

# Jesus, Founder And Perfecter Of Our Faith

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Preacher: Donald Macleod

[ 0 : 00 ] Let's turn back to God's Word and to the chapter we had in the book of Hebrews 12. Taking for a text actually the first two verses of the chapter.

Hebrews 12 and the first two verses. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, it is also a side of the weight and sin which clings so closely.

And it is one of endurance through race that is set before us, looking 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 the seated of the right hand of the throne of God.

I want to say this, I know we always say this, but a short look this evening. I'm going to try and keep it a short look because I want to leave this place encouraged and built up in our love and in our joy this evening.

As we look at who Jesus is and these verses and what it means, what he has done for us. This morning we had Sam 110 and we saw that Sam focused on the power of Jesus, that Sam also was clear that Jesus is now the right hand of the throne of God.

[ 1 : 27 ] This morning we saw what that meant and what that means for us. That's the thing we have that same phrase again. I want us to take these two verses just as we have them. The first verse, we can see what we have to leave behind.

As we carry on this new year, what do we have to leave behind according to these verses? What we leave behind, what we must leave behind and then what we look forward to, where we're heading. What we leave behind and what our future holds. Two simple points for us as we look at these two wonderful verses together this evening.

They first word of our first verse here. Therefore, that simple word of course just connects us to all that's been said. That word is there to bring our minds back to all that's been said in the previous chapter.

A letter of a writer of this epistle saying all that's been said because of all that. Therefore, I now say this to you. What's been said before, what's chapter 11 about, what chapter 11 is a wonderful collection of the Good and the Mighty.

[ 2 : 48 ] The big names we could say of the history of Israel. All the faithful believers in God who served him well.

The believers in God who even though they had nothing visual to go on often, they lived by faith. Even though they often had quite tough existences, they survived by faith.

In chapter 11 we see this wonderful picture of faithful believers trusting in God. Faithful believers living by God. Faithful believers whose whole lives were built on their faith.

So the writer says in the light of all that, in the light of all these great many people, therefore, takes it back then to the readers, the ones he was writing to.

It takes it back to us here this evening in Cardaway. See all these characters in chapter 11 are far away from us, distant from us in time and in distance too.

[ 3 : 51 ] The characters of chapter 11 were distant from the people of Israel. They were distant from the Christians who this letter was first written to. All the names mentioned in chapter 11 were dead for thousands of years before this epistle was written.

So it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter. This letter tells us, this chapter begins by telling us, look at these folks. Look at these great people of faith who relied on God.

And with that in your mind then let's talk about us for a wee while. And then the letter then brings it back to us. Therefore, since we're surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses.

Quite a strange phrase, a unique phrase, just as we had this morning actually in Psalm 110. There's a strange phrase that jumps into this image of being surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses.

Thinking, what's that meaning? As the writer's saying, well, all these folks in chapter 11, you know, they're watching you. They're sifting you out. They're seeing how well you're doing in your walk.

[ 4 : 54 ] Of course, that's not what he's saying. He's not saying all the folks in 11 are watching you. So get your act together. What the writer's saying here is, those who have gone to be awful Lord.

All the great names of chapter 11, all these faithful servants who have gone years and years ago. That they have left us a witness.

They've left us a life lived well, a life lived faithfully. And the light of that, we do our journeys. It's not talking about spectators, not talking about these people in heaven looking down.

We know fine well that those in heaven don't look down on us. Those in heaven are looking towards their saviour, with their saviour, with God at all times. They don't look down back in the center of the earth.

We can name, I'm sure, many from our nation, many from our island, many from this community who have gone before us. Faithful men and women, faithful believers who lived a life well, faithful believers who loved their Lord, who served their Lord well.

[ 6 : 01 ] And who've gone, perhaps some who have gone in recent years, and some who have left us years and years ago. Parents, grandparents, husbands perhaps, or wives.

Dear, dear friends who lived that life, who loved their saviour, who have gone, but who have left that witness behind. That witness as a writer here reminds these poor Christians about it.

These Christians who are suffering so much pain and persecution, who are facing the prospect of going back to their old lives, back to their old world. He says, remember both the gun before you.

Remember them. Remember how much they loved their saviour.

Remember how much faith they had in their saviour. And remember their witness. And in the life of that witness, you now must live.

We leave behind, of course, the dear people in our own lives. We leave behind the ones we once loved and still love who are now no longer with us, those who helped us to grow in our faith.

