

Core Values - Beholding Jesus: Hebrews 12:1-2

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- [0 : 0 0] Thank you, Pastor Josh, worship team. Thank you all for being here this morning. Again, I want to extend the same welcome that Pastor Josh did. We are so glad you're here.
- And if you're new with us, we pray that you would behold Jesus with us in all of his glory and splendor as we're going to see this morning. When I was in eighth grade, I was on a club baseball team.
- Now, I played baseball growing up. My dad taught us baseball and coached us when we were just little boys, me and my brothers. But this was the highest team I had ever been on in terms of its exclusivity.
- I made the cut. I was on the club team for a whole summer. And I have to be honest with you, I had one objective that summer. It wasn't to win baseball games.
- It wasn't even to be the best player on the team. It was to hit, finally, my first home run that had evaded me all through Little League, all through my baseball career.
- [1 : 0 3] Now, I was what a lot of people called a contact hitter. I put the ball into the field, but I had no power. But I would watch all of my teammates all summer just start hitting balls over the fence, left and right.
- We played on some really small fields that were custom built to hit the ball over the fence. And I just couldn't do it. Hit the fence a lot of times, but never over.
- And I remember that summer as I started to dream about what it would feel like to round the bases after hitting the ball over the fence. One of my coaches said, Eric, do you want to know why you struggle to elevate the ball?
- I'm like, why? Because when you swing the bat, you watch the ball all the way through, and right when you get close to hitting, you turn your eyes up to the fence, almost eager to see the ball go over.
- So what he told me was, Eric, I want you to work on, in the cage, just watching the ball all the way across the plate and not swinging until you're absolutely sure it's there.
- [2 : 0 6] So I would watch the ball come in, and I would hit the ball, and I would hit the ball, and I'd watch it every single time, all the way until it made contact with the bat. And there was one game. The pitcher threw a terrible breaking ball right over the plate, and I hit this ball as hard as I could.
- And it went opposite field, and I watched it sail, and it bounced off the top inch of the fence and dropped down, and I got a triple. To this day, I have never hit a home run in baseball.
- And it stings just thinking about it. But I will tell you this. That summer, I became a much better hitter because of the advice from my coach to say, Eric, stop taking your eyes off the ball right when you're about to hit it.
- Keep your eyes on it all the way down. Well, today we're in the book of Hebrews, chapter 12, verse 1 and 2. We're just going to do two verses. But man, these verses are rich.
- And let me tell you, the author of Hebrews, who we don't know who he is, or maybe even she is, probably he. But Hebrews here, the author of this book, has one goal in mind.

- [3 : 19] And here's the goal for the author of Hebrews. That every person that reads the letter would walk away in their life with one refrain.
- Here's the refrain. Jesus is better. Now, that's a snapshot. We're going to do Hebrews at some point as a church. I don't know if it's a couple years from now or a decade from now. We are doing Hebrews at some point.
- But that's the refrain from the book. Jesus is better. And what the author of Hebrews is going to say in these two verses specifically, is that Jesus is the greatest thing you could possibly experience, have, or hold in this life.
- But specifically, for the Christian, all of our sights are set on him. And that if we watch Jesus set our eyes fixed firmly upon him, all the way in life, we will experience the highest joy and the highest blessing.
- So we're going to be in Hebrews 12, 1-2, but quickly I want to just recap what we're doing here. Set up our series. We just finished a series in the Old Testament, Old Testament parables. This is now the start of a new series where we're going to go through our core values as a church.
- [4 : 38] Now we planted this church about eight months ago. And when we planted, we planted with the mission to display the light of Christ for the glory of God and the good of all.
- That is our mission as a church. But in order to accomplish that mission, some of the things that undergird that are our core values. So you actually see a red sign over here that's usually up there every Sunday.
- Those are our seven core values. And we're going to work through each one of them week by week, seven weeks in total. We're going to start with this week, Beholding Jesus, and we're going to work through the rest of them.
- Christ-centered teaching is next week. Transformational discipleship, covenantal community, responsive worship, neighborly evangelism, and kingdom advancement. But what are core values? Well, for us, this is what we define as core values.
- They serve as both theological distinctives and philosophical convictions of the church that guide our ministry focus and vision. Thus, we aim for our core values to stem directly out of God's word and embody his heart for the church.
- [5 : 39] And abiding by core values is a practical way to identify God's priorities and make them the church's priorities. In other words, we've gone through scripture and we've said, what is the church supposed to be about? And that's what our core values really are.
- They're God's heart for the church. Does that mean that our core values are the perfect core values? And every other church's aren't? No. In fact, if you look at the churches we partner with, we all are basically saying the same thing because we read the Bible the same way.
- But why are they important? Well, practically speaking, our core values are the practical means by which we accomplish our mission to display the light of Christ, the glory of God and the good of all.
- Each one of them is a value that we want to put into action as a church that put us on track toward fulfilling this mission and displaying the light of Christ.
- And that image of being on track is something that I want us to understand. That for us, when we think about, hey, how are we doing as a church? We're only eight months in, but when we sit down as elders and we talk about how we're doing as a church, how can we improve?
- [6 : 42] What are things we could focus on or do better at? The core values are actually things that we go through. So much so that we went through them this last year and decided, you know what? We're a little weak on a few of these, but neighborly evangelism, we need to shore that up because that's what the church is called to do, to be neighborly evangelists.

