

Who are you staring at?

Ponder: When is it OK to stare?

Scripture: “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 has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:2, NKJV).

I was taught from childhood that it’s rude to stare at someone. I don’t like being stared at! But there is one case where it’s OK to stare.

In Hebrews 12:2, the writer used a term for “looking” that is found nowhere else in the New Testament. It connotes shifting your gaze away from one thing and fixing it on something else. The world, with its glamour and glitz, has much with which to distract us. Think of America’s obsession with a dozen different sports. Then there is the incessant striving for more and more money. And who can deny that we are preoccupied with entertainment and amusement? It’s far too easy to focus our eyes on these passing pleasures instead of concentrating on eternal, spiritual issues.

In the previous verse, the Hebrews writer exhorted: “let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us” (12:1). Indeed, we must stop staring at the distractions of the world, shifting our gaze instead to Jesus. It’s OK to stare at Him! He is, after all, the author and finisher of our faith. We are Christians, and Christianity was His idea. It is He who went to the cross for us, enduring the suffering and indignity that we deserve. And it is He who sits at the right hand of the throne of God, reigning over His kingdom.

Our life in Christ is not a short sprint, but a long-distance marathon. We must not become sidetracked by the attractions of the world. Focus on the finish line! Jesus is there waiting for us.

Who are you staring at?

Song: “Looking to Thee”

Prayer: Mighty Father, please forgive us for being distracted by worldly pleasures. Your blessed Son Jesus is worthy of our full attention, and we pray that You will help us to fix our gaze upon Him and keep it there. In His name, Amen.