[ 7 : 07 ] Like the writer here reminds these early Christians, these Christians who are suffering so much, in a way they are still with us. That cloud of witness is still around us.

The evidence of the prayers of God's people throughout the years is evident here. We all had grandparents or parents who once prayed for us and who perhaps still prayed for us.

I was thinking about this morning actually, I'm thinking my own life and my own granny actually who even at an older age, she every night, when I would go and stay perhaps some nights with her, she would on her knees at the edge of her bed, on the ground.

On her knees for an hour, two hours sometimes, praying for our family, praying for the village. An older woman whose knees were sore but yet her faith was living, her faith was active.

And that encourages me to know that I was prayed for all these years by her and by our community.

We all have had experience, we all have the privilege of growing up somewhere, living somewhere where yet people are still praying for us.

[ 8 : 15 ] We've had witnesses, we've had examples of how to live our lives well. The Christians, the believers who have gone before us, we all know fine, our lives weren't perfect.

We also know that in spite of that, they were still faithful believers who loved their Lord. We've perhaps, this morning we had a brief Hebrew lesson, well tonight we're getting a Greek lesson, perhaps helps to understand better what's being said here by Paul.

The same word that's used here for witnesses, the word is literally martyr on. Martyr on is the same word for martyr. Those who die for the beliefs, those who die for our faith.

Paul's, if we're hearing this in the Greek, Paul's saying, you're surrounded by a great cloud of martyrs. Those who lived a life of faith and in the case of these Christians here, those before them who have died for their faith.

We see that later on in the chapter, Paul says, you've not yet struggled to the point of shedding your blood. In the early church, these early Christians, many did. They died, they were persecuted, they lost their lives because of their faith.

[ 9 : 26 ] And Paul's saying, you're surrounded by people, by witnesses, by martyrs, by their legacy, by their prayers, by the lives they lived. You're surrounded by that and that's the atmosphere that you go forward in.

We're so privileged, are we not, in these villages that we still have that legacy. We grew up knowing our dearly beloved parents, grandparents, neighbours and friends were praying for us.

We live our Christian lives now knowing that our lives were saturated by our prayers. The writer is reminding the suffering Christians in this place here, wherever they were, as he wrote this to them, he was reminding them that we're not walking this road for the first time, it's been walked before them.

But long before they walked the road of faith, others have walked the same road and suffered as they suffered and went through awful situations but yet God took them through.

It's the same for us this evening. As we read chapter 11, as we think ourselves of those that are gone before us, the same messages for us, as we remember the great cloud of witnesses, of martyrs, of faithful believers who have gone before us, we're reminded we're not walking this road for the first time.

[10:45] We're walking this road in the footsteps of hundreds and thousands have gone before us, who have suffered and who have gone through pain and hard times but yet we know that God took them through.

As Christians we know this is not just nice words, it's not just encouragement, it's not just somebody gets through, we know this is through. This is what we hold on to. That God is faithful to the believers in chapter 11, that God was faithful to the believers in our own lives and God is faithful to us.

So the writer begins this new section by reminding us of this example of those who have gone before us, those who God used in wonderful ways and those who God eventually brought home to himself.

We use this as a sort of encouragement for ourselves, a source of great joy, of praising God, that he has delivered his people again and again.

And in a sense of course we do, we leave these dear saints behind us. They're gone from our experience, we know they are now in eternity, but they're gone, we leave them behind, each day we go forward, we leave them further and further behind.

[12:05] Of course in a sense we also still take them with us. We still have their prayers and they pray for us as we're growing up. We still have their witness and in fact this building still exists and we're all still here worshipping God.

And we have a faithful witness of years of believers gone before us. That's all final. Paul then, he starts off like this, then he reminds them, he reminds them that in this encouragement there are two things they must leave behind.

Yes, yes, they're living their lives in the cloud of this witness, we're living their lives and following the legacy of these great believers, we're living lives where their lives have been built up in the prayers of these great believers, but their race is still of their own.

But we can't rely on these things, we must all run our own race of faith. We must, as the people here tonight gathered together, must run our race of faith. And on that race there's two things Paul tells us in verse one, but we must leave behind if our race is going to be run well.

There's two things as Paul says here, first of all, the weight and secondly the sin that clings so closely. The weight, every weight and the sin which clings so closely.

