



## What it Means and Doesn't Mean

Presented by Gordon Green (9 January 2011)

Hebrews 12:2-3

*Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way.... When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he plowed through. That will shoot adrenaline into your souls! (The Message)*

Linford Christie – sprint champion. “When Linford Christie came powering down the 100 metre track, ahead of the fancied Americans, some of us were privileged to be sitting close to the finish line. We saw our man... catapult into history. We saw the eyes popping, the astonishing hypnotic concentration, the biceps rippling. The impression of speed, and the knowledge that this was a man reaching his peak for less than 10 seconds in a lifetime, was awesome.” His stunning performance caught everyone off guard, including the experts. But the most unforgettable aspect of his race (people would be talking about it for a long time afterward) was the half crazed look of determination in his eyes. He was so focused on the finish line, one reporter observed, his “pop-eyed gaze made him look as if he was running away from mortal danger rather than towards his finest moment.” Christie would later describe a self-imposed tunnel vision that blocked out everything but the lane ahead.

How do we run our race of life? How do we move forward? How do we run the race when we are disappointed with it and frustrated? Focus on Jesus. “Let us fix our eyes on Jesus”

What does it mean to focus on Jesus? What doesn't it mean?

### **Focusing on Jesus does not mean:**

- that we form a mental picture of Jesus' face.
- that God must make be first place in our lives – and then family, church, job etc.

Jesus doesn't want to be first in your life - he wants us to realise that he is *all* of our lives.

Col 3:4 He isn't first place in your life. He is your life. He is the essence of who you are. He is your everything!

See your marriage relationship in a way that it is Christ living his life through you, expressing his love and life to your mate. Parenting becomes an expression of his life when we know that it is he who is loving and guiding our children through us. You have a right understanding of priorities when you know it's him who animates all your activities.

Jesus is the source that animates every place in our lives. His isn't number one, he is the whole list! He lives through each of us every minute of every day.

- that life is divided into 2 separate categories - the sacred and the worldly.

In other words, church, prayer, pastors, bible study etc are sacred and anything else is worldly. No. Everything about your life is sacred. Our role as believers is to allow "Christ in us" to move into every sphere of our lives, bringing his influence to homes, families, businesses etc. You live and move and exist in Jesus Christ.

- that we must make Jesus lord of your life.

We can't make Jesus be anything. He *is* Lord of Lords, King of Kings – whether we make him or not. He is our very life. It is not up to us. We couldn't do it even if we wanted to do it. When we think like this we are not focusing on who Jesus really is, what he is like and what he has made us.

### **Focusing on Jesus**

What does it mean to focus on Jesus? This will be discussed in greater detail during 2011.

This verse means don't get distracted – an unblinking focus. Our eyes are focused on one of 4 places at all times; on our circumstances, on others, on ourselves or on God. If they focus on any one of the first 3 and not on God we will drift.

What you do with your eyes will make a difference

Focus on the truth. Jesus is the truth. What does it mean to focus on Jesus?

Focus on the fact that:

- God is good, always good,
- God is always working and always knows what he is doing.
- Jesus has taken us into himself and presents us, in himself, to the father as perfect in Jesus' own perfection.
- Jesus opened up the life of the Trinity to us and drew us into it through the Holy Spirit.
- The very reason God came to us—through Jesus Christ—was to do for us what we can't do for ourselves.
- Jesus stood in for us and did for us what we couldn't do for ourselves
- Jesus reconciled us to himself.
- Because of what Jesus has done we are adopted, forgiven, accepted. We are not condemned.

This is just a partial list of what has happened in Jesus. Focus on these things and be what we have been made by Jesus!

But there is more to focus on: God will never stop loving us and he will never let us go, even if we refuse his love. Life does get hard. But never forget God is for you. Focus on that. "This I know, that God is for me" (Psalm 56:9). Read Psalm 139. But there is more! Not only should we focus on Jesus but God focuses on us! We are the apple of his eye (Zech 2:8). The word literally means "the pupil." Not only are you in God's sight – *he* is focused on you.