So this year, the year of outreach, the year of neighboring, we are doing a lot of outreach. So all that to say, we believe strongly in some biblical convictions of what a church should be.

And that's what our core values are. But as these core values progress, I want you to notice from one to seven, they move from inward to outward, from the heart to the hands and the feet.

And number one is beholding Jesus. You can put that slide up. Here's how we define beholding Jesus. We believe that the supremacy, beauty, and radiance of Jesus Christ outshines and outweighs all else throughout eternity.

Therefore, we believe that it is the highest privilege of his church to continually behold Jesus and all of his splendor and glory. This beholding entails engaging the heart, the soul, the mind, and strength to fixate on Jesus continually through scripture reading, devoted prayer, and meditation upon his magnificent love made visible through his perfect life, sacrificial death, and victorious resurrection.

[8 : 06] We're going to see that come true in Hebrews 12 today. So let's dive back into the word that Patrick Josh just read. Let me read it again for us. It's short, but so rich.

Hebrews 12, 1 to 2. Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely.

And let us run with endurance the 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 is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

As we get into this rich section, there's a context here that we have to understand. Many of you may be familiar with Hebrews chapter 11, which is aptly considered the hall of faith by many.

And in this chapter, what the author of Hebrews does is he highlights this thing called faith, which is believing in something that can be known. And he takes us through this pattern, starting with Abel.

[9 : 21] Through all of the Old Testament saints, and working through chapter 11, what we're left with is this, verse 39 of chapter 11, and all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us, they should not be made perfect.

In other words, a giant list of people who sought God in faith, who looked to God and said, you are my God, you are my salvation, and I wait, and I long for, with anticipation, the one who will come to redeem me once and for all, Messiah.

Every one of those men and women in Hebrews 11 waited in expectant faith for Jesus Christ, the Messiah, to come. And in that context, we see the word, therefore.

As we look back upon these incredible men and women of faith that trusted in God for salvation, we are told, therefore, in light of them and in light of their faith that has been passed on to you now, here's the reality, we are surrounded by that great cloud of witnesses.

What is the cloud of witnesses? This is a phrase that's often used in our prayer Bibles, our devotional Bibles, in our songs of worship. The cloud of witnesses refers to the whole sainthood of the church.

[10 : 53] All those who have come before us with faith fixed on that Messiah. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Rahab, David, Samuel, and many more.

For us, in the time that we find ourselves in, we could also, from our vantage point in history, also look back and include people like Peter, John, Paul, Mary, and the rest of the New Testament disciples is also part of this cloud of witnesses.