[13:27] After reading yesterday, the most popular, I'm sure you can guess, the most popular New Year's resolution is of course to join a gym or to lose weight, I made it myself a few years running and I'm still to go.

It's a popular resolution, it's a popular idea, it's the most common in Scotland and the most common actually in the UK as, this is by and by about a shooting yesterday, about 7 million pounds every year are wasted on gym subscriptions.

People join up to do that month for a year, I mean ever go, they waste 7 million pounds in the UK alone on unused gym subscriptions.

It's hard, it's hard to lose the extra pound or two we know we should be losing if we are that way inclined. It's hard in our spiritual life to lose the weight we know we should be shedding to live easier, better lives as Christians.

It's hard sometimes to lose the weight we know we need to lose to live lives more pleasing to God. The writer here is telling these Christians that they have some weight to lose.

[14:40] Quite literally the word is fat, till they aside all the fat that burdens you and all the sin which clings so closely. So the image here is now being used of our race, the image here is that as a Christian you are an athlete and you are heading towards the goal and you are going to make that goal, God will carry you to that goal, you will get there in His grace and in His mercy.

That's for sure, that's for sure, you will not lose your salvation, you will not lose your place before God. But your race is so much harder, the journey is so much more miserable if you do not lose some of the weight that clings onto you.

Some of the things that just burden you down as Christians. We have to note carefully the distinction here drawn between this and sin, the weight that burdens us is not necessarily sin. We all know fine well that sin should have no place in our lives but the weight that burdens us is not necessarily sin. But it's things we cling to and things that cling to us that we know fine well we need to get rid of to run our race better for our sake, for the gospel's sake.

My question is just now to the Christians here, only you know what is in your life right now, what is in your mind and your soul right now that is dragging you down.

[16:08] What weight are you holding onto that you could well do of losing to make your race run so much easier? What weight are you holding onto and refusing to let go of but it's slowing you right down in your walk.

I can give a few examples I guess but if any of you know, only you know what is slowing you down in your walk, only you know what is dragging you down as you seek to serve your saviour.

Perhaps you're still feeling guilt or burdens for sin. You know fine well your sin's been forgiven, you know fine well that Jesus is your saviour but yet you cannot let go of a burden of guilt that you still feel hanging around you.

And you know it's not there, you know that God's removed that but still you cling onto it. You know that guilt has been placed onto Jesus but yet you're still kind of dragging your own guilt along with you on your own walk.

Perhaps it's lack of assurance perhaps. You know fine well that your place in eternity is secure because it's bought of the precious blood of Jesus. Your place in a book of life is there and will not be removed because Jesus has purchased you and will never let you go but you still don't quite feel it.

[17:29] You still sometimes wonder is it really true for me? Am I really a believer? Does Jesus really love me that much and that weight clings to you?

Even though you know fine well He does, you hear it again and again but He does but still that weight is pulling you down as you try and live faithfully. Try and do your walk well.

That burden is clinging onto you. Perhaps you're suffering, I've suffered disappointment, heartbreak. Some personal situation that you just can't let go of and it is dragging you down.

Perhaps last year didn't quite go as planned. Perhaps you had great plans and great ideas for how the year would turn out and it just didn't go that way. Perhaps this new year isn't quite shaping up as well as you hoped it would.

Whatever is in your mind just now and I ask you to please think about it. Please think what is dragging you down? What is slowing you down? What grudges do you have?

[18:34] What issues are you holding onto? What false beliefs are you holding onto? That you know aren't right but still we can't let go of them.

We've gone and on a list a thousand more. Only you know what is slowing you down. What does the writer tell us to do with that weight? That we think now that weight that is holding us down, slowing us down.

What does the writer tell us to do? Quite simply to lay aside. Strong words being used here. Quite literally the idea is to fling it off.

The image is quite clear. The image is of weight carried around your shoulders and hanging down. The idea has been taken from the athletes of the day.

The athletes of the day would wear weights to do better training and resistance training. They'd wear heavy weights and then do runs. Then when the weights are gone they could run faster.

[19:34] The idea is you're wearing this weight but you can take it off. Get rid of it. Fling it off as you strive towards the goal.

As you keep living your life. Just get rid of this weight that hangs off you. Then the writer keeps going.

Lay aside every weight but also the comma there. And this next statement. The sin which clings so closely. Some Bibles don't have that comma.

That comma is important. Two phrases. See we're to lay aside the weight. Full stop. Next phrase. And the sin which clings so closely.

