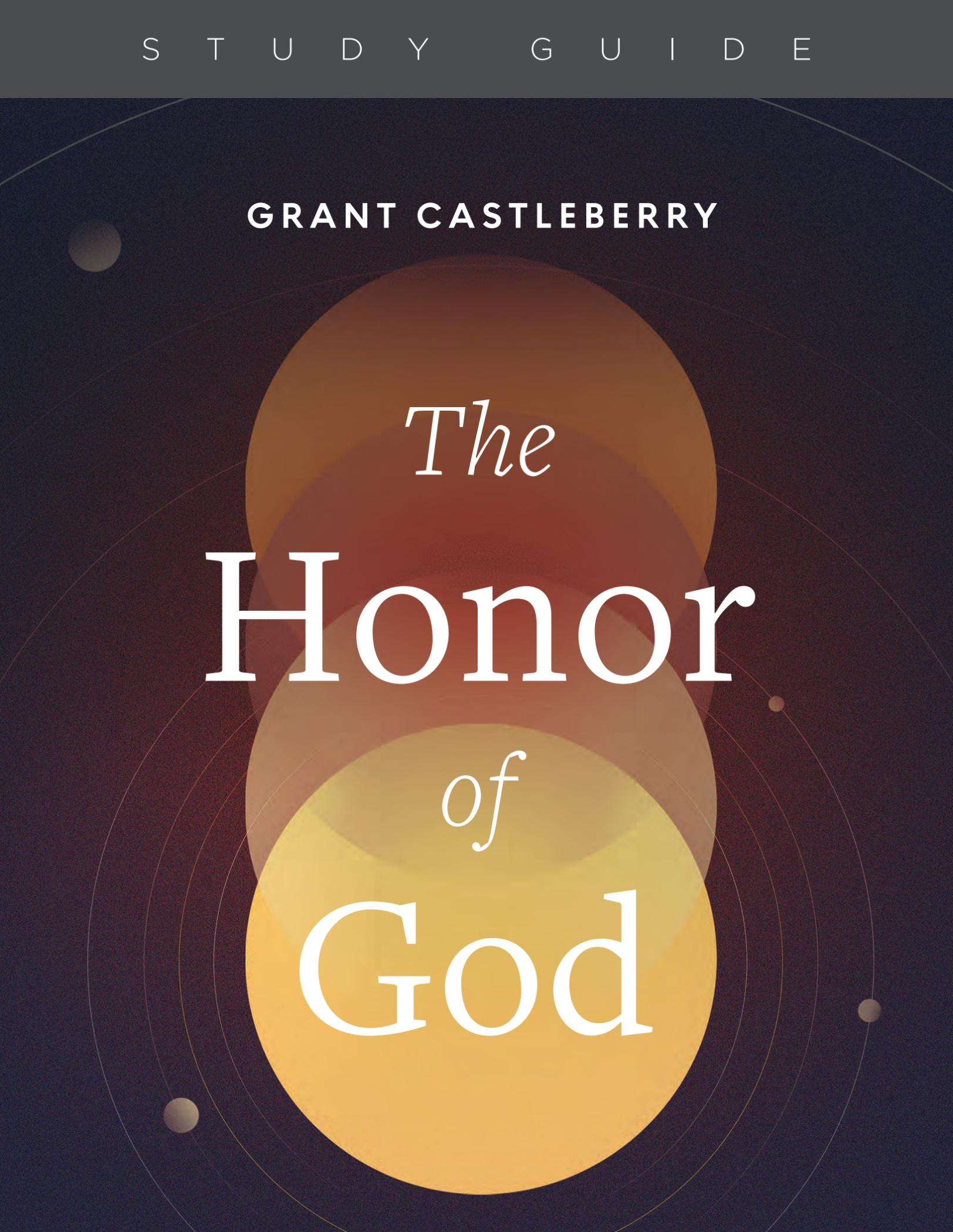


S T U D Y   G U I D E

GRANT CASTLEBERRY



*The*  
Honor  
*of*  
God

# The Honor of God

STUDY GUIDE



LIGONIER MINISTRIES

*The Honor of God Study Guide*

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# How to Use This Study Guide

This study guide includes a chapter synopsis, a lesson objective, key passages, key points, and discussion questions from each chapter in *The Honor of God*, as well as questions that focus on a relevant passage of Scripture from each chapter. Participants should first read each corresponding chapter of the book in order to make the best use of this guide.