We could even go a step further to extend this group to include even historical faith figures. People like Perpetua and Felicity who were martyred in Rome for their faith. People like Augustine, Luther, Spurgeon, Billy Graham, Tim Keller, pick your favorite, amazing, Jesus-loving theologian, or pastor, or even our grandparents were the ones who left a faith lineage for us who are now with the Lord.

What is the cloud of witnesses? Who is it referring to? It's referring to witnesses. The word witness here is martyrian, which is literally where we get our word martyr.

In other words, somebody who testifies to the truth. So in other words, we have a massive cloud that encompasses all around us and it's filled with people who testify that God is faithful and God is our Redeemer.

[12 : 27] But also, I want you to notice in verse 39 and 40, it also says this, that there are witnesses to the grace of God through faith, but that all those Old Testament saints never actually saw Jesus.

They did not receive what was promised. Nevertheless, their faith is valid. For the one who saves the sinner is not the worshiper, it is the God.

In our case, Yahweh. More specifically, Jesus. He is the one who saves and He redeems our faith through His great work on the cross.

But here's what's so amazing about what this author of Hebrews is saying. These Old Testament saints, as great as they were in their faith, that the Messiah was coming to redeem them, they never actually got to hear, see Jesus Christ, the God-man.

But you and I, we have seen and tasted of Jesus. And we testify alongside them as brothers and sisters that faith is the pathway of God's richest blessings and salvation.

[13 : 37] That is what the author of Hebrews is saying here. But back to this verse 1, we are surrounded by that group of witnesses. They're like a cloud around us.

One commentator helpfully describes this section as this, a divine, heavenly cheering section for you and I. That all of these saints are gathered around saying, you can do it.

Run the race. Trust in God just as they did. But then it says this, laying aside every weight and sin.

And the author's point here is that faith in God leads to forgiveness of sin and a redeemed heart. For those who anticipated the Messiah but never saw Him, they still experience that redemption through sacrifice ultimately fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ.

But for us, we look back at Jesus' life, death, and resurrection and we experience the full gospel. In other words, the perfect life of Jesus, the sacrificial death of Jesus and the resurrection victorious that Jesus conquers all powers that we might live forever with Him if we repent and believe.

[14 : 55] That gospel. For all saints of all time, there is one Savior, one salvation, and one way to God. Jesus Christ. And in light of the gospel, here's what the author is telling us in verse 1, in light of that faith that has been carried on and passed on to us, we lay aside our burdens and our shame because they no longer define us.

Just as they did not define Abraham or Moses or Rahab any longer. They were redeemed and so are you.

So set your eyes on Jesus. Lay aside the burdens that you carry. I've been reading a kid's version of Pilgrim's Progress, the great work to my kids.

And we just finished the section where the Christian stands before the cross and his burden falls off and rolls away. The author of Hebrews is walking us through that experience.

That you don't carry your burdens, they're taken. You don't carry your sins, they're gone. They're wiped away, they're cleansed by the blood of Jesus. And in that identity, that redeemed identity that we share with all the saints of old, we walk in confidence.

[16 : 22] Not in us, but in Jesus' perfect work. And this is the reality that propelled these believers, these faith figures of the Old Testament to run the race.

That's the term we're given here. Run the race with endurance for the race that is set before us. All of this leads into and centers around, though, verse 2.

The single most important words in this passage are the following. Looking to Jesus. And here we come to beholding Jesus.

The word looking here is translated in many different ways in our Bibles. Maybe you see a different word there. Here's what I want us to know. This word is highly unique. The only other time it's used in the Bible, two total usages, the only other time it's used is by Paul and it's used in a totally different context.

That's very menial. So essentially this is the only time that any biblical writer uses this word in this powerful of a way. And here's what he's saying. Fix your eyes and your sight on one person.

[17 : 42] what's amazing here. What's amazing here, I don't usually pull this out for us in this way, but I want to do it today because it's really meaningful.

This is a present, active, plural verb, which means this. Let us all fix our sight on Jesus right now in the moment that you read it and again and again and again and again.

In other words, the present tense in the Greek, it gives us this concept of ongoing action. An action that has no beginning or no end.

