

THE POWER THAT KEEPS US FROM FALLING BACK INTO THE LAW

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Today I am going to talk about walking and continue to walk in the power of God where we don't go back to the Law. I'm going to share with you in what empowers us not to fall back under a system where we find sin in the flesh manifest and destroy our lives.

Hebrews 12:

1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your minds

When we look at Hebrews we say that the writer of the Book of Hebrews, let us say it is Paul, wrote to the Hebrew people to encourage them not to fall away from the message of God's grace. Many of the people that believed in grace, after awhile, started to fall back to the Law and they were tempted to go back to Judaism, back to the Law system. They were tempted to go back to the system of labor and works. Paul was coming and encouraging them. He encouraged them in Hebrews chapters 10, 11 and 12 and especially chapter 11. He came with a lot of examples of people who believed and after they believed for a period of time they didn't see anything of what they believed in and what they were persuaded of. Then after awhile God came and as faithful as God is He came and manifested that which He had promised.

The early church believed in the message of the Resurrection where their expectation was that Jesus would, in their lifetime, return in physical form, and those that believed upon the lord wouldn't even die. Many of them believed that. As they believed on that and saw some folk dying Paul had to write things like **1Corinthians 15** explaining the resurrection of the dead and explaining how God has conquered sin and death. I believe that now we find the same kind of a thing in Hebrews. The Hebrew people were persecuted for what they believed in Jesus. They were persecuted by their own country men and the Gentiles of that time. They were going through difficult times. They were believing on this Jesus who was raised from the dead.

Remember, many of them did not see Jesus physically raised from the dead. They heard it. They heard it from the mouths of the five hundred people that saw Jesus at once. They also heard it out of the mouth of Mary and the mouth of the disciples. So, there was a massive stir about the Resurrection. They knew that the Roman soldiers were obviously killed because His body wasn't in the grave anymore and there was a Roman seal on it. There was a massive thing that took place there. Then, many of them believed without seeing the physical Jesus.

As they saw some of these people who believed in the Lord and saw the physical resurrection where they started to believe in this God who has brought His Son, who has conquered death and that would reign over Jew and Gentile. The way He would reign over the people is by reigning over their sin, reigning over their death, bringing life and immortality, that which He was raised into, into manifestation. As they were not seeing this, many of them lost heart. They started to feel, "Well, I don't know what is going to happen." Then many were thinking, "Well, let me go back to Judaism. I am just persecuted in Christianity." That's why Paul comes and he encouraged them and we are going to look at how he encouraged them.

He first encouraged them by telling them to look at the cloud of witnesses who were those who lived prior to them who believed and in their time, God made them promises. They believed that and like Abraham he believed and did not see the promise come forth. He believed and did not see but he didn't waver taking into consideration the deadness of his flesh or not bearing fruit. But he continued to believe that God can manifest what He has promised. Then, in the end, we find that God did manifest that. Then, he actually goes on and he says that the true promise that God made to all these people didn't even manifest. In other words, He was making promises but these promises were only a type and a shadow of the true promise which was eternal life and all these died without receiving the promise. They had faith even until the end.

Remember, I don't want you to be confused. He made Abraham a promise. He said, "Abraham, you will have a son. Sarah will have a son." That is what Abraham believed. But he did not see, "The father of many nations." He died before seeing that but he continued to believe. He comes and encourages the people to look at these, what we would call today, 'faith heroes' and say, "Let not that which seems not to work, discourage you but there is something else we need to look at." That is what we are going to look at today. So we look at these old faith heroes and we see that they believed and although they didn't see that thing which they believed in, did have its first fruit. So they saw their first belief like Abraham. He saw the son. He saw Isaac come forth and yet he didn't see himself as the father of many nations. He didn't even know what that actually meant. Today we know what that means in Jesus Christ. Abraham will still see what that really means in the resurrection.

