



Berean Christian Fellowship

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Our Longing is Purifying—P12

“I stretch out my hands to You; My soul longs for You, as a parched land. Selah” (Psalm 143:6).

Our actions have a great deal to do with where our minds are at. If our minds are on food, we are either looking for a tasty burger or we are eating a salad. If we’re thirsty, all our steps lead us to find water. If our minds are preoccupied with sin, we will pursue sin.

When two people are betrothed to be married, one would hope their minds would be on each other. If not, then they aren’t really taking each other seriously. Jesus Christ, Lord and Savior, is betrothed to the Church—repentant Believers. No one can claim Jesus is disinterested in us or that His feelings are neutral. No one can say His mind is far from us—His actions to save us while we were His enemies speak for themselves, so I can KNOW *“I am my beloved’s, and his desire is for me”* (Song of Solomon 7:10), even if I feel neglected at times while I wait for His return.

The Church, on the other hand is very fickle. We are distracted right and left from our devotion to Jesus. God’s Word continually calls us to focus and keep our eyes on Him—Can you say with the Psalmist, *“Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever”* (Ps. 73:25-26), *“my soul is crushed with longing after Your ordinances at all times”* (Ps. 119:20), and *“my eyes fail with longing for Your word, While I say, ‘When will You comfort me?’”* (Ps. 119:82). *“I opened my mouth wide and panted, For I longed for Your commandments”* (Ps. 119:131). *“I long for Your salvation, O Lord, And Your law is my delight”* (Ps. 119:174). *“O Lord, We have waited for You eagerly; Your name, even Your*

memory, is the desire of our souls. At night my soul longs for You, Indeed, my spirit within me seeks You diligently” (Is. 26:8b-9a)?

Just as a bride, our hopeful longing for our Beloved is purifying, for *“we know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure”* (1 Jn. 3:2b-3). How so? If our hearts ache for Him and His ways, our hearts and minds will be fixed on Him, and that focus keeps us from wandering into all the world’s distractions and temptations to abandon Him. We should be like a bride who cannot be tempted to stray because she does not even see the temptation in the brilliance of her love and longing to be united to her husband.

Yes, *“let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart”* (Heb. 12:1b-3). May our hearts cry, *“How lovely are Your dwelling places, O Lord of hosts! My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the Lord; My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God”* (Ps. 84:1-2). And in our actions may our outlook be clearly discerned that *“we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him”* (2 Cor. 5:8-9).

May our hearts not desire to forestall the return of our Lord. May we not grow comfortable in His delay. May we look with longing for His return! Even so, Amen.

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