It's an action that once you start into it, it just continues to happen. You put that pot on the burner, you don't turn the burner off, you just leave it simmering for eternity.

That's what he's saying here. So, let's do it again. Plural, all of y'all, church, it's actually good grammar in the Greek. Y'all, listen up, y'all set your eyes on Jesus Christ, the person, right now.

[19 : 10] Just look at him and don't stop. What a beautiful picture. Behold Jesus. That's what this phrase means. I actually like one translation here the best.

It's the CSB. If you have a CSB, shout out. Here's the translation of the CSB. It says, keep our eyes on Jesus. keeping them. That nails it.

Eric, look at the ball all the way to the bat. The author of Hebrews is saying, look at Jesus all the way until you meet him.

Don't take your eyes off of him. It's the worst possible thing you could do. That's the implication here from the author here. Just keep looking and looking and looking at him.

In other words, the ultimate goal of the Christian life is this, to behold Jesus Christ the person, the man, God. Looking at Jesus Christ with a spiritual heart is the most simple, essential decision a Christian could ever make.

[20 : 22] and nothing else is required. Everything else in the Christian life, even all the good things, they hinge on this one paradigm in Scripture.

Keep your eyes on Jesus and all else will fall into place. Specifically, if you look at the rest of this passage, here's how he finishes it. 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 is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

The author of Hebrews gives us, as if we needed it, an even additional reason to set our eyes on Jesus. Look to him to run your Christian race, look to him to walk out and work out your faith, but on top of all that, look to him because of these reasons.

He died for you on the cross, he went willingly, and now he intercedes for you on high. Look to that guy. Don't look anywhere else. That's all you'll ever need in this life, is what the author of Hebrews is saying.

Look to Jesus because he is the Messiah that all the saints of old trusted in, the God of witnesses. Look to Jesus because he atones for our sin, he says, endured the cross and laid aside our sin.

[21 : 40] Look to Jesus because he removes all shame. He says, lay aside every weight and Jesus despised the shame of the cross so that he would remove ours. Look to Jesus because he is seated in heaven, interceding for us right now.

Seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Why behold Jesus according to this text? Because in the Bible, throughout all of its stories and all of its verses and all of its chapters and all of its books has a consistent paradigm and it's this.

It's a poetic one. Where we fix our eyes is where we look to for salvation. As you read your Bible, I encourage you, anytime you see somebody looking at something or turning their head or their eyes to see something, just watch.

how the Bible uses this as an image of looking for salvation. So much so that in Psalm 121, in the Psalm of Ascents, we read this, I set my eyes to the hills from where does my help come from?

I'm looking for salvation up in the places where all the gods are supposed to be. And then there's the refrain, no. My help comes from the Lord, creator of heaven and earth. where we set our eyes is where we find our salvation.

[23 : 03] The Bible continually paints a picture of. So I want to work through really quickly here with you guys. This is going to be a load of verses. So if you're trying to take notes, good luck.

I'll try and go slow, but I want us to see this because I believe the Bible is really emphasizing this. Let's look at a list of people who experienced the glory of Jesus by looking upon him and his beautiful face.

Numbers 21, 8-9, the Lord said to Moses, make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole and everyone who is bitten when he sees it shall live. So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole and if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.

Jesus interprets this and says, that was me symbolically. They were looking at me all the way down the line when I come on the scene. Here's what he says in John 3, And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

And what Jesus just did is he just tied looking, looking, the act of looking upon something with belief. As you looked to the pole, the bronze pole with the snake and the serpent on it to be healed from your afflictions, so now you look upon me.

[24 : 28] That's called belief. The shepherds in Luke 2, and they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning the child.

And all who heard it wondered what the shepherds told them. And Mary treasured all these things up in her heart, pondering them. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen as it had been told them.

That's an experience that changes your entire life. Because why? They went and saw Jesus, the baby. Simeon, right after Luke 2.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon and his man was righteous and devout waiting for the consolation of Israel. And the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen, notice, seen the Lord's Christ.

