

# First Day of the First Month 2 of 2

#0596

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—January 8, 1982

Wonderful Lord.

Now, this evening will you turn with me to Luke the 21<sup>st</sup> chapter beginning with the 25<sup>th</sup> verse? You remember in our opening vesper service for the new year last Friday night, we studied God's plan for making this the greatest year of success and victory. And we found that it's all in looking to Jesus.

We studied last Friday night looking to Jesus for three great purposes. What was the first? Acceptance.

"And ye are complete in him..." Colossians 2:10.

"...He hath made us accepted in the beloved"  
Ephesians 1:6.

All right. What was the second thing we look to Jesus for? Power, strength to meet temptation, to overcome the sin, to do the work of God.

Number three, what did we find? Guidance. Our plans are to be laid at His feet to be carried out or laid aside as His providence shall indicate [a paraphrase of *Steps to Christ*, page 70].

So, accepted in Him, empowered by Him, guided with His Spirit, we'll have a happy new year, right?

Now, this evening we're going to look at another application of this wonderful, wonderful privilege of looking to Jesus.

Jesus told His disciples on the Mount of Olives:

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon,  
and in the stars; and upon the earth..." Luke 21:25.

What? Have you seen any of it or heard any of it?

"...distress of nations, with perplexity..." Luke 21:25.

Now, that word that's translated "perplexity" has in it the thought of like an animal caught where he can't get out, can't get away. He just runs here and there trying to get out and no way out, no way out.

“...Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men’s hearts...” Luke 21:25–26.

Doing what?

“...failing them...” Luke 21:26.

There are other things besides cholesterol that make heart attacks, aren’t there? Yes. The cholesterol and this problem work right together. The Devil has quite a team to make heart attacks. Cholesterol’s part of it; nicotine’s another one of the devils that work on that. But here is a root cause:

“...Men’s hearts failing them for...” Luke 21:26.

What?

“...for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth...” Luke 21:26.

Tell me, was there ever a generation that had the means so readily at hand to look at so much trouble? You can actually see it; it’s right there if you want to. But it produces what? Heart failure.

Now, I know Jesus is speaking here, especially of the mental and spiritual side, but it works on the physical as well. It all works together. My point is, Jesus puts His finger on this generation as the one that’s about to see something. What is it?

“...The powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory” Luke 21:26–27.

Oh, what a glorious message of hope we have to present to a distraught world. And now, notice in the next verse how Christ tells us where to look:

“And when these things begin to come to pass...”  
Luke 21:28.

Have they begun to come to pass? They’re all around us.

“...then...” Luke 21:28.

What are the next two words?

“...look up...” Luke 21:28.

Do you know which way “up” is? Well, it isn’t this way, friends. And it isn’t that way or that way. It’s this way.

“And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh” Luke 21:28.

Oh, I hope everybody here tonight will have the joy of looking up. Not after the trouble is all over, but while the troubles are all around us. In the midst of trouble, we’re to sing the battle song:

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” Psalm 46:1.

God’s remnant is going to learn that song so thoroughly in experience that they’ll sing it through the greatest time of trouble that the church has ever gone through, the time of Jacob’s trouble. And not one will wilt or fail in that crisis hour. They’ve learned it.

Tonight I want to ask you, what do we see when we look up? In this hour when all around us is troubled, and fear and perplexity, distress of nations, worries of all kinds, what do we see if we look up? We see through that open door of the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary a Man who is our Brother, who is the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Wonderful:

“...His name shall be called Wonderful...” Isaiah 9:6.

That’s what we see. And that’s where we look to see Him, friends. He’s not in Jerusalem anymore, nor Nazareth, nor Bethany. He’s there. He’s there in the temple of God in heaven.

Have you seen Him? Are you looking there constantly? That’s our privilege, that’s our destiny, that’s our great opportunity now, to look there and cause other people to look.

You know something? You can go right down here on the street in Chattanooga and look at something up in the sky, a balloon or something that other people were missing. What do you suppose pretty soon a number of other passersby would do? They’d stop and they’d either start to look where you’re looking or ask you. Pretty soon, there’d be a number looking there.

