

*"Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith; who for the Joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God. For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." Hebrews 12:2-3 KJV*



Jesus not only authored our faith, He finished it. When a normal man would have been struggling just to breathe, He cried with a loud voice, *"It is finished!"* and so it is! He raised Himself from the dead three days later to seal His work, making it irrefutable Truth for all eternity. **"NOW IS CHRIST RISEN!"** Not only did He arise, He brought others with Him. *"And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city (Jerusalem), and appeared unto many."* He did not need three days to defeat death. It was the unbelief of the day that necessitated a three day stay to stop forever the mouths of the naysayers and liars! There were some, and still are, that claim the dead are not really dead until they've been dead for three days. If you study the Gospel accounts, you'll find Jesus raised the dead to life three separate times. One had been dead for a day, (Lk.7:11-15) another for two, (Lk.8:4 9-56) and Lazarus for over three. ( Jn.11) There is no doubt that he was very dead, because *"Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto Him, 'Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days."* Faith is, not WAS, or WILL BE, it IS the *"Victory that overcometh the world!"* We are *"more than conquerors"* through Jesus Christ. Jesus' work is FINISHED, and He is seated, awaiting *"the Joy that was set before Him,"* the wondrous Day when He will claim His Bride, the Church! This is Joy set before us, also, if we could only grasp its full meaning. We do not suffer and endure stoically. We suffer and endure joyfully, because our time here is but a drop in the ocean of eternity. Faithfulness is nothing more than consistent obedience to God's Word. We will fail, but it's the return to obedience (repentance) every time that defines the faithful. The apostle Paul was very clear about our Great Reward if we abide faithful. *"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."* Jesus' Joy is us, and our Joy is Him! *"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for WE SHALL SEE HIM as he is."*

Our faith was finished by our Lord,  
'Tis so according to His Word,  
We are the object of His Joy,  
Our tongues will soon His praise employ. -CGP

Christ longs to be united with us and we should long to be united with Him! We have not yet *"resisted unto blood."* When you are weary and tempted to quit, take a moment to reflect on the Joy that is set before you, Jesus, *"For He is altogether lovely."* You cannot imagine heaven without Him!

*"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be revealed in us." Romans 8:16-18 KJV*