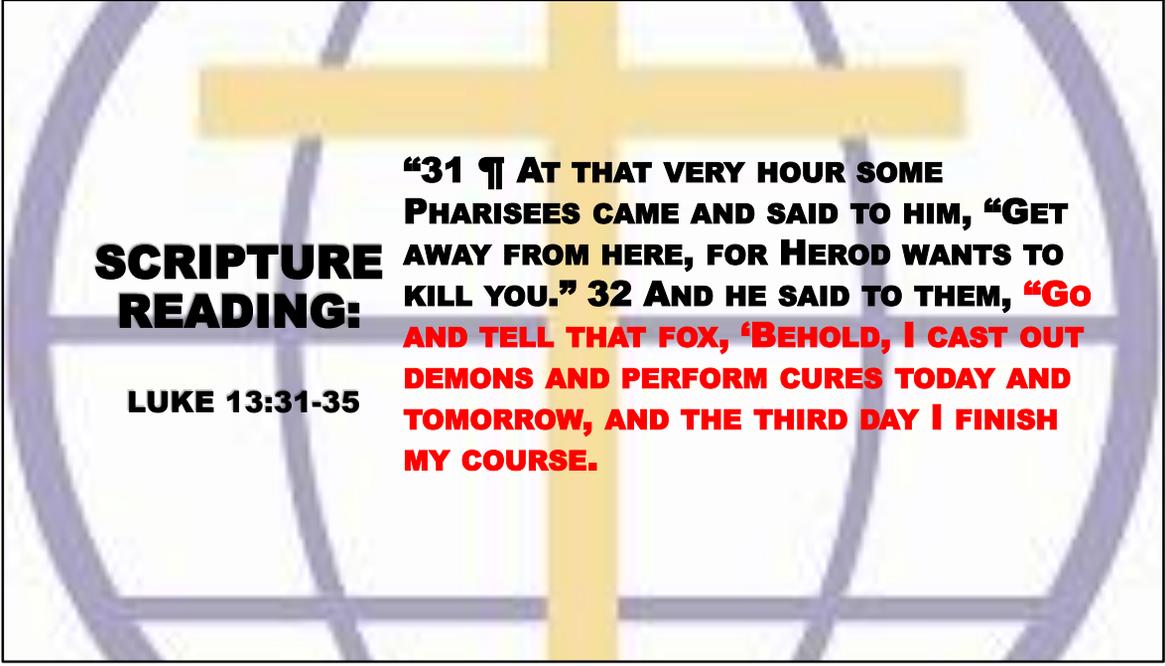




GOING TO JERUSALEM

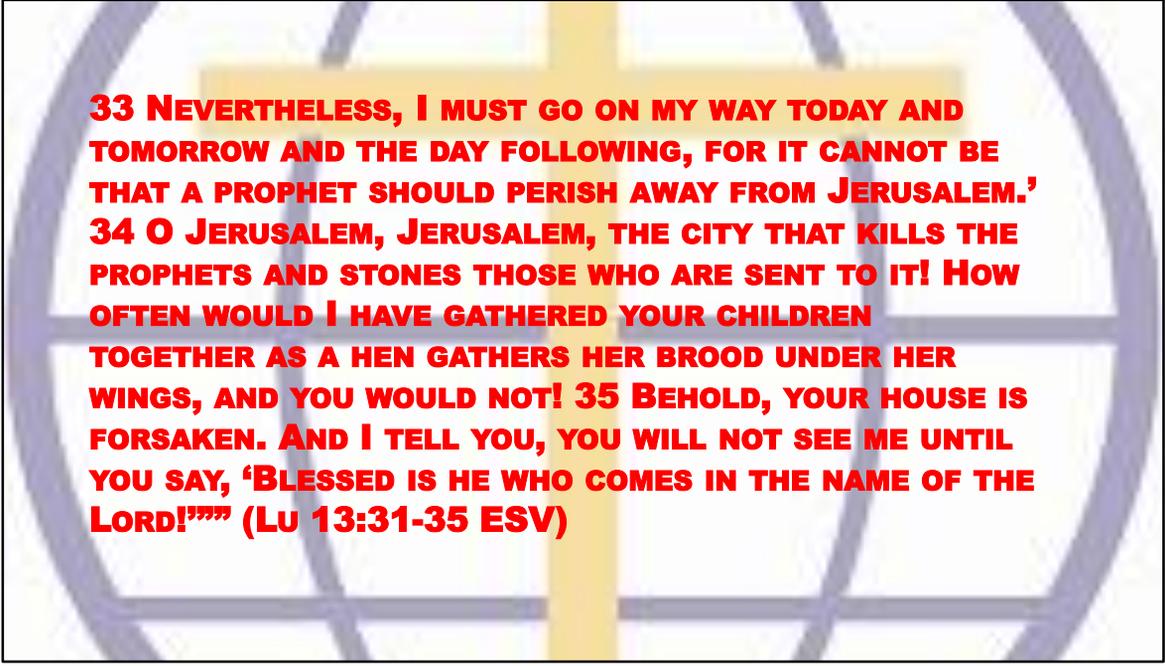
**Grace Communion International
Minister: Eric Vautour
Date: March 17, 2019**