This makes me think of a story of when I lived in Pata Stream. The story I'm about to tell is to explain to you how sometimes we feel like saying, "God, You need to hurry up! You need to change this situation now. We need to see things change. We need to see more fruit. We need to see more of these things. Where is what you have promised?" Back then I was preaching and I did a job on the sideline. That job was to do sand blasting. I got some sand for free from a farmer who was about ten kilometers from out of town. I went with a small car with a trailer and I completely overloaded the trailer with wet sand. I got into the road and you know, back then you are a young man and obviously I went as fast as what the car can go which wasn't very fast because it was a small car with a 1200 cc engine. My motor bike has that kind of engine. It was a small little thing and here we go down the big road. A truck came from the front and the wind from that truck started to shake and just put that trailer off balance.

It was me and Isaac, the guy who worked for me. Isaac used to smoke a lot of marijuana. While working for me he was heavy on the marijuana. I was driving down the road and this trailer started to get out of balance and it was swinging like crazy. I don't know if you've ever seen what happens when a trailer starts to swing like that. You lose control very quickly and the car lands up in the ditch. You can roll the car and get badly hurt. So here I was stressed out. I was doing my best to keep that car on the road. I remember when my dad told me, "Don't hit the brake. Hit the gas so that the car can pull that trailer and it can straighten out.

I was looking at that but I was already having it right to the floor. That car had only four gears. It was a stick shift and I was thinking that when this hill comes, I need to put it in third gear and just give it everything I have in the hope that it will just pull straight. In the meantime, I was praying. I was praying in tongues. I was praying in my normal understanding. I was stressed out praying. I told Isaac, "Pray!" Isaac is a Corda and he started to pray in Corda. I didn't understand Corda and he was praying away. That car was shaking and he grabbed that seat and it didn't have safety belts. The cars that were coming from the front were getting off the road, stopping on the side of the road because they knew this is an accident looking for a place to happen. They didn't want to be part of this accident. There were double lanes on both sides and I was in the middle of this road going like crazy, an accident trying to find a place to happen.

Isaac and I were praying and Isaac just stopped his prayer and he was just stressed out holding on to that seat. As we started to go up the hill, he looked back and saw that trailer which was almost 90 degrees with the car swinging with the sand from one side to the other side and the car was shaking. He started to pray again. As we went up the hill the car pulled the trailer straight and we parked and thanked God we didn't have an accident. I was stressed out and I said to Isaac, "Why do you pray and then you stop for awhile and then you pray again. Can't you see that this is a serious situation? You shouldn't stop praying but you should push through with a prayer." Then he said, "No, sir. I prayed and asked God to help us and after awhile I looked back and when I saw what was happening I said, "God, You better hurry up!" And that was the second prayer. Many times we are at that place where we are saying, "God, we prayed and You better hurry up because this situation is just getting too much for us! I don't know how to handle this any more. What shall I do?" This is the exact situation of the Hebrew people which Paul comes and addresses. Sometimes or many times for some folks, we are at a place where we are saying, "God, this is taking too long. I don't know what's going on. You have promised and I believed and I don't know what to do!"

Let's see what it says here. We've read it and I can bet that in the first reading of those two verses we don't really see what Paul is saying but now I am going to show what the Lord has revealed to me.

Hebrews 12:

1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

I can understand why people would say that, in the English, this verse simply seems to say, "Listen. Get rid of your sin and get rid of the things that bog you down and run your race with patience." It almost looks as if he is saying that we need to get rid of our sin. It says, "***...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us...***"

In the Afrikaans direct translation, it doesn't read like that. It says it much better. It says, "Now, since we have put away our sin, or since our sin has been put away and the burden that we had been carrying has been put away, let us run with patience, the race that is set before us. In other words, what he is saying is, "Since sin has been dealt with and since the Law system has been dealt with, or that which bogs us down, since that has been dealt with, let us just be patient. God has already done what man could not do! God has come and He has broken the power of sin in the Resurrection.

I want to say something about sin which we need to understand. There are many different meanings of the word, sin but I want to talk about sin in the flesh. What is sin in the flesh and why did Jesus Christ have to die for sin and why did He have to be raised up in an immortal body?

Simply, it was to conquer sin in the flesh. Sin in the flesh means, not to partake in or not to be a sharer of. That is what the word, sin, means. So, sin in the flesh means the part in man's flesh which was not a sharer of God's eternal life. We know that man was made from the dust of the earth and that in his own ability he doesn't have eternal life. He needed to have eternal life in a mortal body in order to have the quality of God's life.