Again. You know your life. You know your situation. You know the sins and I know the sins that we face. That cling so closely to us.

[ 20 : 38 ] The sins in our lives that we know are damaging our walks. The sins in our lives that we know are causing us to stumble and to fall again and again. As we make our way towards the goal.

And Paul doesn't just say sin. It's a sin that clings so closely. A sin that clings to our skin. Quite literally we're seeing here.

Very clear here. Very clear. These addresses suppose the writer talking to Christians. The writer is addressing Christians in these verses.

If you're here today as a Christian, as a brother and sister in the Lord. Again I can't stress this enough. You are secure. Your salvation is secure. And to say otherwise is to put words in the mouth of God.

He has bought you. You have been purchased with the blood of Jesus. That is true. And this sin that clings to you. It will not remove from your eternal life. But it will make your walk there an absolute misery.

[ 21 : 40 ] And the Christians here know that. We all know fine well how much our sin messes up our walk. It drags us down. It slows us down. It removes from us our sense of God's presence in our lives.

It removes from us our desire to read scripture, to pray, to join together. It ruins our time. It ruins our walk. It slows us right down as we drag ourselves to the finish line.

If we don't seek to confess that sin and to kill that sin. It will bring our race down. Bring our race down to that slow crawl. Which I'm sure we've all been through.

For honest of ourselves and honest this evening. We all know what it is to let sin into our lives. And to ruin the good walk we were having.

What's the focus of this first verse? What's the focus? The last few words here. Is to run with endurance.

[ 22 : 41 ] To run the race with endurance. That word endurance. It's an imperative. It's an instruction given to us. We're not saved to run the race with endurance. To run the race well.

We're not saved to drag our legs behind us. We're not saved to drag this weight behind us. We're not made new creations to struggle every day. We're made to run the race with endurance.

That question implies that the race isn't going to be easy. If endurance is acquired it means the race is going to be hard. But also since this word is imperative and instruction.

This run with endurance. That phrase is an instruction to us. A command to us. It tells us it is possible. It's going to be hard but it is possible because God is saying it to us.

I wonder if right now, if you're being honest, if you're thinking. Okay. I see what you're saying in scripture.

[ 23 : 46 ] I see it in front of me. I understand it. I get it. I see it in scripture that I have to lay aside the weight that slows me down. I see it in these verses that the sin that's ruining my walk.

I have to kill it. I want to run the race well. I want to run the rest of this new year with God so well. I want to kill the sin and lose the weight. I want to do well.

But I know I can't. I mean, I failed last year. I failed the year before and why won't I just fail this year again?

I don't know how to do it. How do I let go of the weight? How do I kill the sin? How do I do it? I cannot do it. I failed and failed and I'll fail again.

And you're right. You're absolutely right. And that is the beautiful part of these two verses. Question we ask is how?

[ 24 : 47 ] I want to do this. I want to be this. But how? And that brings us to the wonderful words of verse two.

Verse one, the imperative is the command to lose the weight. The command to do good of that sin. It's all as related to the first few words of verse two.

How do we do it? How do we run our race well? How do we let go of that weight and kill that sin?

How do we do any of it?

We do it by looking to very one who saved us in the first place. We look to Jesus. Looking to Jesus. We do all of this looking to Jesus. We're reminded again and again and again. We're told again and again and again that our salvation, my salvation, it's by grace alone.

[ 25 : 48 ] By grace alone it's all of God, nothing from me. We look before together at Ephesians chapter two. And that chapter reminds us it's all of God's whole world so that no one can boast.

It's Jesus alone that secured our salvation. Jesus alone that keeps us going. Jesus alone who walks alongside us. Jesus alone has guaranteed our eternal salvation.

How quickly we forget that truth. How quickly we abandon that truth. When life gets hard, and life does get hard, you all know that. When our own situation becomes tough, when sins prevail against us, we think, I can't do this.

I'm going to risk being chucked out in a second by saying this. I'll say it anyway. I love the footprints poem as much as everyone else. That famous poem, we all know the footprints poem about how you're...

I should have written it down, but walking along in a dream and how two sets of footprints, and when life gets hard, only one set, and we all know how it goes. The footprints poem, it's not right, is it?

[ 26 : 57 ] It's not just in the hard times that Jesus carries us along. It's every day of our lives. Right now, as a believer, if you're going through a good time or a tough time, He is carrying you, and He's carrying me.

