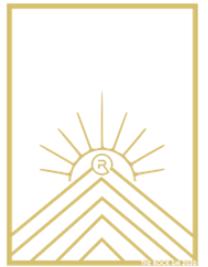


monday – june 22

Hebrews 12:1-2



FOCUS

//faithfulness//

Well...this is not what we had planned is it? I tend to look at things from a positive point of view. I strive to remind myself daily that God is in full control and that not one detail from any of our lives has escaped his plan or purpose. I have my moments of weakness and doubt but in the end, I cling to the reality that GOD HAS THIS UNDER CONTROL. But still, this is not what we had planned, and I've struggled a bit. But through this I have trusted God and his plan. The reality that he works all things out for our good and his glory has been a reminder that I've needed every step of this journey.

This is not how you planned your last year at the middle school or high school. This is not how you planned to get your driver's license or have your athletic season going. This is not how you planned prom, awards night, graduation, and this is not how we planned summer camp. But here we are. Much of life is not about **what** happens but more about **how** we'll respond to it. And think about it, how much does life **not** actually go the way we planned it? I'm kind of glad about that, how much would I miss if I were in control. Look, it's not like these last few months have been something new. Sure, a bit more than normal, but not new. God often changes our direction, vision, and plans. This is nothing new. But yes, it sure feels different doesn't it?

This year our theme has been FOCUS. What a timely theme for the way 2020 has gone right? What do I mean? Well...it's very easy to LOSE FOCUS during uncertain times. It's very easy to allow your eyes to drift from the very one who holds every detail in place. When plans don't go the way we thought, we have a tendency to begin to drift, look away, fix it ourselves. This is not the right answer. So, what is the right answer? FOCUS. FOCUS ON JESUS.

During our morning Bible studies we'll look back at our year and this theme of FOCUS. We'll dive into this main theme for the year, that FOCUS IS ABOUT US LIVING WITH CHRIST IN FOCUS AND CHRIST AS OUR FOCUS. What does this mean and how do we accomplish that? That's this week through devo's and our Bible study.

>> READ HEBREWS 12:1-2 <<

During our devos each morning we'll take a look at what it will take to live with Christ in FOCUS and with Christ as our FOCUS. That's really what Hebrews 12:1-2 is teaching.

Look back at verse 2 for a minute. Underline the statement *"looking to Jesus."* But also, **look at verse 1.** What does you see there? I see this need to *"RUN TO JESUS."* To Run TOWARDS Jesus. To Run only FOR Jesus. To ultimately make it TO Jesus.

So basically...these two verses teach us how about what it means to FOCUS. It's Looking to and Running to Jesus. It's both clarity and directional.

Another way to say it is to FOCUS on Jesus and make Jesus your FOCUS.

There are things we can do in our lives that make living with Christ in Focus & as our Focus possible. We'll spend time on 5 of them this week during our devotions. **FIRST ONE IS FAITHFULNESS**

Turn and read Hebrews 11:6

The very foundation of the life of a Christian is FAITH. The verse we just read is very simple to get, if there is no faith, there is no hope to please God. I believe I'm pretty accurate in saying that the majority of people reading this desire

to please God. **The question then is HOW.** First response? By having faith. But what does this look like?

Let's get simple for a second.

We show faith every day. We trust our phone will work, our car will start, water will pour out of a spout when we turn the handle. We trust our parents will provide dinner. We trust that Chick-fila employees really did wash their hands before leaving the restroom. We have faith in a chair before we sit down. We trust the person we're riding with truly does know how to drive a car. Faith is a daily exercise.

Faith in God is similar to this but on a much bigger scale. But honestly, we daily trust other people with our lives don't we? Hebrews 11 is a chapter we've spent a lot of time in on Sunday mornings here lately. We've heard all about these people who have truly believed God in some pretty desperate and big moments.

So, what will it take for us to truly FOCUS?

What will it actually take for us to live with Christ in FOCUS and with Christ as our FOCUS?

It will take FAITHFULNESS.

It will take us believing even though we can't see him.

But we can sort of see him, right? We see him acting, moving, doing all throughout Scripture.

We see him acting, moving, doing in our own lives, don't we?

Much like the wind which we cannot see, we see God acting, moving and doing each day.

So the first step in living with Christ in FOCUS and with Christ as our FOCUS is believing.

Let me ask you a few questions:

- Do you believe Jesus is the son of God?
- Do you believe Jesus lived a perfect life?
- Do you believe Jesus died on a cross for the sins of the world, including yours?
- Do you believe Jesus rose from the grave, defeating death, hell, the grave and burying our sins?
- Do you believe Jesus has the power to forgive and restore people back to a holy God?
- BY FAITH, Do you believe He has done this in your life?

These are foundational belief statements of the FAITH.

These are what we would ensure people believe before identifying them as Christians or followers of Christ.

Once these truths are believed, a person would then by faith live in a way that reveals this faith.

Without this faith it impossible to actually please God.

PLEASE GOD – simply means to satisfy the requirements of our sin problem.

This is impossible unless a way is provided.

That way is Jesus. He is our only hope. The way to him is paved by FAITH.

We show this to the world by how we live our life....which is a life of FAITHFULNESS.

Life with Christ, one that pleases God begins with FAITH and is shown through our FAITHFULNESS to him.

The first step to living a life with Christ in Focus and with Christ as our Focus is FAITH.

WHAT NOW?

How do I apply this? Well I would start by looking for way to show my faith.

Maybe I stop worrying so much? Maybe I change the way I act around people? Maybe I stop hiding the fact that I

truly do believe in Jesus? Maybe I stop living in the shadows as a follower and proudly communicate who's I am?

Maybe I begin to speak out towards the wrong in the world while striving to do what's right? Maybe I set aside my

pride and choose to do good, no matter what? Maybe my reputation is not more important than the cause of

Christ? Maybe I begin to allow Christ to "season" everything I say, do, share and post

I'm not sure your particular situation but what I do know is this. If **my life** has been changed by God, through Christ, by faith, **it** will look different. That means that the very foundation of all I do and say is done for Christ, by faith.

SHARE IT: Take some time today to share with a leader or parent how you plan to apply this truth to your life today.