So, what God did was, He ended that by taking the likeness of sinful flesh to death and then He was raised up into an immortal body. As He was raised up into an immortal body, He ended sin for us. So what Paul is saying here is since we are now at a place where Jesus ended our sins, and since we are at a place where our burden has been lifted from us, let us just be patient. That is what God has already done. See what God has done. Acknowledge what He has done and don't go back. Since God has taken away the sin that so easily besets us, since God has ended the burden that was on us, let us be patient. What He has started He will finish! That's what the verse says. What has God started? He has ended sin! He has brought innocence for all, the ability not to harm. Amen!

He was the one who has come to stop our sins. We've read repentance of sins as we must stop our sins. We have read that we must now take the yoke upon us meaning, take this difficult cross of Jesus Christ and carry this painful cross with Him. That is not what it means. When you talk about the cross of Jesus, it means when you take the death of Jesus on us. What is the death of Jesus? It was the end of the Law man. That's what it means. Let me paraphrase what He said in Matthew 11:28: "Come to me, all of you who are overburdened with the practicalities of religion and I will give you rest!" Hebrews 12:1 says, "... *lay aside every weight*". It is not saying that we must get rid of the weight, we must get rid of the sin. I like the old, direct, Afrikaans translation where it says, "Since we are now at the place where the weight has been laid aside..." How? By Christ ending the Law. Since we are now at the place where we have been set free from the power and the bondage of sin in the flesh to the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, let us know what He has started He shall also finish.

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith (Looking at Jesus the author and finisher of what we are persuaded of.);

Now we are getting to the punch line. He is saying, "Listen, you might have heard about this Resurrection. You might have heard about the effortless fruit that God has promised you. You might have heard about all these things and now you are at the place where you are saying, "I don't know. Maybe I must go back to works to make this thing work. Maybe I am wrong in believing in the Grace message. I don't know. I don't know what is going off." And first he said, "Look at the Old Testament people who believed. Then for a time they didn't see anything but God did give them the promise. In other words, by faith, they subdued kingdoms. By faith, they saw the dead being raised. By faith they saw all those things but the idea is that they believed and then didn't see and then they eventually did see. He actually said, and what the true promise is which is the Resurrection, immortality. They died without seeing it but we have a God who can raise the dead and that's how they will eventually have what was promised.

Then he goes on and he says, "Look at what God has done. He has started by ending the Law system. He has started by taking away the burden of works righteousness. He has started by becoming human flesh and dying and then being raised up. He created the platform from where this new world and the truth about who He is and what He has dreamt for us, can be born. In using my own words, look at the investment that Jesus Christ has made.

God has loved man so much that God eternally changed. We must say that God doesn't change. I don't believe that He changed in character. I don't believe He was changed in person but God, to a certain aspect, has changed in form because we know that God was the unseen God that cannot be seen. Then He came and took on a form which God had never had. God never had a physical human body. He never had that and then about 2,000 years ago God was incarnated into human flesh. He was called Emmanuel, God with us. Then Jesus, as a human, died. Then God didn't say, "Well, I am going to abandon the human form and I am just going to be a spirit now in heaven." God said, "No, I'm making an eternal investment in humanity. I love them so much that I want to be like them! I want to be in their form and fashion. I want to be who they are and I want them to be what I am. So I have to have this place where I take humanity and I bring them into My Godly nature where they are eternal, loving, holy, righteous beings that share in My quality of life, the quality life of God the Father yet in human form. That is what Jesus then did in His resurrection.

Imagine Jesus, the Son, before the Incarnation. Here we find one of the persons of the Godhead, Jesus Christ, the Son, or we can just say, the Son of God, incarnated into human form. Imagine the anticipation of, "I am now going to be incarnated into this being and I will never, ever be in the exact same same form as I am in now. I am now going to have some form of physicality about Me, forever! I'm going to become like these humans. In becoming like that, I am going to lift them up to who and what I am yet they will be different." Jesus would say, "I now have a human body. I am now a God man." Look at the love of God towards humanity. Look at the care of God that He is not ashamed of people. He made an eternal investment and this is what I think verse one is saying: "Look at what Jesus has done!"