Ah friends, this is the picture of the remnant church, looking not at the trouble around us but at the solution above us; looking not at the hopeless conditions that breed hopelessness, but looking where there are light and blessing, answers to questions, solutions to problems. Have you found it there?

Don’t you think these three things we studied last Friday night are wonderful? Looking to Jesus, we find acceptance, we’re:

“...accepted in the beloved” Ephesians 1:6.

Looking to Jesus, we find strength.

“But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” 1 Corinthians 15:57.

And looking to Jesus, we find guidance.

“I will instruct thee and teach thee...” Psalm 32:8.

Tonight I want to study with you another great blessing that we find by looking to Jesus. It's the blessing of protection, the blessing of protection.

Now, I need protection. Do you? People don't always treat me the way they ought to. I've been abused again and again. I've been lied about. Sometimes what hurts worse is to have the truth told about me.

But through all these experiences of being talked about, and abused, and mistreated, and not appreciated, Jesus has made all those things work together for my good.

I'm not just preaching a sermon. I'm telling you from my heart, dear friends. I wouldn't have missed it for anything in this world. I've been watching it now for many years and decades, and I know:

“...That all things work together for good to them that love God...” Romans 8:28.

And in my poor, weak way, I do love Him. I do love Him.

You see, too many people have the idea that if a man is a Christian, he ought to have an easy time. Well, that's like saying if a man's a soldier in the United States Army and war's going on, he ought to have an easy time. Soldiers don't have an easy time in wartime, do they? They're out on the battlefield. They get shot at.

Anybody here ever been a soldier? Let me see your hands. Yes. You know what I mean? A soldier who enlists is not expecting an easy time.

And in God's army, there are none drafted. All are volunteers. In fact, it's even a step further. You can leave any time you want to. What an army! What an army! How in the world would an army like that ever fight a battle?

That's the army that's going to *win* at Armageddon, my friends, all volunteers. All could leave any time they want to, but they wouldn't leave for all the money in the world. And they're not going to be scared out by all the force and fear in this world. Not scared a bit. They love Jesus. Love is a mighty conqueror, a mighty conqueror.

Yes, my Lord is taking care of me. He's taking care of you if you let Him. He's taking care of you.

The psalmist sings:

“Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee: the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain” Psalms 76:10.

You know, God’s taking care of His church. He’s taking care of His prophet. He’s taking care of the gifts of the Spirit. We don’t have to worry about that.

I read an interesting statement some time ago. It’s been coming to my mind again and again in recent days. You’ll find it in *Volume 5*, page 453. It runs like this, listen:

“God means that testing truth shall be brought to the front, and become a subject of examination and discussion, even if it is through the contempt placed upon it” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 453.

Isn’t that wonderful? Somebody was telling me about an article in a national news magazine about the shaking that Sister White predicted. Well, thank the Lord. You know, there’ll be at least a few people who want to get that book and read it. I would if I’d never read it.

But thank God, friends, by means of the reproach and contempt heaped upon the church, or upon the Spirit of Prophecy, upon any phase of God’s truth, thousands, millions, may be led to examine it and find the real pearl of great price.

But God is interested not just in masses of His people. He’s interested in me and in you. He would send every angel out of heaven rather than suffer me to be overcome. He’s looking after me.

Do you remember what Jesus told His followers in the Sermon on the Mount?

“But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek...” Matthew 5:39.

Do what?

“...turn to him the other also” Matthew 5:39.

My, my. Then He went further and said to do what with our enemies? Roast them? What did He say? Love them.

“But I say unto you, Love your enemies...” Matthew 5:44.

Did He set the example? What did He pray on the cross?

“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” Luke 23:34.

Do you know who the hardest people to forgive are? Your brethren. It’s easier to forgive the cannibals or the heathen. The hardest people to forgive are your brethren.