If you're just now going through a trial of some sorts, He is carrying you. If you're going through the life now and just in a moment in time we're having a good part of your life. Things going well, He's still carrying you.

If He wasn't, we wouldn't get very far. If He wasn't, we would get nowhere. The wonder of verse 2 is that we do all...

verse 1 tells us to do in His strength and by Him and by Him alone. We can't lay aside that weight by ourselves. We cannot simply do it, we will fail.

We can't kill the sin realised by ourselves. If we do, it will not die. But by looking to Jesus, we can. We can do. Because He does it in us.

[ 27 : 59 ] What does this week hold? What does the rest of this New Year hold for any of us? I can offer you absolutely nothing. I can't tell you what this night holds for myself.

Never mind what the week or the year or the month ahead of us. The one thing I can offer for sure, that's not a thing, it's a person.

It's a person who is in the midst of the ups and downs, all the struggles, all the pains, all the misery, all the good news and bad news. We will face this year. We can hold to the fact that Jesus is ahead of us.

Jesus has run the race. Jesus has completed the race and Jesus is now reigning. As we heard this morning, we'll hear that again in a second. He is reigning the right hand of the Father, the right hand of the throne of God.

He is King and He is carrying us through. What good news, people, believers, here this evening? What good news? If we're honest, we're very often not honest with each other as much as we should be.

[ 29 : 05 ] We're not perhaps as open as we should be. We're not truthful. When someone asks us how we're doing, have you ever said, I'm pretty rubbish, actually.

I'm pretty rubbish. I'm lost, I'm full of doubts. If we could live some mess of sitting here and sitting there, we would never say that, would we? Perhaps we should. Perhaps if we understood these verses better, we'd be more willing to confess and to be truthful with each other and to grow together, look into Jesus together, understanding each one of us here, understanding that each one of us, that we're all living various messes of our lives in various ways.

At the same time, that's true, but also at the same time, we all look through Jesus together, and that makes it beautiful. As we heard this morning, that yes, we are a very bunch of folks, but also in one sense we're together in the fact we are cloved in His perfection, cloved in His righteousness.

He has called us His own. The writer tells us simply to look to Jesus, through Him, and in Him alone we will survive and thrive and live and carry on our walk as Christians.

To those here who are not yet believers, this can be true for you too. This can be true for you too.

As you carry on this new year, this can be a year where you are worshiping and knowing and loving and serving the full hope, but no matter what happens, that you're being held secure by the King of the universe Himself.

[ 30 : 52 ] The King above all kings. And nothing is holding you back from that, apart from yourself. If only you would believe, if only you would come and be able to trust Him and believe in Him, this would be true for you.

And whatever reason you have for not doing that, it's just a simple excuse. We then see Jesus just described in more wonderful ways as we go through verse 2.

The writer reminds us, he reminds these Christians that as they remember Jesus, they remember Him as both the founder and the perfecter, quite literally the starter and the finisher, the originator and the one who concludes the thing.

But their faith and our faith, it begins with Jesus. It begins with Him. It begins before beginnings existed. It begins before time existed.

It begins in eternity past. It begins as we again as we read in Ephesians 1 that in time past, in eternity, what happened? An eternity God loved His people.

[ 32 : 06 ] An eternity God chose to set His love on His people. Ephesians 1, Romans 8, God showed His love to His people and that one day He would send a savior to save them.

And before we were born, before creation itself existed, God set His love on His people. Before we knew anything about anything, Christ had set His love on us.

He came into the world, lived His life, fulfilled the hundreds of thousands of years of prophecy before Him. He died, rose again.

It all begins with Jesus. He is the ruler. He is the offer of our faith. It is He who has put it all together. Jesus alone is the one who has scripted and put together the reality of what we are and what we believe. All for His people, all for us.

[ 33 : 09 ] As we carry on into this new year, let's trust in the one who is the founder of our faith, the one who'd begun it all before we were born, who knew us before we were born, who before we were born agreed to come into this world to suffer to die for us, out of His love for us, to have us as His people.

That sort of means to look to Jesus as the founder of our faith. But also, I see here, He's the perfecter, the finisher, the one who concludes our faith.

He's done it all. It's done. It's finished. It's finished. Again, as we saw this morning in Psalm 110, that's Sam which prophesied the return of Jesus to eternity after his work on earth.