God has come and, in Christ, He has made an eternal investment in taking away the burden which was the Law. Remember Jesus said, "Come to Me all you who are overburdened with the practicalities of religion." In Afrikaans it says, "Come to Me all of you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you." Here we clearly see that he is writing to Christians here. He is now saying, "The yoke was put on Jesus. Now, that sin in the flesh and your sin, has been taken away by the power of Jesus, let us behold how the people of Old believed and, in the end, received and let us behold what God has started. Keep in mind that this is only the start. It is what God has started to do. If the start is Jesus conquered sin and death, if the start is that He ends the burden, if the start is that He ends separation between the Jews and Gentiles and brings forth one new man, what would the end not look like? He is the author and the finisher!"

Now listen to this. This is what I am really wanting to say.

:2 Looking at Jesus (the One who started this who in His mind doesn't start with the idea that His word would return void but that His message of eternal life and His message of having people blessed by His doing, that it shall succeed!

It goes on, **who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame** (making despising the shame, making nothing of the shame; He despised the shame. He actually said, "I make nothing of this cross! I make nothing of the pain I am going through. I make nothing of the ridicule and the disgrace of hanging naked on the cross, being seen as guilty... I make nothing of this compared to what I know this can bring forth."

He is saying, "Look at the people of Old. They believed and they did receive. But, now, greater than that, I want you to know now that you are at the place where this whole burden thing and sin thing is now something of the past, I now want you to continue in this because Jesus, who started this will finish this! Jesus didn't start this to finish this. He started this and the start of this meant the death on the cross which to Him was a small thing compared to what He knows will be in the end. What was this joy that was set before Jesus? This joy that was set before Jesus was US seated with God in heavenly places. That means that it was us sharing in the fullness of the quality of God's life having eternal life!

He is saying to the people of the Old, "Keep before your eyes the fact that God started something. In the Old we can see that He did fulfill His promises and what He has started, shall be fulfilled. Also keep in mind there was a joy before God that caused the Father to give His Son as well as for Jesus to actually despise the shame of the cross. It was like He was just looking at it saying, "I despise it! It means nothing to Me because the glory that is ahead, which is us sharing in the life of God!" The joy before Jesus was you and me having eternal life! That was the joy that was before Jesus and that is so great that He could endure the cross.

Paul is saying in the book of Hebrews is that if you can keep in mind that YOU make God happy, that the thought of you not dying but having eternal life, eternally being with Him, brings Him so much joy that He said it made Him endure the cross. Alleluia! Amen!

Let's read it again. 2 ***Looking unto Jesus*** (What must we look at? You might be going through a difficult time and you are saying, "God, I have seen victory in my life in the area of finances. I have seen victory in my life in the area of what others say about me but I don't see the victory in this or that area. I don't see victory in the area of depression. I don't see victory in certain areas of my life and I don't know what to do. What am I believing wrong? What am I doing wrong? I am still seeing the deadness of my flesh in my life.")

Abraham did not consider the deadness of his own body. Did he see it? Yes, but that was not what he considered. He considered the God who could raise the dead! This is what Paul is talking about here. The thing that God started, and this is what he is saying: "***Look unto Jesus the author of our faith...***

What is the Author of our faith? What do we believe? What is the first thing that He did as pertaining to our faith? He took a man, Jesus, made Him to partake of death. He was even made sin. He made Him partake of that and then raised Him up without sin, meaning, without the ability to die. He raised Him up without sin, without death. That is the Author of our faith. That is the one who started what we believe. What are we now believing? What are we persuaded of? We are persuaded that the very thing that God started in Jesus which is a resurrected, immortal human, above sin, above death that that is our destination. That very thing is what we shall attain through His doing. Now we see some of the fruit of the Spirit and sometimes we don't even see everything. As we are in this time, which might be a time of doubt, a time of not knowing what to do, consider the fact that Jesus didn't start something in the earth. Remember the starting of this thing wasn't a small thing. It was a very painful thing. It was a very humiliating thing and what He had in mind was so great that that humiliation and that pain was nothing to Him because there was a joy that was greater than that that was set before Him. So what is the chance that He will not finish this? He will finish this for there is a joy in the heart of God and that joy is you, your life preserved forever! Glory to God! He had such a plan in that. He had such a joy in that. that He eternally sealed Himself into a human body. His body today is not the same as our body. His body is glorified. It is co-physical but it is glorified which means that the life that He has in His body originates from God and not from His own ability but from God Himself.