Did Jesus forgive Peter, who denied Him? Was He mean to Judas, who betrayed Him? And to us, He says:

“For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you” John 13:15.

“By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another” John 13:35.

But we will never, never, never be able to reproduce the life of Jesus by our human works, just trying to imitate Him. We’re like that beautiful moon that I saw as I came in tonight.

How many of you saw the beautiful moon? Isn’t that lovely? Don’t you wish you could shine like that? Well, you can if you’ll just look at the sun. That’s all it takes. The moon doesn’t have one spark of light of its own. It’s just as dark as a lump of coal by itself. But oh, it keeps looking at the sun, looking at the sun, looking at the sun, and so it reflects back the light of the sun.

Who is our Sun? Jesus. The Bible calls Him the Sun of righteousness (Malachi 4:2). He’s the Light of the world (John 8:12). And you and I as little moons, if we’ll look at *Him* instead of ourselves, we’ll reflect that love.

I got a letter from a man not long ago.

He said, “Brother Frazee, there are some things I don’t understand.”

Well, when I write him, I’m going to tell him there are a lot of things I don’t understand, too. But oh, one of the things he doesn’t understand is what his enemies do to him.

Jesus says:

“...What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter” John 13:7.

Can a man who has been mistreated, abused, lied about, can he find peace in his own heart, and can he find love toward those who have mistreated and abused him? Can he? Yes, he can, provided he’ll look where Jesus is. If he looks to himself, he won’t find it. If he looks to his enemies, he won’t find it. The more he dwells on himself, the sorrier he’ll feel for himself. The more he looks at his enemies, the madder and more irritated he’ll be. It just works that way, doesn’t it?

But if he’ll look at Jesus, there he’ll find somebody that’s real love, real love.

You know, more than once, as I’ve met people who are having problems of this kind, I’ve tried to lead them to this question, “Who was treated worse, you or Jesus?”

What do you think? Do you think Jesus was treated worse than anybody else has been treated? Then, if Jesus could be loving and kind and forgiving toward those who mistreated Him if you and I will look to Him and reflect that kind of love, we can be loving to those who treat us wrong, can't we?

There's something very interesting about this matter of mistreatment. Usually when we're going through it, we imagine that we have an unusual experience. The truth of the matter is, it's quite common, dear friends, quite common. Isn't it?

I want to see the hand of anybody—listen carefully to what I'm saying—I want to see the hand of the man or the woman here tonight who has never been misunderstood. May I see your hand? Guess there isn't any. Well then, everybody's in the same boat; only some are deeper in the boat. That's all.

But now, I wonder who it was that misunderstood you. Anybody here? Could be. In other words, we're not only on the receiving side of this thing; we're on the giving side. That should humble us, shouldn't it? That should make us realize that we need to forgive, not only because Jesus forgave us, but we might need to be what? Forgiven. Did Jesus tell us to pray something about that in the Lord's prayer? Let's pray the Lord's prayer together:

“...Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in  
heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us  
our debts, as we forgive our debtors” Matthew 6:9–12.

Let's stop there a minute. Forgive us our what? Our debts. He's not talking about our money debts. He's talking about what we're studying tonight. And we pray to be forgiven as we what? Forgive.

As it's put in another place:

“Forgive us our trespasses for we also forgive those who  
trespass against us” Matthew 6:12 (unknown version).

Turn to Ephesians the fourth chapter, please. Oh, I want everybody here tonight to be free and happy in the Lord. I want you to have a happy new year. And you can. But you can't if you cherish an unforgiving spirit. You can't if you wait until everybody treats you nice. It's going to be that way in heaven. Some people would like to get there right now because they want everybody to treat them nice. But the place—don't miss it—the place to learn this lesson is in the world where everybody *doesn't* treat you nice.

You say, “Well, I'm in a good place, then.”

All right. Ephesians the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter and the last verse, 32<sup>nd</sup> verse, you all have it? Let's read it together:

“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” Ephesians 4:32.

Why are you to forgive others? Not because they’re nice to you and say, “Oh, I’m so sorry that I misunderstood you. I’m so sorry that I said that about you.”

