

North Christian Church -

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5/31/16 - The Gospel, Salvation, and Sanctification - Part 93

Trust In the Process

When we follow Jesus Christ with a sincere heart, He will reveal all things to us at the proper time.

Grace Precedes Fruit

God will always afford a believer the appropriate grace to accomplish a command. This means that every command in the Bible is placed upon man in the presence and sufficiency of grace (ala 2Co 12:9).

Grace-Orientation

Paul understood that "power is perfected in weakness" to the degree that he persistently fulfilled his mission in the face of obscene adversity, even from those in his own flock.

Grace-Orientation

"Courage" is really just another name for faith applied. Faith is a grace gift given to the humble. So while Paul appeared "boastful" to his flock, he was actually exceedingly humble, comparatively. As a result, he pressed on under all circumstances.

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What Paul realized is that perseverance in the face of adversity produced something great in him...something supernaturally strong.

What is perseverance?

Isn't it a repetitive, consistent faith? A faith that doesn't give up hope, but presses on one day at a time?

We all can persevere!

Perseverance is a product of God, because it spawns from faith in the first place, which as we know is a gift from God, Eph 2:8-9. Therefore, it is available to all who are humble.

Faith properly placed

Paul lived by faith, which is what gave him courage. And it's faith IN THE LORD

that gave him courage, and can give us courage.

2 Cor 5:14-15 NIV

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

Paul's Labor Pains

Gal 4:19 "My children, with whom I am again in labor [to suffer child-birth pains] until Christ is formed in you." Paul persevered under immense pressure for the same reason Jesus did - for others - even when those same people forsook him, personally.

"proof of your faith"

Requires testing (e.g., "by fire"). What is faith untested??? Faith reveals its value WHEN tested (Heb 11:6a "And without faith it is impossible to please Him.").

The Humble, Repentant Heart

If we truly fear God, we are overwhelmed by our own sinfulness. This is the precursor to repentance that leads to salvation. Nowhere in scripture is it suggested that believers lose this sense of fear and repentance.

The Humble, Repentant Heart

Peter had faith (Lk 5:1-11), and the "proof of that faith" (1Pe 1:7) is worth much more than anything he hauled into the boat that day! His faith was increased, as were others', and afterwards, he "left everything and followed [Jesus]."

Lk 5:1-11 with 1Pe 1:7

Jesus never stopped strengthening the faith of His disciples. Likewise, He never stops strengthening our faith, in time. Faith does the job of overcoming our fears (fruit of the flesh) so that our inherent desire to obey (fruit of the new creature) may perform unrestrictedly in/through us. The Spirit is our "Helper" in this (Jn 14).

Expounding Upon 1Pe 1:7

Among the greatest fruit for a true believer is their eternal security ("I lost not one" - Jn 18:9). That sense of security, knowing that you've been saved is among the most basic fruit in your soul; and it IS fruit, because it is a gift given by God to you, and it has become part of who you are (e.g. the new creature is assured of its destiny, and the Spirit confirms it! - 1Jn 3:24; 4:13)..

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If you're grace-oriented, then you walk by faith (2Co 5:7)...in a manner worthy of your calling (Eph 4:1)...and a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ (Php 1:27)...

Distinctions

There are those who actually walk by faith, and those who have an "incomplete" faith that says that "walking by faith" is the right way to walk. It's one thing to mentally assent to something, it's another to live it. "The righteous man shall live by faith" (Ro 1:17).

Reading Parables

Imposing contemporary culture upon a parable will inevitably result in errant

conclusions. Speculation is always bad when it is taken as theology. If you don't "get it", you've missed it. If it's not plainly apparent, do NOT take it upon yourself to construct something that isn't there!!!

Avoiding Speculation Errors

The parables haven't changed in 2,000 years. However, our culture and our "life contexts" have changed dramatically. Therefore, in order to "find" the meaning of a parable, we must avoid imposing contemporary ideologies on them in favor of understanding the context in which they were written (time, place, person, culture, etc.).

Is there anything more persistent than God's love?