And that Jesus returns and sits at the right hand of God. That symbol of, it's all done. His work on earth is done. He's done all that needs to be done for salvation to be available to all who will cry out to all who want it.

As we carry on this new year, we proclaim what's told us in that wonderful last few paragraphs, of the words of Revelation, of Jesus.

[ 34 : 35 ] He is what? He is the Alpha and the Omega. Nothing can be added to His finished work. This night, if you say, I want to be saved, then there's nothing you can do but come to Jesus.

He's done the work. This evening as a Christian, if you're saying, I want to improve my faith, I want to live a better life, then come to Jesus. It's only in Jesus, only through Jesus we grow and live as Christians.

If we do Jesus plus anything else, we will begin to fail and fail pretty quickly. Jesus plus my ability to memorize things. Jesus plus my ability to do well.

Jesus plus my effort. Jesus, He is the starter. He is the finisher. He is the Alpha. He is the Omega. He is, we have here, the founder and perfecter.

If you want to be saved, come to Jesus. If as Christians here this evening, you're looking to better your walk and to improve your walk, you do it by coming to Jesus.

[ 35 : 39 ] By praising Him more, by serving Him more, by reading about Him more, by taking more joy in Him, by digging more into it, by worshipping more.

It's not by doing better. It's not by doing better. It's by doing better, we only ever do worse, as we all know. It's by coming to Jesus.

The hope for Christians, Philippians chapter 1 and verse 6, I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion of the day of Jesus Christ.

Our Saviour, Jesus, He is the finisher of our salvation. He is the guarantee that even though yes, we'll struggle, and we do struggle, even though our walk may be long, and short for some of us, that He will take us home to Himself.

That He is more than able of taking us through the day, the month, the year, the rest of our walk. Look to Jesus.

[ 36 : 55 ] Look to the one who has saved you. Look to the one who knows you. Look to the one who knows all about you. The one who has called Himself your Saviour, who has called Himself your older brother, the one who has stepped down to save you.

As we heard this morning, I say again, the Rabbi Duncan quote, I quote about where is Jesus right now? Well, the dust of the earth sits on the throne of heaven.

For our Jesus, it will live eternally, a fully man and fully God, eternally bating the marks in His hands, His feet and His sight. A living portion is His new body, yes, but still fully man and fully God. He will always be like us. He will always look like us, look like the people He came to save. He has chosen that life because of His love for us.

That is the Jesus we're told to look to. The Jesus who for the joy that was before Him, what was the joy for Jesus?

[ 38 : 10 ] Well, of course, we know one of the, part of that joy was of course the promise and the true hope and the fulfilled hope that He would sit again at the right hand of the Father, that He would come down, perform His work, live His life, die, suffer, grazed again from the dead, and then the joy of eternity.

The joy of being back in eternity, back in His home. Surely there's more to His joy than that, and there is. What else is a joy that was set before Him in His verse?

That joy is also the fact He now has or would get a people for His own possession. That Jesus suffered as Jesus lived His life and as Jesus died in that cross, as Jesus took on Himself, our punishment, the joy He had was knowing that He would have a people for His own possession, a people that were His, a people that He was going to save.

1 Peter chapter 2 and verse 9, you can read that section, it talks about that, that our saviour, He died to have a people for His own.

As we go forward for the rest of this new year, I look forward to Jesus, Jesus who had you in mind, Christian, you in mind, brother and sister, as He died on that cross.

[ 39 : 39 ] You in mind as He agreed to come into His world and to live and to suffer and to go on and to die. Who knew what He was going to do on His earth, who knew what He was going to face on His earth, who did it for you.

Look through Jesus, who despised the shame of the cross. Despising the shame of the cross. We all know, find well, the cross was not easy. An easy trial for Jesus, an easy death for Jesus. And sometimes perhaps we forget just how real the suffering was.

See, Jesus fully man and fully God. Jesus suffered as a man on that cross, He suffered also as our sin-bearer on that cross. He suffered as fully man and fully God.

And He suffered in a way we cannot begin to understand. And He knew what He was heading towards. We see that in the garden as He's bare crying and sweating the great drops of blood, crying out to the Father.

[ 40 : 48 ] We see a man who is anxious, a man who is in pain, a man who knows what's before him and who knows he must endure it. A man who can see is just in such a stressful situation.

Who is going to endure pain that we cannot begin to understand. We see physical pain, spiritual pain, separation, we can't begin to grasp. What does it mean that one of our sins equals an eternity of punishment?