That’s not the reason for forgiving. The reason for forgiving them is because God has done what? Forgiven *you*. For whose sake? For Christ’s sake. Not for your sake. Don’t forgive people because *they* do this or that or the other thing. Do it for Christ’s sake.

There’s a wonderful lesson on this in the little book of Philemon. Take a look at it over here, just before you come to Hebrews.

Philemon was one of Paul’s converts. And Paul wrote him a letter from his dungeon in Rome, and sent it by the hand of a man whose name was Onesimus. Have you heard about Onesimus? Know who he was? He was a runaway slave. Do you know whose slave he was? Philemon’s.

Now, in those days, slaves had a hard time unless they had a good master. And if they ran away, then they might really have a hard time if they were recovered. But here was the thing. Onesimus had run away, and there in Rome, Paul had somehow gotten in contact with him even though he was in jail and had won this man’s soul to Christ. And what did Paul do? He sent him back to his master.

“Oh, do I have to do that?”

“Yes.”

I think before he got through with him, Paul helped him to see that that was the thing to do. And I don’t know whether Paul let him read this letter or not. If he did, I don’t think he’d mind going back.

You know what Paul wrote to Philemon? He said, “Philemon, I want to ask you a favor. I want you to receive this man Onesimus as you would receive me. And if there’s anything he owes you, put it on my account, and I’m writing it with my own hand, I’ll repay it” [a paraphrase of Philemon 1:17–19].

Don’t know just where Paul thought he’d get it in jail to pay it, but right away he put in the next verse, and I think it’s interesting, Philemon verses 17–19:

“If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account; I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it...” Philemon 1:17–19.

Now, notice this nice little thing after:



“...albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides” Philemon 1:19.

“I’ll pay it,” Paul says, “anything he owes you. But remember, Philemon, you owe me your whole self; you owe me your whole life.”

How was that? He was Paul’s convert.

I think Onesimus got along all right, don’t you?

Now, listen, why do you suppose that’s in the Bible? Onesimus and Philemon and Paul, they’re all dead these centuries. But Jesus is saying to *you*, my friends, concerning anybody that has wronged you, or that you think has wronged you, Jesus is saying to you, “Receive that man, that woman, that boy, that girl that has wronged you, receive him,” Jesus says, “as Myself.”

And Christ is saying to you, “I’ll repay it, I’ll repay it.”

And then, Christ gently adds, “Remember, you owe Me something yourself. Put it on the account.”

Oh, how will it balance up? How does what somebody that’s mistreated or abused or damaged us, how does what they’ve done measure up to the damage and hurt and pain and sorrow that we’ve brought to Jesus, friends? Which do you think owes the most, the one that’s wronged us, or what we owe the Lord? You’d all agree we owe the Lord more.

Jesus says, “Put it on My account.”

Let’s do it, friends, and leave it with Him. Oh, so many people are so anxious to take care of themselves, avenge themselves that they don’t leave God much room to work in.

I was reading in a book I have up in my library about a man who, through an accident, had a hole in his stomach. And this scientist got hold of him, and they used him as a kind of a guinea pig to study with, you understand. They’d give him various things to eat. And then, they’d look in through that hole outside of his abdomen. They could examine and photograph the inside of the stomach through that little hole.

Well, I won’t tell you all about it tonight, but I’ll tell you this. They found out that when that man had periods of resentment or anger that it affected the way the lining of his stomach worked and looked. And he actually got an ulcer once through a period of resentment. Yes. That’s the photographic evidence, and if you doubt it, I’ll let you take a look at it, if you don’t believe me. I’ve got the picture.

Oh friends, you know the world has an expression, “I wonder what’s eating on you anyway.”

Well, that's the point. It is eating on you. If somebody's done something to you, real or imaginary, and you just let that eat on you, it *will* eat on you. Why not give it to Jesus? Why not turn from looking to what others do and look to what Jesus has done for you? It's better scenery, friends. It'll have a better effect on digestion, circulation, everything in your life.