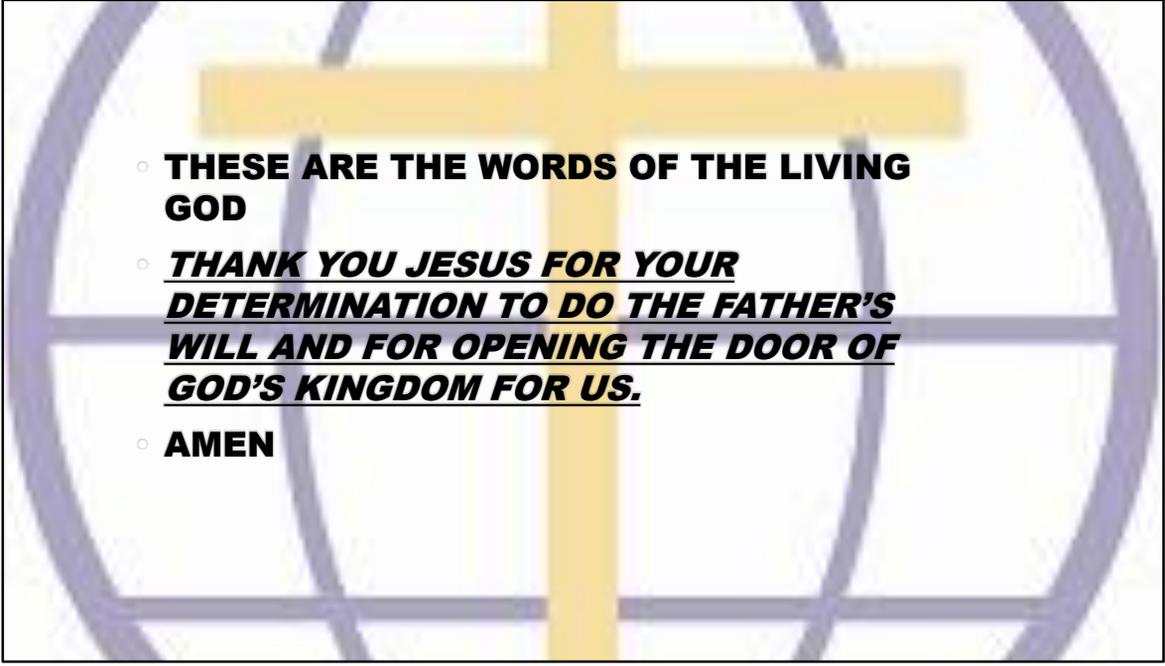
**SCRIPTURE
READING:**

LUKE 13:31-35

“31 ¶ AT THAT VERY HOUR SOME PHARISEES CAME AND SAID TO HIM, “GET AWAY FROM HERE, FOR HEROD WANTS TO KILL YOU.” 32 AND HE SAID TO THEM, “Go AND TELL THAT FOX, ‘BEHOLD, I CAST OUT DEMONS AND PERFORM CURES TODAY AND TOMORROW, AND THE THIRD DAY I FINISH MY COURSE.



