

Cornerstone Church

October 23, 2016

**Sermon Series: Practicing Our Readiness Drills for
Christ's Return - Seeking God's Guidance from 1st and
2nd Peter**

Today's Sermon: Loving the Invisible Jesus

Today's Passages: 1 Peter 1:8-9

[8] Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, [9] obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. (1 Peter 1:8-9 ESV)

Introduction

Main point: Our passionate love for Jesus outweighs any hardship we may experience for following Him and our love relationship with Jesus witnesses to and results in our eternal salvation.

Review:

(1 Peter 1:3-7 ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- While being harried and confused, persecuted Christians often wonder if 1) it is worth it all, and 2) if God has abandoned them. Peter reminds these believers that is not the case.

- Confused by their trials, persecuted Christians need to be reminded that God uses them to refine their faith which when purified will result in their praise and honor given them by our Lord Jesus.
- That praise, honor and glory matter only if Jesus matters, so persecuted Christians need to be reminded of how much they love their Lord and value His praise.

Exegeting Today's Passage:

1. The scattered and persecuted Christians did not have the luxury of seeing and touching and talking with the earthly Jesus. That may be considered a hindrance to faith. **Though you have not seen him,**
 - **(John 20:24-25 ESV) Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe." (John 20:24-25 ESV)**
 - **(John 20:26-29 ESV) Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."**
 - **(Hebrews 11:6 ESV) And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must**

believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

2. Despite this lack of visual evidence, the Christians in the Diaspora placed their faith in the risen Lord. The faith they placed was also known as love for their Savior. **you love him.**

- True faith is characterized by a) a knowledge of the gospel, then b) a glad acceptance of the gospel, and then c) a heartfelt gratitude of the gospel.
- That heartfelt gratitude results in a growing love for Jesus because:
 - The more we understand the depravity of our sin the more we appreciate the mercy and grace and willingness of our redeemer to pay the enormous price we owed and,
 - The more we understand our fierce rebellion against His authority and our unwillingness to submit to His will, the more we appreciate that he did not turn His back on us, but saved us anyway. **(2 Timothy 1:9 ESV) who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, and, (Titus 3:3-7 ESV) For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.**
 - This love is all about our will and our emotions, but emotions move the will. This love is deeper than our love for even our family. **(Matthew 10:37 ESV) Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me,**

and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

- The prostitute and the Pharisee in Luke 7:36-50
- Genuine faith/love like this reflects genuine salvation - **Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, [9] obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.** Paul says that if we don't love Jesus like this we are not truly saved. **(1 Corinthians 16:22 ESV) If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed. Our Lord, come!**
- Since Jesus is our joy, and we become like that which we find joy in, then the greater the joy, the greater the transformation, which increases our joy in Jesus which . . .
- But how can we, like the Christians of the Diaspora, love Him without seeing Him? Didn't the Apostles have a strategic advantage over us by handling and seeing the earthly Jesus?
 - Seeing Him apart from the awakening power of the Spirit is no advantage. The Pharisees saw Jesus in the flesh but could not truly see His divinity. That is why Jesus addressed this condition called blaspheming the Holy Spirit. Mistaking Jesus' earthly form for just being human is forgivable but not listening to or telling the Holy Spirit when He whispers to a persons' inner conscience is blasphemy. See Matthew 12:22-32
 - Plus the witnesses to the earthly Jesus saw only pieces or glimpses of His whole being. We have the gospels to see all of Him in all His glory.