And he came in the Spirit into the temple. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him according to the custom of the law, he took them up in his arms and blessed God and said, Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace according to your word for my eyes have seen your salvation.

[25 : 39] Simeon's a great dude. You got a great namesake back there? Tech Simeon? Guy just walked, Mary and Joseph walk in the temple with their baby and he just snatches them up.

Give me that baby. All right, let me do this thing. It's awesome. Love Simeon for this but don't try this in the church. Okay, next one. Wise men, Matthew 2. And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary and his mother and they fell down and worshipped him.

Then opening the treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. We're picking this up. People see Jesus and crazy things happen. Worship flows naturally. Next, Zacchaeus.

I love this one. Luke 19. He entered Jericho and was passing through. Jesus, that is. And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and he was rich and he was seeking to see, double, who Jesus was.

But on account of the crowd, he could not because he was small in stature. You guys know the story? So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to what? To see him. I want to see him.

[26 : 46] And I love this. And when Jesus came by that place, he looked up. Jesus sees him. And said to him, Zacchaeus, hurry, come down, for I must stay in your house today.

We all know how it happens. Salvation has come to this house. Why? Because Zacchaeus looked upon Jesus and it changed everything. How about the man blind from birth in John 9?

Jesus made mud with his spit. Yeah, he spits on the ground, makes the mud, rubs on his eyes, he says, go and wash in the pool of Siloam. The man does it. He immediately receives his sight.

Blind from birth, never seen anything. Immediately interrogated by the legalistic Pharisees. How did you do that? Who told you? Who did this for you? What was his name? And the man says, all I know is I was blind, but now I see where we get that great hymn from.

But I love this. Jesus finds him in secret in John 9. Remember, this man's just seeing people for the first time in his life. And it says this, Jesus heard they cast him out and having found him, said, do you believe in the Son of Man?

[27 : 49] And he answered, and who is he, sir, that I may believe in him? And Jesus said to him, you have seen him. This is me. You're looking at him. And it is he who is speaking to you.

And he said, Lord, I believed. And he worshipped him. Jesus heals his physical sight and his spiritual sight in one go. Fanny Crosby is a great hymn writer, wonderful lady, church history, blind from infancy, never saw anything her entire life and lived a rich, full life.

She wrote a great hymn that we sing oftentimes here, Blessed Assurance. And there's a line in there, blind from birth. Here's the line that she wrote, perfect submission, perfect delight, visions of rapture, now burst on my sight.

Okay. You don't know what you're talking about. You can't see anything. Actually, there's a historical story about her that's amazing. People used to come up to her all the time and would try and sympathize with their blindness with statements like, oh, I'm so sorry, you're blind.

That's so hard. And oh, man, God did that to you. But you know, like, it's hard. Here's what she would put back to them all the time. I love this. She'd say this, do you realize that the first face I will ever see shall be his face?

[29 : 08] That'll shut you up quick. I will only ever see his face. And she saw that as a blessing from the Lord. How about this one? The woman and the disciples of the resurrection, Matthew 28.

So they departed quickly, the women, from the tomb with fear and great joy and ran to tell the disciples. And behold, Jesus met them and said, greetings, resurrected Lord. And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshipped him.

Then Jesus said to them, don't be afraid. Go and tell my brothers and go to Galilee where they will see me. Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee to the mountain which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him.

Beholding Jesus changes everything. And it leads to worship. Matthew 14, Peter on the water. Peter answered him, Lord, if it's you, come to me and I'll come in to me and I'll come to you on the water.

And he said, come. So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. Presumably looking at his Savior who's commanding him. But notice verse 30, when he saw the wind, he was afraid and began to sink.

[30 : 11] He cried out, Lord, save me. In other words, what happened? He took his eyes off of Jesus and all the calamity overtook him and he fell. Stephen, Acts 7. You know Stephen, great martyr of the church.

Now when they heard these things, they were enraged preaching about Jesus, the Pharisees and whatnot, and they ground their teeth at him. But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and who?