33 NEVERTHELESS, I MUST GO ON MY WAY TODAY AND TOMORROW AND THE DAY FOLLOWING, FOR IT CANNOT BE THAT A PROPHET SHOULD PERISH AWAY FROM JERUSALEM.'
34 O JERUSALEM, JERUSALEM, THE CITY THAT KILLS THE PROPHETS AND STONES THOSE WHO ARE SENT TO IT! HOW OFTEN WOULD I HAVE GATHERED YOUR CHILDREN TOGETHER AS A HEN GATHERS HER BROOD UNDER HER WINGS, AND YOU WOULD NOT! 35 BEHOLD, YOUR HOUSE IS FORSAKEN. AND I TELL YOU, YOU WILL NOT SEE ME UNTIL YOU SAY, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'" (LU 13:31-35 ESV)

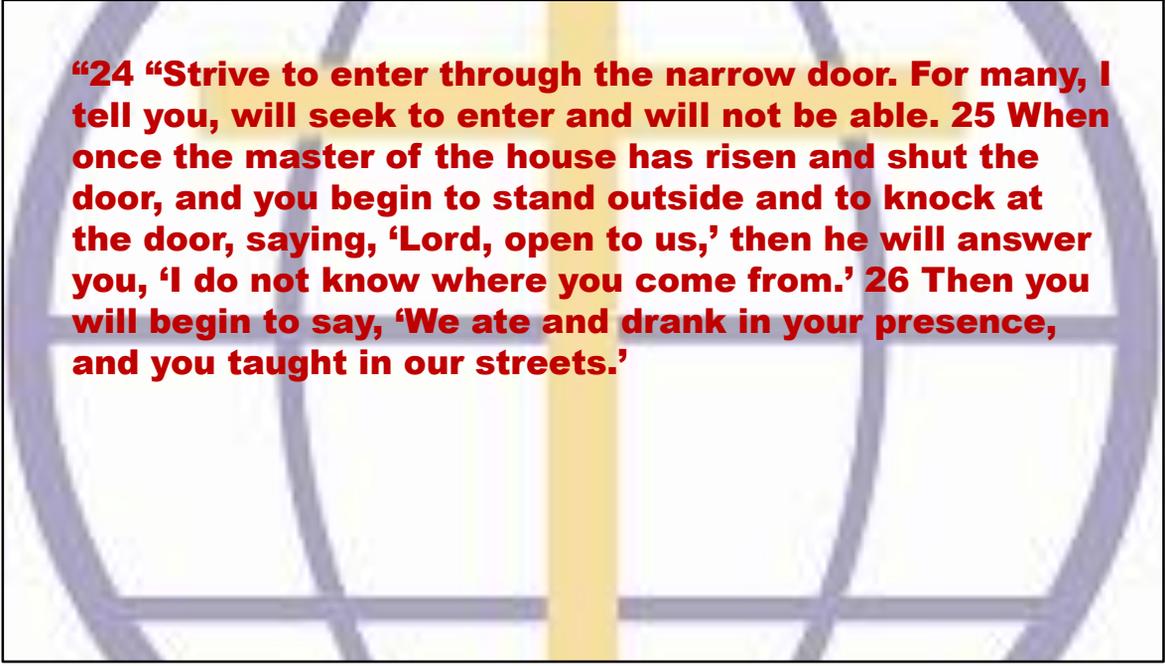
- 
- **THESE ARE THE WORDS OF THE LIVING GOD**
 - **THANK YOU JESUS FOR YOUR DETERMINATION TO DO THE FATHER'S WILL AND FOR OPENING THE DOOR OF GOD'S KINGDOM FOR US.**
 - **AMEN**

In these few verses, we see that nothing was going to stop Jesus from going to Jerusalem.

