace that reveal Jesus, it’s Jesus to whom we must look. And you’ll find over and over and over again in this book that that’s the answer.

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You know, I mean to say it like this. I think the problem is—well, I’ll put it like this. We live in an age of fear.

Have you ever checked it out? There’s a website out there. It’s the fear website. I don’t know what it’s called. But it has literally hundreds of phobias on it. I think the last count of the man who hosts the website was five hundred different phobias that he has retrieved from medical journals and things of that nature. So it’s not just sort of a thing that he’s made up.

And we live in a world where anxiety and fear reign. And what we’ve said is that I listen to Paul. And Paul says to cast all of our anxiety on Him and to pray, and it just doesn’t work for me. And so we’ve said that the means of grace just don’t work. I need to treat my anxiety, my fear, my phobias in some other way.

And I guess what I’m saying is this. I’m saying this. Does the prescription of Scripture really not work? Or have we just not persevered in it, and recognized what it is that Jesus and the writers of Scripture are actually saying to us when they communicate biblical truth?

I mean, nowhere does it say in here that if you fix your eyes on Me, all this persecution stuff is going to go away, right? But it does say that if we look at Him, we’re going to be able to understand and experience and live through this moment.

Participant: Amen.

Jeff: I don’t know. That’s where I am in our world today. Don, go ahead.

Don: I just got done reading a book on World War II and all of the atrocities of the Nazis and everything that a lot of people went through. There was despair in there by some people who went in believing in God, mostly Jews and liberal Christians, who abandoned it because they just couldn’t figure out how God could be ruling and yet all these atrocities and evil.

Jeff: Yes.

Don: See, that’s where if we don’t put our eyes on Jesus, the same despair could happen to us in light of all the terrorism and everything that’s going on, all the atrocities and how we see our world. We have to fix our eyes on Jesus, just like the author of Hebrews says.

Jeff: Yes. You know, I read a book—Go ahead.

Participant: I’m just thinking that if you really want to attack this—and what a wonderful thesis you’ve presented to us!--but if you want to attack this, you have to attack the Bible, because the only way we can see Jesus is to see the Jesus who is presented to us in the Scripture, who Himself is the hermeneutic of the whole of Scripture.

Jeff: Yes, that’s right.

Participant: And that’s exactly what you find going on in seminaries and churches. But the attack upon Scripture, I think, is absolutely key to this.

Jeff: Yes. You know, I can speak to that with regard to my work on B. B. Warfield. One of the things that I noticed was that the attack came on Scripture early on, and that the bible was talked about not as the infallible word of God and the inerrant word of God. It was talked about as “spiritual,” right? And if you look at Warfield’s life, the next thing

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that begins to happen is that Jesus is not the Man of two natures. He is now the spiritual man, right? And so the attack comes. The same attacks that you were saying that come to the Bible now come to Jesus. And so you're right. We should expect that; you're absolutely right. Yes, that's a great point.

You know Don, just to your point, I was reading a book called *Treblinka* years ago. It was about the Polish Nazi prison camp. And there was just an absolutely heartbreaking story in that book. I'll never forget it.

It's where a man was in the camp as a prisoner. And the train came into the camp, and all of the new folks were released into the camp, and they were going to be processed by the Nazis. And there was a little boy who got off the train and saw his father carrying laundry from the gas chambers to the warehouse where they kept all of the clothes.

And the little boy recognized his father and started yelling for him, and ran across the camp and grabbed his father and said, "Father, Father, I've finally found you!" And he'd been wandering the streets before he'd been rounded up.

And his father hugged him, saw the Nazi soldiers coming around him. They didn't interfere, but they waited. And the father said to the son, "Now you go take a shower and we'll see each other at the end of that." And he sent him to his death.

And I thought to myself, how about that for helping somebody to set his eyes on a place that is just an amazingly horrible thing? I mean, I sometimes wonder when we don't put our kids eyes on the right spot, and we put our kids' eyes on the places we think will be quick fixes and those kinds of things, if we're not just doing the same things to them. We're sending them to their death as it were, you know? And sometimes it's really difficult to be the parent and the Christian parent who needs to say, "I love you. But I'm telling you that this is destructive to you." We look like the bad guy, and friendship with our children comes later than we hope it will. They have to go through that time of difficulty perhaps. But I think it's some important for us not just to set the eyes of our congregations or our friends, but our children on the Lord. Yes?

Participant: As you were telling that story, I was actually wondering if you could put a different twist on it and look at it in somewhat of a positive way. His father was setting his son's eyes on their reunion. In a sense he was having him set his eyes on him. It could have been an act of grace strangely, in that he knew what his son would have to go through if he stayed in the concentration camp.

Jeff: Yes.

Participant: And when you think about life with Christ, we've got to put our eyes on Him. And He hasn't promised us a rose garden. And He said that you've got to lose your life if you want to find it.

Jeff: Yes.

Participant: And so we sometimes are also called to go through what may be a death-like experience in order to faithfully follow Christ. Fixing your eyes doesn't always make it an easy path, for sure.

Jeff: Yes. Go ahead, Bill.

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Bill: One of our teachers said that our problem is not with Bible-believing churches. It’s hard to find a church that doesn’t say that it’s Bible-believing. The problem is, is the Bible sufficient?

Jeff: Yes, that’s absolutely right. Yep. The sufficiency of Scripture, for sure.

Well let me pray with us, and then we’ll be dismissed. Father, we thank You for this day. And Lord, we ask that You will help us to set our eyes upon You. And Lord, we pray that You will remind us again and again that we need to look to you in Scripture and to see Christ, to find Him worthy of our trust. We know that even our trust is not our own work. It’s not our own doing. So we pray that You’ll increase that trust in Your Son. Our Father, we pray that You would help us to keep our eyes fixed in the right place, upon Your Son the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Men: Amen. (*Applause*)