Jesus. Standing at the right hand of God. And he said, behold, I see the heavens open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. They crowd out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him and they cast him out of the city and stoned him.

And the witnesses laid down their garment at the feet of a young man named Saul. And he, as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. On that guy named Saul who just stoned Stephen, let's go to him.

Acts 9. And laying his hands on him, after Paul loses his sight on the road to Damascus, laying his hands on him, brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

[31 : 24] And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes and he regained his sight. Jesus takes it from him and then says, I want you to see me for real this time. Here we go.

Faith. And finally, we'll end with this one, Apostle John. Revelation 1. Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands.

And in the midst of the lampstands one like the Son of Man clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. The hairs of his head were white like white wool like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire.

His feet were like burnished bronze or fine in a furnace. And his voice like the roar of many waters. And in his right hand he held seven stars. From his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword. And his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

Verse 17. When I saw him I fell at his feet as though dead but he laid his right hand on me saying fear not. I am the first and the last and the living one I died.

[32 : 22] And behold I am alive forevermore and I had the keys of death and Hades. This is but a snippet. A snippet of the Bible showing what happens when people set their eyes literal and spiritual on Jesus Christ.

Is it any wonder the author of Hebrews seems to know a secret? It's almost like whoever wrote this has lived a full life of being a disciple of Jesus and following after him and is telling with all of his heart and soul and mind and strength to a church listen please please please just listen run the race but do so looking at Jesus nothing else.

2 Corinthians 3 17-18 also says this the Lord is the spirit and where the spirit of the Lord is there is freedom and we all this is Paul with unveiled face beholding the glory of the Lord are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.

Beholding the glory of the Lord fix your eyes on Jesus. This core value as a church guides a whole lot that we do.

In our worship ministry as Pastor Josh leads us he is very intentional to pick songs that specifically lead you and I to behold the majesty of Jesus Christ.

[34 : 04] That's intentional. In our preaching we have a goal of seeing the gospel made clear and Jesus made alive that we might behold him every time we open his word.

In our children's ministry we use a curriculum that helps children behold Jesus every single week.

our teachers are fantastic at teaching Jesus every single week that our kids might walk away and go home saying mom and dad I learned about Jesus and every week I ask my kids this question and sometimes they'll say oh we learned about Noah we learned about Jacob but what I'm so grateful for and Kate you're a huge part of this for all the work you do and all the teachers I can still ask that question and my kids still say to me we also learned about Jesus I think we've succeeded if we do that with our children fixing the eyes of our heart upon Jesus steadies our faith calms our anxious heart relieves our doubts and empowers us to run the race of faith properly and beholding Jesus leads us again to experience the fruits of the gospel every time you take a look at Jesus it redirects you back to two things one our sin to his holiness and forgiveness through the cross we never outgrow our need for

Jesus which is why this core value is number one it guides and directs everything we do as a church we don't grow out of our need for Jesus we grow into our need for Jesus that's sanctification in fact that's what biblical faith entails the gospel that Jesus lived perfectly died sacrificially rose victoriously forgiving our sin if we repent and believe that gospel starts by beholding Jesus for the first time with new and authentic eyes that really want to know God and the most practical way to behold Jesus is to repent and believe repentance is the initial recognition for the first time if you've never repented of your sin here's what it is recognizing your sin that you are inadequate that you have in your brokenness turned against a holy God and his ways for you recognizing sin and acknowledging one's hopelessness giving up all hope that any goodness or badness inside of me could ever deliver me from the wrath of a holy

God who loves me and wants me in his kingdom repentance is waving the white flag on self reliance and faith is the second piece of this puzzle it's the initial heart acknowledgement that Jesus is Lord that when the heart acknowledges I need a savior I cannot save myself we have to turn towards somewhere else away from ourselves and toward Christ acknowledging he is Lord and trusting in his perfect gospel work if repentance is turning from sin faith is turning to Jesus repentance is finally opening up your eyes to the sinking boat that you are on and jumping ship for the first time refusing to go down with that ship of sin and destruction and faith is seeing the rescue boat from a distance and trusting that there is salvation there if you're here today and you've heard this before repentance and belief