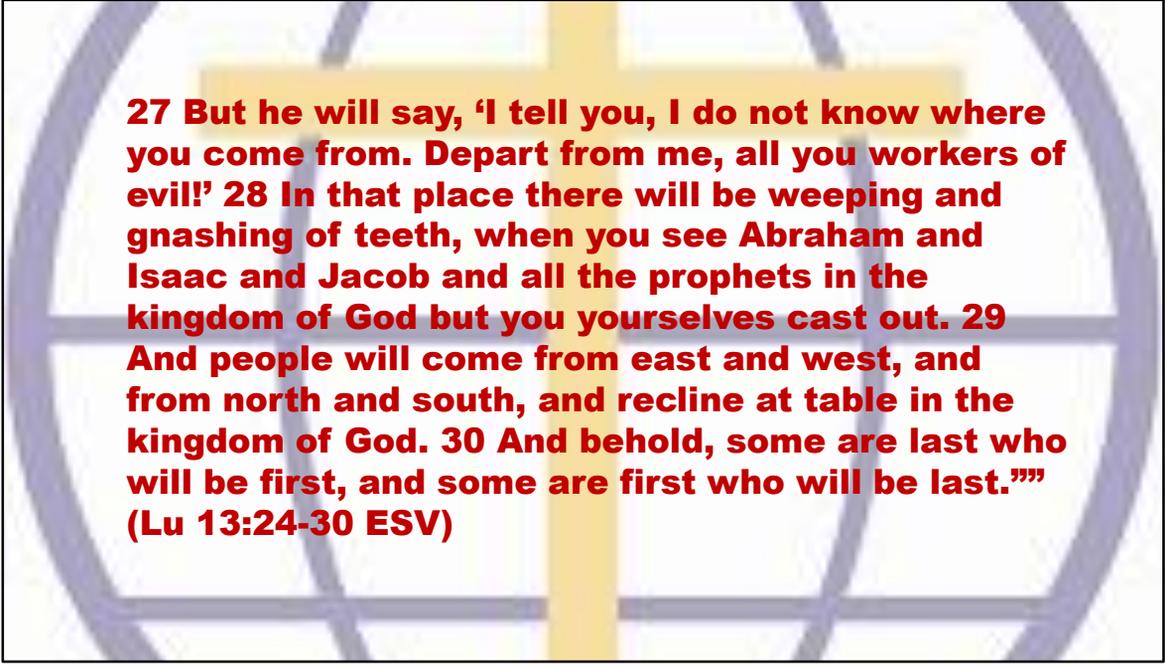
How can these verses encourage us in our walk with Jesus? During today's sermon, we are going to stop and think about Jesus' determination, his love and his boldness.

In the context of these verses, Jesus had told his audience that the only way to enter into God's Kingdom was by the narrow door. That narrow door we know is Jesus. The only way to obtain eternal life is to voluntarily believe, when God draws us, that he is indeed the Son of God and our Saviour. Eternal life exists in no other. We cannot have eternal life apart from Jesus. The Bible, God's word, is very clear about this.

The following is what Jesus said to the Pharisees.



“24 “Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. 25 When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, open to us,’ then he will answer you, ‘I do not know where you come from.’ 26 Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.’”



27 But he will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!' 28 In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out. 29 And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God. 30 And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.'"
(Lu 13:24-30 ESV)

Then we read in verse 31 that at very hour some Pharisees came to him and tried to discourage him from going to Jerusalem.

The background or the motivation of this statement by the Pharisees telling Jesus not to go to Jerusalem is not explained in this passage of Scripture.

We know that Herod mentioned in this passage of scripture was the son of Herod the great. He had John the Baptist assassinated (Matthew 14). We also know that when Herod met with Jesus at his trial that neither he nor Pilate found any reason to kill him or to have him crucified. (Luke 23:13-16).

Jesus knew the Scriptures. He had a thorough knowledge of the Old Testament and the prophecies talking about him. He knew the mission given to him. He knew that God the Father so loved the world that he gave his only Son to the world that whoever would believe on him would have eternal life. He also knew that he would not be recognized as the Son of God, that he would not be recognized as the light of the world.

We know the Pharisees had in their mind to have Jesus killed. They could not stand

him. They were offended by him because of what he taught and what he did. (Matt 22 and 26).

When they tried to get Jesus to avoid going to Jerusalem, he didn't buy it.