**Chapter Synopsis:** This section summarizes the material in the chapter and provides a reminder of what the chapter covered. It serves to help readers remember what they've already read in the book.

**Lesson Objective:** This section explains the purpose of the chapter and the intended outcome of the study guide lesson.

**Key Passages:** This section quotes several passages from the chapter so that readers can remember some of the more significant things the author said. It can also serve as a starting point for discussion if the group leader would like to ask questions or provide thoughts related to excerpts from the book.

**Key Points:** This section outlines many of the basic ideas that the author mentioned in the chapter. It helps readers recall not just the big idea of the chapter but also its supporting ideas and their flow.

**Scripture Reading:** This section highlights one of the chapter's key points in God's Word. It helps readers identify the scriptural basis of important Christian doctrines and develops their ability to understand Scripture through questions about the reading. These questions are also ideal for group study.

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**Reflection Questions:** This section provides readers with questions that could be asked of themselves or in a small-group setting. The questions are designed to help readers understand the chapter and apply that knowledge to their lives.

**Prayer:** This section closes the study with an opportunity to come before the Lord in prayer based on what readers have learned.

# Introduction

## CHAPTER SYNOPSIS

The honor of God is fundamental to all existence; it is God's very own chief end, and so it is ours. Honoring God means recognizing His character, rule, and sovereignty as the most significant reality of life. But our modern, diminished understanding of the concept of honor threatens our ability to feel the weightiness of the God of the Bible. We must see the biblical vision of God's holiness and glory to recover a reverent, God-centered Christianity.

## LESSON OBJECTIVE

This chapter will help you understand the biblical concept of honor, which is central to God's character and the Christian life and significantly shapes our worldview and worship.

## KEY PASSAGES

*Honoring God means that we view His character, His rule, and His sovereignty as the weightiest realities in our lives. (p. 3)*

*Many moderns have lost the lens through which to see and understand God in the way that He is presented in the Bible. This is because we lack a framework for the concepts of honor and shame. (p. 4)*

*The Hebrew word used to translate "honor" is kabod, which literally means being "weighty," "heavy," or "severe." Sometimes it is translated in the Old Testament as "glory." The basic idea is that honoring something or someone means that we are showing the heaviness or weightiness of that person in our life. (p. 7)*

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*Our ethics, our morals, our family life, our work, and our worship are all transformed underneath the all-encompassing shadow of a holy God. We are to live coram Deo—before the face of God. This is the essence of a biblical worldview. (p. 12)*

### KEY POINTS

**The Honor of God as the Chief End of Everything** (pp. 3–4): Everything has one ultimate purpose: the honor of God. God’s *honor* refers to His glory or weightiness. When we truly behold the God of Scripture for who He is, His honor becomes the weightiest priority in our lives, and our lives can be defined as “God-centered.”

**Modern Loss of Honor** (pp. 4–6): Contemporary culture struggles with the concept of honor, often prioritizing wealth, popularity, or personal success over integrity and reverence for God. Rev. Castleberry described his experience in the Marines as an example of how honor has become a foreign concept in our modern culture.

**Honor and the Bible** (pp. 6–10): The Bible defines God’s glory and honor as a weightiness, a heaviness, or a severity. Honoring God begins with acknowledging the gravity of who He is. The concept of *honor* has a counterpart in the world of the Old and New Testaments: *shame*. Honor and shame were foundational to the worldview of the authors of Scripture. The importance of honor can be seen in the ways that the biblical authors abhorred shame (see Ezra 4:14; Pss. 31:1; 35:26; Jer. 51:51; Matt. 1:19; Rom. 1:16; 1 Tim. 6:13–14; 2 Tim. 2:15; Titus 2:7–8). It can also be seen in how they ascribed all honor to God (1 Tim. 6:16).

**Recovering Reverent Worship** (pp. 10–16): We need to have a vision of God’s honor to recover a reverent, God-centered Christianity. This is realized through worship in reverence and awe, recognizing that “God is a consuming fire” (Heb. 12:28–29). We must exalt God’s transcendence to worship Him rightly and to have a proper understanding of the gospel and our call to holiness.

### SCRIPTURE READING

**Revelation 4:8–11** And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!” And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders

## INTRODUCTION

fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

- How does God’s nature connect with the chief end of everything as described in this passage?
- How can this scene inform our worship of God?