[37 : 51] I've heard the preacher say this I've been called to this I've never felt compelled you may not feel compelled! today here's what I want to appeal to you we got the Super Bowl happening later today I don't know if you're going to watch it or not but here's what I want to say I once was unrepentant just like all of you and being unrepentant and refusing the love of Christ and the call of the gospel is like living in sin rejecting the gospel running the same play every down imagine if at the Super Bowl today every single play that Patrick Mahomes calls he pulls his little thing he pulls it all right we're running a QB sneak up the middle break imagine every single play is a QB sneak up the middle you think the defense is going to figure it out?

they're not going to get one first down take the ball myself I got this I can do it I got it running up the middle are you tired of waking up each day and devising yet another hopeless plan of how you're going to manifest peace and fulfillment in your life I know I was that's what unrepentance is like are you tired of trying to be the savior of your own story yet in our sin we continue to don the cape each day and say I'm the hero and take on life only to be beat up and worn down from failure again and again we're like that QB that calls the QB sneak over and over again four downs in a row we need a new playbook and that's what the gospel is pass the ball to a better savior let him run the race for you that's the call so as we think about beholding Jesus this morning I want to encourage you even if you've already repented of your sin even if you say

I've done that I remember that moment how sweet it was here's the call for you beholding Jesus as Lord is the initial primary step in receiving the gospel but also it's the daily pattern that we live our lives beholding Jesus every day as a believer means preaching the gospel to myself seeing the beauty and glory of Christ in his word in song in prayer in others and being drawn to once again surrender to him every day we look at ourselves we should see the weakness we should look to Christ and see the strength and the salvation for every one look you look at yourself and your sin take ten looks at the beautiful Jesus one of my favorite books on this topic I encourage you is called Rejoicing in Christ and this book is all about beholding the glory and splendor of Jesus we're also big fans here at this church of a book called

The Gospel Primer if you're any interest in beholding Jesus and starting to see the beauty of him in a daily manner grab one of these two books or both if you're really ambitious here's one quote from Rejoicing in Christ from the author Michael Reeves listen to this sometimes we find ourselves tiring of Jesus if you're in here today and you've received the gospel and you say beholding Jesus I get it but it's getting old here's the quote for you I find myself tiring of Jesus stupidly imagining that I've seen all there is to see and used up all the pleasure there is to be that in Christ we get spiritually bored but Jesus has satisfied the mind and heart of the infinite God for eternity our boredom is simple blindness if the father can be infinitely and eternally satisfied in Christ then Jesus must be overwhelmingly all sufficient for us set your eyes on Jesus this morning church at the risk of oversimplifying our faith

I offer to you all life's worries and all life's problems would be remedied if we just committed every day every moment to seeing Jesus when you suffer the loss of a loved one look to Jesus who also lost much when you're fighting in your marriage and continually at odds with your spouse look to Jesus who brings all comfort and peace in our relationships when bills stack up and the money coming in doesn't match the money going out look to Jesus who promises to clothe and feed us like the lilies of the field or the birds of the air when you're rejected by others for sharing your faith look to Jesus who endured total rejection from the world when you feel guilty shameful or irredeemable from the habitual sin that afflicts you time and time again look to Jesus who washed you white as snow and you are now not under condemnation when you feel lonely and unloved look to Jesus who loves you more deeply than any person ever could and is always present and if you're here today you have not beheld

[42 : 54] Jesus ever with a new heart a repentant heart I ask you to behold him now he is the most beautiful most radiant thing you could ever set your eyes on this time I have to ask you to stand if you are here today and you want to take the next step of faith to turn from sin to call a new play to receive Jesus Christ and all of his glory and splendor here we've got some people in the back that would love to talk to you and help guide you in this new gospel journey but for now I want to redirect us to a great song called before the throne and in this song there's a line about beholding him who stands at the right hand of the father interceding for you and I as we sing this song together let us with one voice with full hearts behold

Jesus together