I don't want to get technical in that but know that God comes and He encourages us in the writings of the Book of Hebrews. He's saying, "Listen. Behold what God has started. Behold the pain that He went through and know that it was for a joy that was set before Him that He went through this pain. What is the chance that He will not finish it? He has always finished it in the past. He makes His word manifest. His word will not return void to Him. We must keep in mind that Jesus, for the joy that was set before Him, which was our eternal life, He endured the cross and counted it as a little thing. He despised the shame that there was as nothing to Him because He knew what He would get.

What would keep you from going back to the Law? What would keep you from going back to the Law is knowing that the thought of you, eternally with God, makes God so happy that He thought it a small thing to go through the cross and the shame because He knew that He would have you forever. That would keep you from going back to the Law!

Let's read it again. We are now at the place where the first thing that God started which was ending sin and ending the burden. Since we are there, we are not going back to that and we are patiently going to continue to look for the manifestation of Christ. The way that we are going to stay in this patience and not go back to the Law is by looking at Jesus, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross. In other words, looking at Jesus who looked at us and the joy and the thought of we being with Him forever, we being blessed with His life, was so great that He endured the cross. The cross was tremendously painful and it was difficult for Him in human form and yet He endured it because He looked at the will of the Father and His will and the Father's will were united and the Bible says that He saw, "for the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross." That joy is you at the right hand of God in Christ! That joy is you having eternal life. The joy that there was in Jesus was the joy of Him living with you forever in a glorified earth and a new heaven and a new earth! Isn't that beautiful! That is the power of the Gospel, my friend!

We are going to confirm this through another well-known scripture.

John 3:

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:
Why?

15 That whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Now what was the reason why God gave His Son? The reason was that you would have eternal life. You will not die but live forever.

When I think of Helena, my children, people that are close to me, I don't want them to die. Why? Because I want them with me. For if they die, they will not be with me. I will only have the thought of them and they will not be there. I'm thinking of my mum who passed away not too long ago. The thought of her, the reality of not being here where I can talk to her, is terrible! With that in mind, I don't want my wife to die. I don't want my children to die. I want to live forever and I want them to live forever so that we can be with each other forever. I know that in my ability, even if I lay down my life for them, I cannot do that but God knows that it was within His ability to bring forth eternal life for us so that we would not partake in what Adam partook of.

Adam partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The result of that was, “Adam, by the sweat of your brow, you are now going to work and toil and it isn't even going to preserve you forever. You are going to work so hard and by your own works and heavy burden and labor, you are only going back to dust.” It was a terrible thing for God. Therefore God said, “I will have to incarnate that dust and bring life to it because I want man to be with Me forever.” The thought of you forever being with God, the thought of your presence in the presence of God, is what motivated the Father to give His Son. That very same thought was called the joy that was set before Jesus. Today, as we sit and put this joy before us and we behold what God has started in Jesus and how this will be finished, how He will bring forth the full manifestation of what He has accomplished, we will find no reason to go back to the Law.

I want to define the finished work of Jesus. As we say, “the finished work of Jesus”, especially to us in Grace circles, we need to know that we cannot say everything that God has dreamt has already happened. We cannot say that because that is not true. If we talk about the finished work, it means that which God had to do in order to bring forth salvation by faith to end sin in the flesh and end death. It's like what Nelson Mandela said when the apartheid fell. He would say, “Well, it is finished.” Yet we find that what was established there takes years to manifest in South Africa and it will still take maybe a hundred years or longer because something had to be finished. A new kingdom had to come and now that kingdom can infiltrate the nation. That is exactly what is meant by the finished work, what I mean by the finished work, what I think what Jesus said, “It is finished.”

