



Monday Matters

September 8, 2014

Where Is Your Focus?

Helen Howarth Lemmel was born in England but came to the United States at age 12, eventually settling in Wisconsin with her parents. Helen had a reputation of being a brilliant singer. She studied private voice for four years in Germany. In the early 1900's she regularly traveled giving concerts in many churches.

She married a European who was quite wealthy. She taught voice at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago before teaching in Los Angeles. During her lifetime of 98 years she composed over 500 hymns and poems and even authored a children's book.

It was during the middle years of her life that things changed dramatically and she was dealt a couple of big blows to her faith. Helen became blind and her husband abandoned her. Life became a struggle for her and would have challenged anyone's faith.

In 1918 a missionary friend gave her a pamphlet that was titled "Focused." Inside it contained some very impacting words for her - "So then, turn your eyes upon Him, look full in His face and you will find that things of earth will acquire a strange new dimness." These words had a great impact on her.

Helen recalled later, "I stood still and singing in my soul and spirit was the chorus, with not one conscious moment of putting word to word to make rhyme, or note to note to make melody. The verses were written the same week, after the usual manner of composition, but nonetheless dictated by the Holy Spirit."

That song was "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus." The chorus was "Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in His wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace."

Helen suffered with blindness and a husband leaving her. Through it all she turned her eyes to Jesus knowing that only He would not fail her or leave her in any situation or circumstance.

Maybe this week you feel that circumstances have dealt you a low blow or someone has abandoned you. You feel pain, hurt and sorrow which is understandable. You might feel confusion or anger at being let down. The trust you put in someone that is no longer there for you really hurts and makes you mad. All of that is understandable.



I would encourage you to turn your eyes to Jesus. Ask for His comfort and His grace during this time. He will not hurt you. He will not leave you. He will never, ever fail you. Psalm 23 puts it this way: (4) Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. (6) Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

The last verse of Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus goes like this:

His Word shall not fail you-He promised;
Believe Him, and all will be well:
Then go to a world that is dying,
His perfect salvation to tell!

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Ron Nelson, CCA - Email - MondayMatters.us@gmail.com

Linda J. Nelson - Email - ArtByLJNelson@bellsouth.net

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