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by Zac Poonen

Many times in my life I have looked back over how the Lord has led me – and that has renewed my faith. When I face a difficult situation and it looks as if there is no way out, I remind myself of the promises in the Bible and listen to the encouragement that other believers give me. But the thing that strengthens my faith most of all is when I look back. The Lord asks me, “Have I ever let you down even once so far?” I have to reply, “No, Lord. Not even once.” Then He says, “I won’t let you down now either.” This encourages me more than anything else. Have you fallen again? Look back and see how the Lord forgave you in the past. When He forgave you, didn’t He know that you would fall again? Was that a surprise to Him that you fell again? No. Then He will forgive you again. Look back with gratitude. That will strengthen your faith. Be thankful for the Lord’s mercy. When you look at your failures in the past, you will learn to be merciful to other believers around you who fail.

We must never stop looking upwards and seeing more of the glory of the Lord. There is much of the glory of Jesus that we still haven’t seen. We must hunger for this, because that’s the image into which the Holy Spirit seeks to transform us. As we see the Lord’s glory, it will humble us because we will see our own need. This is the secret of remaining in humility, till the end of our lives. It is very easy for one whom God has anointed and used mightily to become proud. I have seen a lot of preachers like that. Because God has used them they are so proud and they are very distant from people. What is it that can keep us in brokenness and humility till the end of our lives? Only one thing: Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. When we look at Jesus it is impossible to be proud. A man becomes proud when he starts looking at other people, and imagines himself to be better than them, or more anointed than them, or more used than them etc., If however he looked upwards at Jesus, he would fall on his face in the dust in repentance - like the apostle John did on the Isle of Patmos. And if he keeps looking at Jesus, he will keep his face in the dust forever. All of us need to learn to keep our faces in the dust at all times. That’s the place of safety. So if you want God to be happy with you until the end of your days, keep looking upwards.

God has wonderful things in store for us. He has a great job for us to do. We don’t know when we will have to leave this world. But before the Lord comes, we look forward to doing something useful for Him on this earth. Most people in the world look to the future with fear and anxiety. But we look forward in faith.

In Deut.11:21 (KJV), Moses told them that God’s longing for them was “that your days and the days of your sons may be multiplied on the land like the days of heaven upon earth.” This is God’s will for all of us - that our days on earth may be like the days of heaven. God wants us even now to have a foretaste of the joy, peace, love, purity

and goodness of heaven in our homes and in our churches. I have experienced a little bit of that. So my life and my ministry have not been a heavy burden for me. Not at all. It has been joyful and every day has been exciting, because I have learnt to live by the principles of heaven, and not of earth. It's easy for you to determine to do this when you start your Christian life. But I hope that you will determine to live by heaven's principles and not earth's even during this coming year. Fix your eyes on Jesus Who endured until the end - so that your days can be like days of heaven on earth. That is God's will for us.

I wish you all a very blessed New Year, full of God's richest blessing every day.