When He said, “It is finished!”, He was talking about His life here as a man carrying a body that had sin in the flesh. He was not a sinner but He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. Then when He died He said, “It is finished!” and He died. Then He was raised. When He said that it was finished it does not mean that He was already raised. Some things still had to happen. That, “It is finished!” only pertained to the cross. Then He was raised. When He was seated at the right hand of the Father, He could have said, “Well, that is now finished. I have now conquered sin and death. It is now finished. I am sitting down. There is nothing for Me to do but what needs to take place now is His enemies, which is sin in your flesh, which is the fruit of the flesh in your life, which is even physical death in the lives of people, must still be made His footstool.” That happens through His spirit taking this truth to people. As they believe it, He manifests it in them. Glory to God!

Jesus went and sat down at the right hand of God, not to work. His work has been done. He's conquered death. He's conquered everything and His victory is now being manifested in the lives of people by the work of this Spirit of Christ that was raised from the dead, as we believe upon it. Alleluia! So I want to say this: God has come and He has a plan and let us not be distracted from the very Good News of the Resurrection.

I find that we have come to a place where we don't know where to put the Resurrection of Jesus because we have not seen the resurrection of the dead as in graves opening up and people being raised. Now we say, “It is not going to take place and things will just continue as always. There must be another logic to this.” I want to tell you that there is no other logic to this. We can see how the first work looked. Jesus was the first born from the dead and He is the first born among many brethren. He is not ashamed to call us brethren for by His doing through the Spirit, shall manifest the very same things in our life. We are the sons of God and what we are does not yet appear but it shall appear and we shall see that we are in the exact likeness of His resurrection. God is busy stopping sin to manifest in our lives. God is busy stopping the fruit of the flesh manifesting in our lives. That is His work. Under the Law, you resist sin. Under Grace, God resists sin. Amen!

So, Church, let us not become weary. Let us not come to a place where we get tired of believing in Jesus Christ. Let us not get to the place where we are saying, "Oh, my goodness! Let's get back to the Law." How are we going to continue to stay in Grace? We will continue to stay in Grace by knowing that inside the heart of God, you, living eternally, is of such a great joy to Him that the Father could give His Son and that the Son could endure the cross for their joy is you in their presence forever! To put it in simple words: God could not imagine a future without humans as His friends. He is so in love with humans that He became one and glorified that human so that He can have humans with Him forever. Alleluia!

You may say, "I don't know about this! This sounds like another Gospel! This thing about God becoming a human..." Hey, Church, what was the Resurrection all about? In Luke, Jesus came and said, "Touch Me!" A spirit does not have flesh and bone. What we behold in the resurrected Jesus and that Jesus, in glorified form, appeared to Paul. Paul likened the appearing of Jesus to the very same appearing as that which was when Jesus appeared to the disciples. He said, "He appeared to me and I was just born out of season." So he didn't say that Jesus had a different appearing or a different form than the very form that He had when He appeared to the disciples. That Jesus is the manifested Son of God and we, who believe in Him, are sons and we shall be manifested as immortal in the day of the Lord.

Let us not lose heart! He is busy working with us. He will finish good thing that He has started. He is the Author and the Finisher of what we are persuaded of. He started this thing that we are believing in a resurrected body. He started this thing that we are believing and conquering death. He started it by being raised from the dead so He shall finish it in our life. And all we can do is open ourselves up to say, "Lord, we present our bodies a living sacrifice to you. As we are alive, we make this body available for Your working in it. We are not going to interfere with Your working by going back to the Law. Keeping, in front of our eyes, the joy that God had in His heart when He gave His Son, keeping the joy that Jesus had in His heart which is us with Him, forever, will keep us from falling back to the Law and will encourage us on a daily basis. Glory to God!

It is a blessing for me to minister this to you and I trust that it greatly blessed you. Let me pray for you.

Father, I want to thank You that I can just pray for people today. Thank You that Your love is toward humanity. You love us. You sealed Yourself into us. You sealed a human into the Godhead which is the truth about us. Lord, we are seeing Your joy that You had in Your heart before You went to the cross that caused You to endure the cross and where you just said, "The shame of the cross was just a little thing because what makes Me happy is people are not dying but living forever. I being with them and they being with Me forever!" Father, thank You for that and thank You that that encourages people all the time.