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How do God’s glory and honor factor into your life practically?
2. In what ways have you seen a loss of the concept of honor in modern culture or even in the church?
3. How does the Bible define *honor*? How did the author define shame? In what ways is it evident that these concepts were culturally significant to the authors of the Bible?
4. Why is understanding God’s honor important for rightly grasping the gospel?

## PRAYER

- Praise God for inherent glory and honor, which He possesses fully in and of Himself.
- Confess ways that you have failed to honor God in your everyday life and priorities.
- Thank God for revealing both His holiness and His mercy in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
- Ask God to work through His Spirit in the hearts of His people to reform the worship of the modern church.

# The Rule of Honor

## CHAPTER SYNOPSIS

First Samuel 2:30 introduces the “rule of honor.” This rule states that God honors those who honor Him and esteems lightly those who despise Him. It is a principle that is evident throughout Scripture. We see it in force negatively in the lives of Eli and his sons and positively in David’s victory over Goliath. The rule of honor calls us to live obediently, see God above circumstances, persevere through opposition, and align ourselves with God’s purpose to honor His own name.

## LESSON OBJECTIVE

This chapter will define the “rule of honor” and explore its significance in the Bible, so that we might grasp how honoring God leads to His honor in return.

## KEY PASSAGES

*God will honor those who honor Him. God will treat as weighty those who treat God as weighty. The reverse is true as well. God will lightly esteem those who despise Him. (p. 19)*

*A culture that fails to honor God will be given over to shame and reproach by God, and that is precisely what is happening. If we fail to honor God, if we esteem God lightly, God will treat us lightly. This is the rule of honor. (p. 21)*

*Obedience to God’s commands expresses that we believe that God is worthy of honor. We show that someone is “heavy” in our life by listening to and obeying that person’s commands. (p. 24)*

## THE RULE OF HONOR

*God ends history with the coronation of His honor. Since we know the end of God's grand story, it makes sense to put ourselves in the middle of the stream in which God is moving to honor His own name. (p. 29)*

### KEY POINTS

**The Rule of Honor Defined** (pp. 17–19): This biblical principle demonstrates that God rewards those who treat Him with reverence and obedience. The rule of honor is first introduced in 1 Samuel 2:30: “The LORD declares: ‘Far be it from me, for those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed.’”

**The Rule of Honor in Scripture** (pp. 19–21): The rule is evident throughout the Bible, from David's confidence in God's deliverance (Ps. 37:39–40) to Jesus' words in John 12:26, which affirm that those who serve Christ will receive honor from the Father. This principle can be seen in the prophetic works of Daniel, Hosea, and Malachi, and in addition to being found in the teaching of Christ, it is affirmed by the Apostle Paul in Romans 1.

**First Samuel 17 and the Rule of Honor** (pp. 21–23): The giant Goliath struck fear into the heart of every Israelite on the battlefield—that is, until David arrived. The great tragedy of that day is that not a single soldier remembered God but saw only Goliath. The great victory that day is a classic case study in the rule of honor.

**Application of the Rule of Honor** (pp. 23–31): We are called to honor God in all areas of life. This is exemplified by David's encounter with Goliath; David was practicing ordinary obedience to his father when he encountered the giant's defiance of the God of Israel. Obedience is the foundation of the honor of God. Also, because David lived *coram Deo*, he did not fail to see the unseen God when everyone else saw Goliath. We must see the unseen God in our own lives and persevere through opposition with the one desire of pleasing God. Doing this, we enter “the stream of God's honor,” because all history is flowing toward and will end with the vindication of God's honor.

### SCRIPTURE READING

**Matthew 16:24–27** Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

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For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.”

- How does Jesus’ call to take up the cross relate to the rule of honor?
- What does it mean to be repaid by Christ, and how does this connect to honoring God?