Then for every sin of all God's people, He endured that punishment. He endured all that for us. We can't even begin to grasp that.

He despised the shame of the cross. Our eternal Lord who had reigned for all eternity and perfection and glory is now stuck, nailed down to a cross.

The shame of that, the shame of the King of Glory is now nailed by bits of metal and wood. Atoms that He Himself had created are now keeping Him His body to that cross.

[ 42 : 00 ] And He remained there. We know fine well as the after Himself that He could call angels down, legions of angels, but He didn't.

He suffered there as our Saviour, despising the shame of the cross. That's a Saviour we look to. The Saviour we look to who is our High Priest. We heard this morning, He's the High Priest who sacrificed Himself for His people.

We have a suffering Saviour. Like I said, a Saviour who is still in the form of man. A Saviour who right now is still living His eternal life as fully God and fully man.

Who will be that way forever because of His love for His people. As we pray, as we cry to Him, as we ask for His help, as we ask that He leads us and guides us through our walk, that's the one we're praying to.

[ 43 : 03 ] That is the one who hears our prayer. It's the one who is fully man, but also we see here, as we finish off these verses, the one who is seated where, at the right hand of the throne of God.

I guess we heard this morning, we come to Jesus as one who is King, as one who reigns and who rules, who knows all things, who is in charge and full control of all things.

As Spurgeon said, not one dust particle in the air is not under God's full control.

That's true. But also Jesus is the one who is close to all His people. Look to Jesus. Look to our King. Look to your High King.

Look to the one who is reigning and ruling. Look to Him and know that He is also the one who for the joy set before Him, who for the joy of having you as one of His people, who suffered the shame of the cross, who through all that and in all that, He endured it all.

[ 44 : 12 ] He now reigns forever. That's the Jesus we're told to look to. We can't do verse one. We can't let go of a sin.

We can't get rid of that weight, but we can when we look to Jesus. Great news. Great news to the Christians here this evening.

Just like we said in the morning, Jesus is King if you worship Him or not. Jesus rules and reigns whether you care or not. Jesus is King whether you've listened to last half hour or not. He still reigns.

He still rules. He is still King, but He's also still Saviour. Until the moment He returns again, He is still Saviour.

He is still the one who is saying right now to come to Him. The work has been done for you to believe it, accept it, live it, believe it, always given to you and it is your.

[ 45 : 12 ] There's no fancy handshakes or stupid dances. There's no rituals to be done. Come and believe it. Come and take it. It's for you. As we carry on this new week and carry on this new year, let's be encouraged as we think of verses like these verses here.

The verses that remind us that our race is held by Him. The race is organised by Him. The root is known by Him and He is with us every step of the way.

Let's be encouraged as we seek to kill this sin, as we seek to let go of that weight and to do it all in His power and through Him and through Him. Let's bow our heads now.

A word of prayer. Our Lord God, we again thank You as always for Your Word. Our thank You for blessing we have of being able to dig just for a short while into it. Lord, You've forgiven me again, Lord, for anything I said that was incorrect, anything I said that was not in accordance to Your Word.

We give You praise that Your power is not in the jars of clay who stand here, Lord, Your power is in Your living room because You are our living God.

[ 46 : 20 ] I pray this evening that this will be true for us, that Your people here this evening, Lord, those here who know You, as we seek to kill that sin, as we seek to let go of that weight, we truly do so knowing that we can only do it by relying on our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

And because He is the Founder and Perfector, because He is the One who has endured all for us, that He is more than able to walk alongside us through all the ups and downs of the race that is set before us, knowing that the end of that race, that He is the One who will welcome us home.

We pray in Word for all those here this evening who as of yet, don't know any of that, who as of yet don't know Jesus as their Savior, that they would join in this great race, they would come alongside and start running the race with Your people here.

They would look to Jesus as the Finisher and Perfector of their faith, they would come to know Jesus as the Alpha and the Omega. Come to know Jesus as the One who has made provision for them, if only they would come and take it.

Lord, You would encourage them to seek these things out, to dig into these things. Lord, don't give them rest until they know You as their Savior. Help us to pray for them, to be good friends to them.

[ 47 : 35 ] Help us rest of this evening, to humble ourselves. Even as we come to sing our final item of praise, help us to do so with hearts and minds, full of understanding and full of joy, as to who You

are and as to what You have done for us.  
Let's go with his precious name.