"Ah, but you don't know what he did to me."

No, and I don't even need to. I know that Jesus has suffered far more for you than you've ever suffered through anybody's mistreatment or abuse.

Do you know why Jesus could take it? Would you like to know the secret? I'll read it to you in this little book *Mount of Blessing*, page 71:

"The Father's presence encircled Christ..." *Mount of Blessing*, page 71.

What does "encircled" mean? Clear round. As Psalm 34:7 says:

"The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them" Psalms 34:7.

Do you remember that morning that Elisha woke up, and his servant looked out and said, "Oh, my master, what are we going to do anyway?"

There was a heathen army clear around that city to try to catch one man. Who was the one man? The prophet. The prophet wasn't worried, friend. The prophet's not worried today. But the servant was worried, and some servants are worried today. But what did Elisha pray?

"Lord, open the young man's eyes" [a paraphrase of 2 Kings 6:17].

And what did he see? The mountain was full of chariots of fire and horses of fire round about Elisha. What were those chariots? The 68<sup>th</sup> Psalm says:

"The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them..."  
Psalm 68:17.

So, there were thousands of angels guarding the prophet of God. God will take care of His prophet, all right. And God took care of His Son, Jesus, too.

You say, "Why did He get hurt then?"

I'll tell you why. I'm going to read it.

"The Father's presence encircled Christ, and nothing befell Him but that which infinite love permitted for the blessing of the world. Here was His source of comfort, and it is for us" *Mount of Blessing*, page 71.

He knew that His Father wouldn't let one single hand strike Him unless there was in that some blessing. Would you be willing to be hit that God's name might get the glory? Would you be willing to be spoken against, that God's name might get glory and souls be blessed?

"He who is imbued with the Spirit of Christ abides in Christ. The blow that is aimed at him falls upon the Saviour Who surrounds him with His presence."

Ah, there it is. The Devil or somebody that the Devil gets to do it wants to hit me. But that blow can never reach me unless it first reaches Jesus. Is that the answer?

Then, if God allows it, I can accept it from whom? From Christ. This is why Jesus prayed to His Father:

"O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt"  
Matthew 26:39.

And He chose to take the cup.

"The blow that is aimed at him falls upon the Saviour, who surrounds him with His presence. Whatever comes to him comes from Christ" *Mount of Blessing*, page 71.

Do you believe that? Ah, my dear ones, if we believe that it'll give us rest and peace, no matter what people say about us, no matter what people do to us. We can leave our reputation all with Jesus. We'll do our best to represent Christ right for Jesus' sake, but Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, when you're reproached for righteousness sake:

"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad..." Matthew 5:12.

Let's learn the lesson. What do you say? The remnant is going into a time of trouble similar to what Jesus endured, as far as physical suffering is concerned. The mobs will soon be on their way. The courts of justice or injustice will be running us through. God help us to develop in our daily experience that peace and joy, that forgiveness. And remember, you can't make yourself do it, but you can look where the light is.

We're what? Suns? No, we're moons, and moons do what? They reflect light, looking to Jesus. So instead of looking around us at the trouble, we're going to do what? Look up. And who's up there? Jesus. Where is He? In the sanctuary. Which room? Most Holy Place. What's in there? The ark. What's in the ark? The law. And the basis of that law is love, love God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself [a paraphrase of Luke 10:27].

If we love, it'll be easy to forgive. Let's pray that God will bless us with that experience, shall we?

Let's bow our heads.

Blessed Lord, we have of ourselves nothing like what we've studied tonight, but we want it. And we thank Thee that the more we look to Jesus, the more His love is reflected in us. We thank Thee for the great privilege of looking away from ourselves to the One who gave His life for His enemies. Give us that deep, abiding love for His sake. Amen.

Now, this evening I thought there'd probably be a number that would like to give a short testimony of love for Jesus. Don't tell us a long personal experience tonight but just express your love for Jesus and your dedication to Him, your appreciation.

[Testimony meeting follows]

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