

# Look unto Jesus Christ

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If we look to Jesus Christ, He will help us live our covenants and magnify our calling as elders in Israel.

As Jesus walked in a street near Capernaum<sup>1</sup> with a great crowd of people around Him, a woman afflicted with a serious condition for 12 years reached out and touched the hem of His garment. Immediately she was healed.<sup>2</sup>

The scriptures record that Jesus, perceiving “that [power had] gone out of [Him],”<sup>3</sup> “turned him about in the press”<sup>4</sup> and “looked ... to see her that had done this thing.”<sup>5</sup> “When the woman saw that she was not hid,”<sup>6</sup> she “fell down before him, and told him all the truth.”<sup>7</sup>

Jesus said unto her, “Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.”<sup>8</sup>

Jesus Christ saved the woman. She was healed physically, but when Jesus turned to see her, she declared her faith in Him and He healed her heart.<sup>9</sup> He spoke to her with love, assured her of His approval, and blessed her with His peace.<sup>10</sup>

Brethren, as bearers of the holy priesthood, we are engaged in the work of salvation. In the last year, the Lord has placed the leadership of this work squarely on the shoulders of the elders in Israel.<sup>11</sup> We have an inspiring charge from the Lord—working with our sisters, we are to minister in a holier way, accelerate the gathering of Israel on both sides of the veil, establish our homes as sanctuaries of faith and gospel learning, and prepare the world for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.<sup>12</sup>

As in all things, the Savior has shown us the way: we need to look to and serve Jesus Christ as He looked to and served His Father.<sup>13</sup> The Savior said it this way to the Prophet Joseph:

“Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not.

“Behold the wounds which pierced my side, and also the prints of the nails in my hands and feet; be faithful, keep my commandments, and ye shall inherit the kingdom of heaven.”<sup>14</sup>

In the premortal realm, Jesus promised His Father that He would do His Father’s will and be our Savior and Redeemer. When His Father asked, “Whom shall I send?”<sup>15</sup> Jesus answered:

“Here am I, send me.”<sup>16</sup>

“Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever.”<sup>17</sup>

All through His mortal life, Jesus lived that promise. In humility, meekness, and love, He taught His Father’s doctrine and did His Father’s work with the power and authority His Father had given Him.<sup>18</sup>

Jesus gave His heart to His Father. He said:

"I love the Father."<sup>19</sup>

"I do always those things that please him."<sup>20</sup>

"I came ... not to do mine own will, but the will of [the Father, who] sent me."<sup>21</sup>

In His agony in Gethsemane, He prayed, "Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."<sup>22</sup>

When the Lord calls the elders in Israel to "look unto me in every thought" and "behold the wounds" in His resurrected body, it is a call to turn away from sin and the world and to turn to Him and love and obey Him. It is a call to teach His doctrine and do His work in His way. It is, therefore, a call to trust Him completely, surrender our will and yield our hearts to Him, and through His redeeming power become like Him.<sup>23</sup>

Brethren, if we look unto Jesus Christ, He will bless us to be *His* elders in Israel—humble, meek, submissive, full of His love.<sup>24</sup> And we will bring the joy and blessings of His gospel and His Church to our families and our brothers and sisters on both sides of the veil.

President Russell M. Nelson has called us to look unto Jesus Christ in just this way: "There is nothing easy or automatic about becoming such powerful disciples. Our focus must be riveted on the Savior and His gospel. It is mentally rigorous to strive to look unto Him in *every* thought. But when we do, our doubts and fears flee."<sup>25</sup>

*Rivet* is a great word. It means to fasten firmly, to attract and hold completely.<sup>26</sup> We rivet our focus on Jesus Christ and His gospel by living our covenants.

When we live our covenants, they influence everything we say and do. We live a covenant life<sup>27</sup> full of simple, everyday acts of faith that focus us on Jesus Christ: prayer from the heart in *His* name, feasting on *His* word, turning to *Him* to repent of our sins, keeping *His* commandments, partaking of the sacrament and keeping *His* Sabbath holy, worshipping in *His* holy temple as often as we can, and exercising *His* holy priesthood to serve God's children.

These acts of covenant devotion open our hearts and minds to the redeeming power of the Savior and the sanctifying influence of the Holy Ghost. Line upon line, the Savior changes our very nature, we become more deeply converted unto Him, and our covenants come alive in our hearts.<sup>28</sup>

The promises we make to our Heavenly Father become rock-solid commitments, our deepest desires. Heavenly Father's promises to us fill us with gratitude and joy.<sup>29</sup> Our covenants cease to be rules we follow and become beloved principles that inspire and guide us and rivet our focus on Jesus Christ.<sup>30</sup>

These acts of devotion are available to all, young and old. You young men who hold the holy Aaronic Priesthood, everything I have said tonight applies to you. I thank God for you. You make sacred ordinances and covenants available to millions of Latter-day Saints every week. When you prepare, bless, or pass the sacrament; minister; baptize in the temple; invite a friend to an activity; or rescue a member of your quorum, you are doing the work of salvation. You too can look unto Jesus Christ and live your covenants every day. I promise you that if you do, you will be trusted servants of the Lord now and, in a coming day, mighty elders in Israel.

Brethren, I know that all of this may sound daunting. But please remember these words of the Savior: "I am not alone, because the Father is with me."<sup>31</sup> So it is with us. We are not alone. The Lord Jesus Christ and our Heavenly Father love us, and They are with us.<sup>32</sup> Because Jesus looked to His Father

and completed the great atoning sacrifice, we can look to Jesus Christ with assurance that He will help us.

None of us are perfect. Sometimes we get stuck. We get distracted or discouraged. We stumble. But if we look to Jesus Christ with a repentant heart, He will lift us up, cleanse us from sin, forgive us, and heal our hearts. He is patient and kind; His redeeming love never ends and never fails.<sup>33</sup> He will help us live our covenants and magnify our calling as elders in Israel.

And the Father will bless us with all things required to accomplish His purposes—“things ... both in heaven and on the earth, the life and the light, the Spirit and the power, sent forth by the will of the Father through Jesus Christ, his Son.”<sup>34</sup>

When divine light and power flow into our lives, three miraculous things happen:

First, we can see! Through revelation we begin to see as Jesus saw the woman: beyond the surface into the heart.<sup>35</sup> As we see as Jesus sees, He blesses us to love those we serve with His love. With His help, those we serve will see the Savior and feel His love.<sup>36</sup>

Second, we have priesthood power! We have the authority and the power to act in the name of Jesus Christ “to bless, guide, protect, strengthen, and heal others” and bring miracles to those we love and keep our marriages and families safe.<sup>37</sup>

Third, Jesus Christ goes with us! Where we go, He goes. When we teach, He teaches. When we comfort, He comforts. When we bless, He blesses.<sup>38</sup>

Brethren, have we not cause to rejoice? We do! We hold the holy priesthood of God. As we look unto Jesus Christ, live our covenants, and rivet our focus on Him, we will join with our sisters and minister in a holier way, gather scattered Israel on both sides of the veil, strengthen and seal our families, and prepare the world for the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. It will happen. I so testify.

I close with this prayer from my heart, that all of us, every one, will look unto Jesus Christ in every thought. Doubt not. Fear not. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.