



GIG260 – Look Up

Welcome to this podcast, and thank you for joining us today at *Growing In God* with Hargrave Ministries. You can find us on our website at www.hargraveministries.org. Please go there and find our blogs, our study guides; you can also play these podcasts, and there are many other very interesting pieces of material and things for you to study about Hargrave Ministries and what we do. But I appreciate you being here today as part of this podcast.

I want to talk about something that came out of a phone call today with the members of our editing team, both for the blogs as well as the podcasts, and those working with us in the material that God is giving. We were just talking about the things that are transpiring in this day that we are walking in, and some of the feelings people are having. I think everybody agrees that there seems to be a lot of turmoil, a lot of spiritual conflict that is taking place around us now; and as believers, it is important for us to know how to walk with God during these days of the end time. We are in a very different time. You have to find a way to have the Scriptures apply, and to apply the Scriptures in the age that you are walking in. This is where the Lord has placed us. We should be grateful for Him having us be part of His family and part of those who are walking in the knowledge of the Gospel during these times.

However, I know that there are a lot of people who are concerned, even fearful, about this idea of the end times and what it is to be walking during these days. One thing I think we should do is think about the end time as providing an atmosphere for us as believers in Yeshua. Now that may sound a little unique or different from what other people are talking about with these days we are in, but really, it is an atmosphere. I think it is an atmosphere for us as believers, as Christians, to turn what we have learned about and learned in the Scriptures from just a knowledge and an understanding into an enabling to walk and to execute what we have learned. At some point, it really comes down to our walk with the Lord.

The Scriptures talk about the fact that we should walk in the Spirit and not after the flesh. We should be able to put what we know into practice. And many times it takes an atmosphere to be able to do that. You can study snow skiing and snowboarding all you want to, but at some point, two things have to happen: one is that you have to put on some skis, you have to get a snowboard; and another very necessary element is that you have to have snow. You have to go to a place where it is snowing. There also has to be an incline, there has to be a hill for you to work with. So, many times we need the atmosphere. We cannot just study the Scriptures, we cannot just talk about our faith, and have that faith be disconnected from what is necessary for us to walk in these things.

The disciples found that out, and they were proven. I remember the conversation between Christ and Peter, I was reading it again this morning, where Christ is telling the disciples what He is going to experience and what He is going to go through. Peter, of course, comes and he tries to correct the Lord and says, "Oh Lord, You can't do that! You shouldn't be talking about this." So all of a sudden he is in an atmosphere where his faith, Peter's faith, is really being tested. Christ turns to him and says, "Get behind Me, satan, you are not focused on and considering the things of God. You are not focused on the

will of God.” This brought out things in Peter’s spirit that had not been shown before, all surrounding this atmosphere of the cross, of the suffering that Christ was going to go through. And Christ Himself says to Peter, “Hey, Satan has desired to sift you like wheat; and when you break through this successfully, then you help your brothers and sisters at the same time to win this battle that you are now going through.”

We do not always have the same atmosphere. It is easy to study the Scriptures at home or in a nice study group, one thing or another. But it is different to go to some place that is a war zone and to implement what you have read and learned about the Gospel, about a walk with God, in the atmosphere where it is demanding something of us personally. And that is what I am concerned about with this podcast today, that we really see ourselves as being in a place. If these are the end times, then they offer for us a very special opportunity, an opportunity that other saints through other generations have not had. We have an opportunity to have our faith tested, which again, the Scriptures say that the testing of our faith is worth gold. It refines us as pure gold, and we should want this and delight in it, even though suffering is not always fun, and persecution is not always fun, and spiritual battle is not always fun. It depends on how we are focused upon these events and what we are looking for. We want to serve the Lord, and we want our spirits to be refined and perfected to be standing before Him and be pleasing to Him. That is what Christ looked for when He went to the cross, was to please the Father, and to do that through His obedience; and so we do also in this opportunity that we have, being here in the earth at this time to experience the things we will experience as servants of the Lord.

I want to look at Luke the twenty-first chapter, and I will start reading at verses 25-28. This is Christ talking to the disciples about these things of the end time.

“There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these things begin to take place....”

I know it is great to read the ending of the story, “The Son of Man comes in the clouds with power and great glory.” But Christ backs it up a little bit and says, “When you see these things begin to take place.” In other words, go back to the beginning of what transpires during these times we call the last days, or the end time, when difficult things are going to be taking place. Men’s hearts are going to be failing them for fear and expectation of what will take place in the world, and we are experiencing that even now.

Christ goes on and says in verse 28, “But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” So again, He is telling us there is an attitude we should have, and to recognize the opportunity that we as individual believers have to walk in these days in a way to glorify the Lord, in a way to bring God’s strength and blessing, to appropriate all that we need. You know, when you are in a time of need, you learn to appropriate all that the Scripture is saying we have available to us in His power, in His enabling, through the Holy Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit, all that is available; He has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness. And many times, it takes an atmosphere for us to be really in need of appropriating what God has available for us in the Spirit, what there is available through resurrection.

