

Trust in My Life

by Chip Brogden

The sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting in Christ's life within us rather than relying on our own strength and efforts.

Scripture: John 15:5, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Galatians 2:20, Philippians 4:13, 1 Peter 5:7

Topics: "Trusting God", "Christian Living"

Description

Chip Brogden emphasizes the importance of letting God work through us, showcasing the power of yielding to Christ's nature over our own. By surrendering control and depending on the sufficiency of Christ's life within us, we can witness His transformative work in our actions and reactions, leading to a display of His patience, love, and peace that surpasses human capability. Trusting in His life not only brings rest and peace but also allows us to experience His strength, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption in every aspect of our lives.

Transcript

I'm learning more and more the necessity of letting God have His Way with me. That is not to say I allow Him to live through me at all times as I should. Would that I would so yield, at all times, and without fail. But in the instances where I have allowed Him to respond through me the results have been startling. It is by this that I know He is alive. I am able to watch Him work through me, almost as though I were standing apart from myself observing it.

In order to bring my experience down to earth in terms of practicality, let me take an ordinary incident and demonstrate how His Life responds for us, and in our stead, when we allow it. I am not a patient person by nature, and I am prone towards laziness and irritability. At times I can be most difficult to live with, as my wife will certainly testify. On one occasion I was particularly angry and was on the verge of reacting as I always do, from Adam's nature instead of Christ's nature. But in order to test the sufficiency of Christ's Life in me, I inwardly turned to the Lord and frankly confessed my inability to control my anger, or my tongue. I did not ask for help to do so, nor did I ask for strength, or for patience. I simply cast it all upon the Lord, saying, "Since I cannot, therefore you must. It is beyond me, therefore I depend on You to do what I cannot. If You will not, then I cannot." This was not done in an arrogant way, but in a matter-of-fact tone that was simply relaying the facts of the situation. As long as we think WE can, or even if we think God will enable us to do it, we are still striving. We must cease to do, and allow Him to do. I already knew how it would turn out if I tried to handle this on my own.

After uttering this simple prayer I never gave it another thought, but waited to see what the Lord would do in me. Each time my mind would try to take the matter up again the still small voice would say, "Trust in My Life." Over and over again in recent weeks this gentle prompting has guided me through impossible situations and carried me well beyond any short-term victory I had ever been able to procure by way of self-effort. We know that Christ was tempted in all areas like as we are, yet without sin. He is over all things, and there's not a single temptation, situation, problem, or circumstance that He has not already mastered. We do not worry that Christ may stumble, or sin, or be taken advantage of by the enemy. Why? We trust in His Life; we know the Man; we believe He is sufficient, nay, more than sufficient, to answer any and every test, trial, and temptation. Since He lives in me, and I am a vessel which contains His Life, why can I not trust in His Life working through me as much as I would trust Christ on earth? Is it not the same Spirit? Decidedly so!

"Trust in My Life," that Spirit urges. Cease striving, trust Me, watch what happens. In so doing, I can report that in this particular case my temper was non-existent; my words were soft; my manner meek; in essence, the Living Christ was expressing Himself through me, and my part was only to yield and watch in amazement as His Nature began to engulf my personality. Who else could display such patience? Such love? Such peace? It cannot be conjured up, nor can it be duplicated by asking "what would Jesus do?" and setting out to copy His example. Trying to imitate Christ is the path of frustration and despair. Let me say undeniably that you will never meet a Man like Jesus. Try for a million years and you can never duplicate His personality! Your best attempt to "be more like Jesus" is as feeble as trying to grow a plant out of a concrete rock. Only a proud, ignorant person thinks they can even come close to being like Jesus.

No, the answer is, "It is no longer I that liveth, but Christ that liveth in me, and the life that I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." I live, yet not I but Christ. It is not Jesus reproduced in me, it is Jesus instead of me. It is not my life, my work, my effort at holiness. It is Christ my Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.

As I learn to trust His Life for the small things, I am finding the larger things to be less large. It is all a question of leverage. When you have a large load you desire to lift with a lever, the closer you move the fulcrum to the load the less force you have to exert to lift it. Consequently, trusting His Life effectively positions the fulcrum in such a way that you exert very little force, while the Lever (Christ) does all the work. Of course we eventually arrive to the place of total rest and exert no self-effort at all. Simply "ask, and it shall be given unto you."

A better analogy is one Christ made Himself: "take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me...and you shall find rest unto your souls". A yoke is made for two oxen. It was common practice to yoke a weak animal with a stronger one and thus strengthen the weaker. In our situation we cannot get stronger; we must be made weaker. Our whole problem is we are too strong in ourselves. So we are never told to improve our flesh, for God has judged it unworthy of being saved and nailed it to the cross. But the illustration of the yoke shows us that Christ is doing all the work for us while we reap the benefit of His labor. He is not pushing us from behind, exacting impossible demands upon us like a slave-driver. He is beside us, laboring on our behalf. If I take His yoke upon me I am carried along with Him. We may rest since He carries all the weight. His Life is unrestricted and limitless. The weight of the world is not too heavy for Him to bear. We must therefore cast our burden upon Him, because He cares for us and He is well able to handle it. It is His privilege to do so.

Paul thought himself a strong individual until God weakened him. Now Paul rejoices in his weaknesses, boasts of his inadequacies, and revels in his sufferings. Why? "When I am weak, then I am strong." How so? He is at last cognizant that "apart from Me, you can do nothing"; that human strength and self-effort only delays the inevitable and eventual defeat; that true strength is manifest through the denial of self and trusting in His Life. For His Life, that is, His Being, Nature, and Essence, is Christ Himself. Today there is a need of strength; He is my Strength. Tomorrow the need may be patience; He is my Patience. Next week the call may be for more self-control; He is my Self-Control. Each new revelation of weakness and need provides us with fresh opportunity to trust in His Life and observe a living Christ expressing Himself through us.

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