Jesus knew what is in the heart of man and he knew the heart of Herod. He was not afraid of him. Jesus calls him a fox. The fox **"has the temerity to associate with lions at the kill, take what it can and dodge the consequences. Herod plays the crafty fox to Caesar's lion (Luke 13:32). He is a political nuisance, but not worth bothering with. In early Jewish literature the fox portrays a lesser person as opposed to the truly powerful, who are lions."** (DICTIONARY OF BIBLICAL IMAGERY, by General Editors: Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, Tremper Longman III, page 30).

What do we see in Jesus attitude and determination?

We see that Jesus was not ruled by the fear of men.

Looking back and knowing who Jesus is, we see his love, his mercy and his great sense of justice and purpose.

- He loved for God the Father;
- He loved us. He did not want us to be oppressed in slavery by the power of sin, death and the devil, who is the personification of evil.
- He had a great sense of justice. God could not let sin go unpunished. Sin brought death and eternal separation from God for all mankind.
- He was determined to enter this evil and take the consequence upon himself which is death. He took upon himself the death of humanity. He defeated death through his resurrection.

We also see his selflessness. He was going to continue the work of his Father. He was going to continue to cast out demons and to heal people as he walked towards Jerusalem.

Jesus the man, although incarnate in our fallen human nature and tempted just as we are, was selfless. He continued to glorify the Father here on earth knowing that God the Father had a completely outgoing and selfless love for him and for humanity.

We see his love for Jerusalem even if Jerusalem was not responsive to God. In terms of endearment, he said, **"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it."**

In these verses, we see his true love because Jesus died for us while we were still his

enemies. He experienced the brutal aloneness on the cross caused by sin. The emotions he felt on the cross were so powerful that he told God the Father, "..., "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mt 27:46 ESV).

On that cross, having become sin for us even if he had no sin, he felt the utter aloneness and separation from God caused by sin. We know that God the Father never abandoned Jesus because God is one – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. All of God was involved in the decision that Jesus would become man and would die on the cross to reconcile human beings to God.

When we stop to think about what Jesus did by entering the darkness of this world to liberate us from it, we can only say thank you for delivering us from this oppressive monster which is eternal death.

Jesus not only saves us from eternal death but he also changes lives in the present, as we let him in when he knocks at our door (Rev. 3:20). When we turn to him, we receive a new life secured for us at the cross, in his resurrection and in his ascension to heaven.

(Example of a life being changed in the present age – Samian)

SAMUEL TREMBLAY - STAGE NAME SAMIAN



I am personally not a fan of rap music. Samuel Tremblay/Samian is a rapper recognized both in Canada and internationally.

Wikipedia talks about his biography and some of his accomplishments.
([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samian_\(rapper\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samian_(rapper)))

A member of the Abitibiwinni First Nation. Samian was born in Amos and grew up in the community of Pikogan in Abitibi-Témiscamingue and in several other cities in the province of Quebec. His father is Québécois and his mother is Algonquin.

He began his career in 2004

In 2005, Samian collaborated on several projects with Canada's National Film Board, the Department of Indian Affairs and *HARRO décrochage scolaire* (school dropout Network), AIDS and problems related to compulsive gambling.

He has performed across Canada and internationally, including shows in France, Finland, Spain, China and at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver.

On Saturday, March 16, I heard an interview he gave on the French CBC radio. He is from a family of three children. He has two sisters. At the age of eight, he was placed in a foster home whose father was a Christian pastor.

He describes his family of origin as dysfunctional. His father was an alcoholic and his mother had emotional problems.

His mother went for Christian counselling.

While growing up, he describes a difficult childhood.

Being from the first nation, he said that when he was living with white people that he would be beaten up because of his first nation background. When he went on the reserve, he would be beaten because of his Québécois roots.

Growing up was difficult for him. He had difficulties with the law. He was imprisoned in his younger days.

Because he was travelling a lot because of his musical career, he became physically tired and worn out. He went to live with his father for about four months. He also had to come to terms with his father's past dependence on alcohol and the damage it caused. He said that he forgave his father and became at peace with him.

While living with his father, his father developed cancer and died four months after.

Sometimes prior, his father had become a Christian. His father's desire for him was that he would be baptized prior to his death. He was baptized at the age of 30 and a few days after his father died, God granting him his wish.

During the interview, he openly told the interviewer that he prayed and read the Bible regularly. He said very boldly and matter-of-factly that he was a follower of Jesus.