Remember, Christ did not just go to the cross, Christ was resurrected from the dead, and that was a release of great power; and there was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, with

the enabling of gifts and ministries that we have. But many times, if the moment is not requiring it, we tend to have a passivity about how we are approaching God and the things of God. Yet, I don't know, we seem to live in a day that is bringing about a different atmosphere for us, and now we have to reach in. We have to be able to move in the power of the Holy Spirit to speak words of power, to move in gifts and ministries that are sufficient for this day. They are not going to be just enablings from our flesh or our human abilities, these are going to be things that we have to draw from God by the Spirit; and we really are in an opportunity to do that. So Christ says, "Look, straighten up and lift up your head, because your redemption draws nigh." There is a redemption that we are looking for. We are looking to be able to walk in these things through the persecution, through what is being done in what is happening in the world. We should find a redemption and we should be able to minister that redemption in this time.

He goes on in verses 29-31 to tell the parable. "'Behold, a fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they put forth leaves, you see it and know for yourself that summer is now near. So you also, when you see these things happening, recognize that the kingdom of God is near.'" Now to me, I take that as a very positive thing. I want to be in His Kingdom. I want to live in His Kingdom. And we have that ability. That is what Christ is talking to us about: "Lift up your head. Look up, look up." The Kingdom of God is near to us, and we can bring ourselves into that Kingdom. We can experience the things of the Kingdom, the fulfillments of the Kingdom now, if we are looking up. But we cannot be looking down, and distracted, and in fear of where we are and all the things that are taking place; we have to be able to look up. And that is the generation that we are finding ourselves in.

I want to go to the Scripture in Ephesians the second chapter, and I will start with verses 1-6. It says, "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world." See, we were in this world, we were part of this world, and we were experiencing the things that the world goes through. It says, "According to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience." So there is this great spirit that is working around us in the atmosphere of the world today, and we should be extremely aware of it. If you are not, go turn on the news and see what is going on. It says,

Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

I think this is what Christ was referring to back here in the Scriptures in Luke when He was saying, "Look up, because your redemption draws nigh." He was saying that when it comes to these days of the end, when all these things are beginning to transpire, we need to remember where He is – He is in the heavenly places. But He has also raised us up. This is Ephesians 2, verse 6. Memorize it: "And He raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places." Christ, when He ascended, went to the Father and was seated at His right hand; but also, He made the provision for us to be raised up with Him. This is part of what it is talking about when it talks about the power of the resurrection. When we talk about the resurrection life, part of our resurrection life, by definition, means to be with Him where He is; and according to the Scripture, He raised us up and seated us with Him in the heavenly places. This is talking about the Father, who in His great love has made this provision. He has raised us up and seated us with Him.

Now see, this is something we can read about, and that is what I was talking about at the beginning of this podcast. We can read about and we can talk about all the wonderful things that are available to us through our salvation, through the Scriptures and our walk with the Lord. But when we get into this atmosphere of the time of the end, and all of these dramatic things are beginning to take place to the extent that men's hearts are failing them with fear, then there is this drive that goes, "Boy, I need to be with Him." That is what Christ said: "When you see these things beginning to happen, look up." Why look up? Because that is where He is. Put your focus on where Christ is, because not only is Christ there, but the Father in His great love has seated us with Him.

You say, "I don't feel like I am seated with Him." Well, you have to appropriate the things of God. If this is available, if God made this available that He has raised us up, then it is past tense. Do not say, "Well, when I die, I am going to heaven." No. When we are here right now, we have the ability to rise up and to be with Him where He is at the right hand of the Father, and to move in our walk with God from that place. That is what the Word of God is talking about when it says, "Walk by the Spirit." We are to be in the Spirit in the heavenly places with Christ and we are to walk with God from that position, and then minister to the earth.

Christ was always in the Presence of the Father, and He was ministering to us from what He heard the Father speak, what He saw the Father do. How could he see the Father do it? Because He was with the Father, even at that time. And so we are able to be with Christ, seated with Him, with the Father, in the Holy Spirit, and to be moving on the earth as God's chosen people and instruments right now in this day and age to walk through this time of the end. Why? Because as He said, "The Kingdom of God is near." Remember verse 31, when we were reading back in Luke 21: "So you also, when you see these things happening, recognize the kingdom of God is near." It gets nearer and nearer, that space between the spirit world where it exists and this age of the natural world that we seem to be in; they get closer and closer together until the two become one. Because truly there will not be multiple worlds, there will be one world; it is coming nearer and nearer, and we are able now to dwell in the Kingdom. It is closer today than it has ever been, and we have been seated with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

So, all of these things are open for us. And again, I just want to encourage us, because the time of the end can seem to swallow you up in spiritual warfare and battle. Just looking at the world around you, as Christ said, your heart can fail you for fear. But somehow you have to find the way to look up. We have to look again at the Scriptures we have read before. We have to look again at the things we have learned about the gifts of the Spirit, about the infilling of the Holy Spirit, about our basic salvation and all that has been provided for us in God, and we have to reach in and appropriate it now. We can begin by looking up to where He is and saying, "Where You are, Lord, I will now be with You also, and appropriate Your seat in the heavenly places."

I bless you. I hope that this is a help to you in your walk in the Spirit today.

Amen.