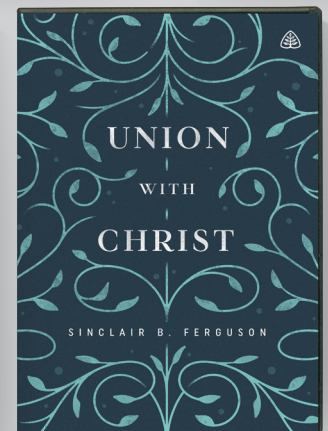
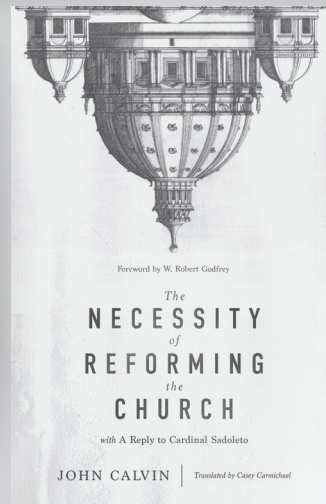
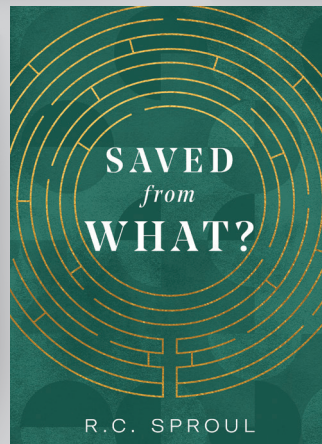
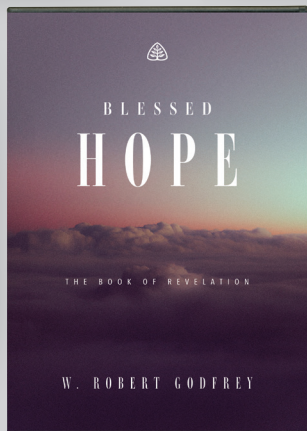
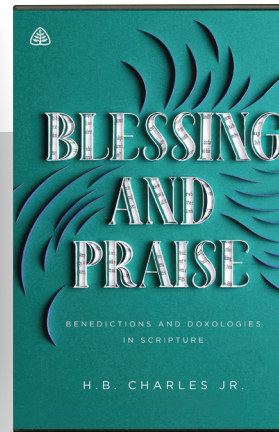
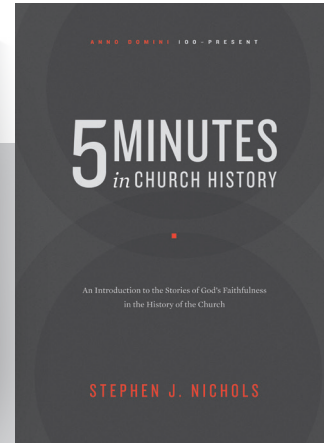
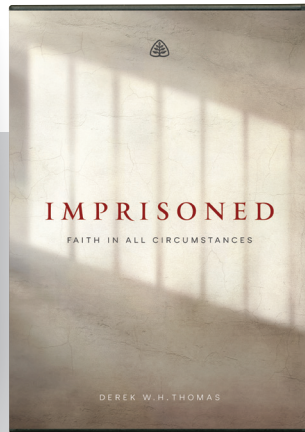
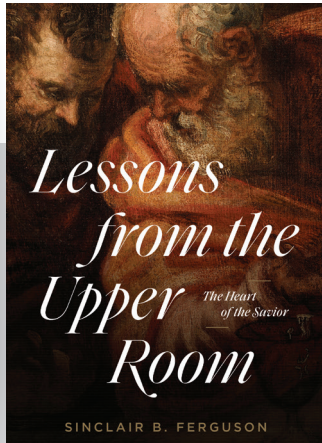
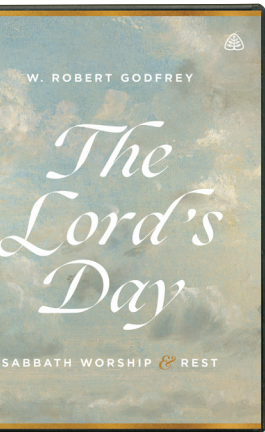
### REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How does the rule of honor logically flow from God’s chief end?
2. Which of the four foundations of the rule of honor in David’s life connects most with an area of need in your life? How might you practically implement that godly disposition?
3. How might understanding the rule of honor change your perspective on suffering and adversity?
4. Why is it important to remember Christ when considering how we fall short of perfectly honoring God?

### PRAYER

- Praise God for His justice, which stands under the rule of honor.
- Confess ways that you have failed to honor God this week in thought, word, or deed.
- Thank God for the godly example of the faithful and the lessons that can be learned from them in our own pursuit of holiness.
- Ask God to help you fix your eyes on Jesus Christ and, with the help of the Spirit, stay steadfast whenever you face life’s obstacles or opposition.

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