Listening to him, I admired the fact that he made a clear differentiation between his former life and his life as a Christian. He let go of the past – of the hurt, instability, etc.. Obviously, God's presence in his life helped him to do this.

As he mentioned his belief in God on several occasions during the interview, toward the end of the interview, the lady interviewer asked him to describe the importance of his religion in his life.

He quickly said that a relationship with Jesus was not a religion. He accurately said that the word religion is only found one place in the Bible, in the epistle of James. He quoted

part of the verse which said the following: **Jas 1:27 Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.**

In the interview, he said that's pure religion before God was to visit the orphans and widows.

He plainly stated that religion and true Christianity were very different from one another. Man-made religion is made up of rules made by man while true religion is God focused. He also said something that struck me when he said **the main focus of Christianity is not focused on what we can get from God but his focus on how we can serve God.**

He also spoke very candidly about the primary religion in Québec and how Christianity described in the Bible differs so different from it.

He also spoke about the difficulty in sharing his belief in Jesus because most people do not want to hear about it.

When he was young, he fathered a son who is now 10 years old. He also talked about his relationship with son and the challenges of being a single dad.

Samian is a poet. He writes his songs in French. His grandmother who is Algonquin helps him to translate his song in their native language. He sings in both French and Algonquin.

He tries to encourage young people to dream and to live more fulfilled lives.

Samian's life is changed because of Jesus. His life changed both spiritually, having eternal life faith in Jesus and physically, as he follows Jesus. He still carries burdens from his past life. He is a single dad. However, in Christ, he seems to have put these issues in perspective. Does it mean his life is always easy? Obviously not. He has a tattoo on his neck which says "warrior" (Guerrier). His reason for doing so – living the Christian life is a battle. (Now I do not advocate tattoos – in Leviticus 19:28, God told the Israelites not to have tattoos.)

When Jesus lived on the earth, many people's lives were changed physically for the better as he healed so many physically and emotionally when he cast out demons. People's lives were physically transformed by him.

He also changed people's lives in other ways when we think of the impact he had on the apostles, Mary Magdalene and many of the other men and women who became his

followers.

Because Jesus set his face to go to Jerusalem, lives continue to be changed by him daily as he adds people to his church and makes them and us a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, to enable us to proclaim the excellencies of God who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. Before we were not God's people. Before, we had not received mercy but now we have. "Paraphrase 1 Peter 2:9-10).

Jesus face challenges in this world. We also face challenges in this world from within ourselves and challenges coming from the world. The value system of the world is so often contrary and in opposition to God's word.

The world, because it values thoughts, actions and behaviors that are contrary to God's will presents a challenges. We are told to live in the world but not be of the world.

Jesus voluntarily give up his life for us. He willingly suffered for us. Part of our calling is that we need to be ready to suffer with him as we accept the consequences of following Jesus and carrying our cross..

“16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 ¶ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. 19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope” (Ro 8:16-20 ESV)

Whatever happens in our life, like Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit, we look to the joy that is set before us for a glorious future in him. (Next slide)

○ **“1 ¶ THEREFORE, SINCE WE ARE SURROUNDED BY SO GREAT A CLOUD OF WITNESSES, LET US ALSO LAY ASIDE EVERY WEIGHT, AND SIN WHICH CLINGS SO CLOSELY, AND LET US RUN WITH ENDURANCE THE RACE THAT IS SET BEFORE US, 2 LOOKING TO JESUS, THE FOUNDER AND PERFECTER OF OUR FAITH, WHO FOR THE JOY THAT WAS SET BEFORE HIM ENDURED THE CROSS, DESPISING THE SHAME, AND IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE THRONE OF GOD. 3 CONSIDER HIM WHO ENDURED FROM SINNERS SUCH HOSTILITY AGAINST HIMSELF, SO THAT YOU MAY NOT GROW WEARY OR FAINTHEARTED. 4 ¶ IN YOUR STRUGGLE AGAINST SIN YOU HAVE NOT YET RESISTED TO THE POINT OF SHEDDING YOUR BLOOD.” (HEB 12:1-4 ESV)**

Let us pray.