

**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
Watertown, WI**

**“Fix Your Eyes on Jesus”**

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*“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame” (Hebrews 12:2).*

Do you ever secretly speculate about why God chose to save you? Is it because you're generally kind and considerate to everyone you meet? Or maybe you are not kind, but you like to think you make up for it with hard work. Maybe God saw that in you. Or maybe it's because you're humble, humble enough to see that you need God's forgiveness, and so you chose Him while others have rejected him. That's why he saved you. Or maybe it's because God knew you would be useful; He knew you would pull your own weight in the church and would be generous with your time, money, and skills. Maybe that's why God saved you.

If we're honest, I think all of us have entertained thoughts like these. We don't speak them aloud, and we try to squash them, but they come back to visit. Honestly, I think it's probably the devil planting his foul seeds of self-righteousness in our hearts, for if we believe **we** are somehow responsible for our salvation, then the devil has us right where he wants us.

But the message of Scripture, the message of the Reformation is that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

Christ alone. We do not approach Christ with a divided heart. To Jesus alone be the glory. It's all him. You and I had nothing to do with it. If an individual is saved, it is by Christ alone. There can be no patchwork here. Christ did it all. So long as you cling to your works or your humility or your kindness or your generosity or to any other hope, you risk exchanging Jesus for a lie, and your salvation teeters in the balance. Friends, we are saved by Christ alone, or we are not saved at all. His share of the credit for our salvation is not 50% or 90% or 99%. We are saved by Christ alone, 100%, so let us fix our eyes on Jesus.

I've used this illustration before, but I think it's worth repeating. What I'm going to try to do is balance this broom on one finger.

Now I'm going to try to do the same thing while looking down. Clearly, that doesn't work. I can only balance this broom by fixing my eyes on it.

Our text says, “Let us fix our eyes on Jesus.” Don't focus on yourself, your own kindness or humility or good works. For salvation, fix your eyes only on Jesus. That's why Paul wrote, “I resolved to know nothing . . . except Jesus Christ and him crucified” (1 Cor. 2:2).

“But I don't have strong faith”, you might say. Don't worry about your faith. Fix your eyes on Jesus, because we are saved by Him alone.

“But I have many doubts.” Don't fixate on your doubts. Fix your eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of your faith (Heb. 12:2). Besides, everyone has doubts. Wherever there is faith there will be doubts.

“But I'm not sure I really love God with all my heart, and with all my soul and with all my strength.” You probably don't. Remember, as soon as you look to yourself, the broom comes

down. So, stop thinking about yourself and your love for God and fix your eyes on Jesus and His love for you. "This is love" wrote John. "Not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 Jn. 4:10).

"But I'm not good enough!" Who of us is? "For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Beggars know that the more tattered their clothing, the better the results. It is the same with respect to the Gospel. Don't put on any airs before God; he sees right through them. Come just as you are to this altar, a poor, miserable sinner, so he can wash you clean with his blood and clothe you with his righteousness.

"But I don't feel like I fit in here. I don't look like everybody else here or think like they do or enjoy the same kind of things they do." The Gospel is blind to all that. "Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all." We are a community centered on Christ. Community is not homogeneity, where we are all the same. In the church, community is made up of people who may not have anything else in common but the Lord Jesus Christ and that's quite enough.

"But I don't even like some of the things Jesus said." Get over it. Neither do I. "But while we were still enemies of God, Christ died for us."

"But I still feel so guilty and ashamed." You don't need to, for "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1).

"But my life is a wreck." Join the club. Because of sin, we're all dysfunctional. But Paul wrote, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me."

Fix your eyes on Jesus, because "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1).

Fix your eyes on Jesus, because Luther wasn't crucified for you, nor were your grandparents. Jesus died for you.

Fix your eyes on Jesus, not on the angels or your ancestors or the saints, because "there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:5-6).

Fix your eyes, and ears on Jesus, because the Father said, "This is my Son. Listen to him!"

Fix your eyes on Jesus because "in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form" (Col. 2:9). That is, if you know Jesus, you know the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Fix your eyes on Jesus because "salvation is found in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Fix your eyes on Jesus, because it's all about Jesus. Amen.