

July 2009

But remember, there was never a time that Christ did not trust the Father or believe what he had to say! The completion of faith is not about dealing with unbelief, it's about **taking the faith that is there and bringing it to a place of absolute and unshakable confidence and conviction!** Do we trust God in this situation? Do we trust him in this other situation? We keep being put into different situations where we are left only with the concept of faith. Do we trust him now? And it is only as we go through different categories of situations in life, and through varying intensities, where ultimately we have to resolve each one of them by faith in God, do we finally get to the place our faith is completed.

We see Christ reflecting in faith on the promise that the Father had made to him while he was on the cross, that He would not abandon Christ's soul in Hades, nor would he allow his body to undergo decay. *“Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because **thou wilt not leave my soul in hell**, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”* Acts 2:26,27

We see Christ's faith in action again on the cross as he was praying to the Father in his anguish. *“Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded. But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.”* Psalms 22:4-8 Three times he mentions that the fathers trusted in Him and were delivered. And then he talks about himself and what he was going through, the reproach of the people, how he was despised, how they laugh at him, and how they ridiculed him over his faith in the Father.

In the first three instances of where the word trust is found the Hebrew word *batach* is used. (For a more in depth definition of *batach*, see my Online study, True Faith). But in the fourth instance, where the evildoers are mocking him, the Hebrew word *galal* is used. **What they're saying in effect is, 'You say you are trusting in Yahweh? Hah! Look where that got you!'**

The word **gahlal** means to roll or to turn. It can refer to a circle, or anything that can be rolled. Used of a wheel that is rolled; used of the covering of the entrance to a tomb by rolling a stone across it; also used of storms and waves that roll across the sea and land; also a heap of stones that has been formed by rolling stones there. It was also used for the root of the word Golgotha, the place of the skull. Oftentimes, men, after they had covenanted with each other, would roll stones together into a pile, then have a covenant meal at the stone heap in observance of their new covenant standing with each other. And then farmers would unceremoniously roll stones into a pile just to get them out of the way.

Now *gahlal* from that idea came to be used figuratively for the idea of faith or trust. Like rolling your burden on the Lord. It could very well have been used because of the covenant idea associated with it. **But the significance of *gahlal* is the idea of the consequences of one's actions! It was important for all to realize the direct relationship that exists between one's decisions, one's acts, and the consequences that come from them!** A concept that is almost totally ignored in our society today. The idea is as follows, **as one was pushing the rock from point A to point B, he would notice that a furrow or track was left in the ground** showing an unbroken line. This led to the idea that there was a direct connection between one's acts and their consequences. One could see how the one thing led to the other; there was a direct line between the two.

So many people today are oblivious of this concept though. They blindly go through life committing all kinds of acts, without any regard or concern of the consequences. They act bewildered, or angry, when their lives are destroyed because they made wrong choices. They have never understood that actions have consequences, some good, some bad.

So when it comes to this idea of faith or trust, or committing oneself to the Lord, using *gahlal*, there is **this idea of rolling one's burden on the Lord; and, there is also the idea of the direct consequences that will come about as the result of it.** That is to say, that as one makes decisions and choices in life, some good, some bad; that there will be consequences, some good, some bad; that will come about as the direct result of these decisions and acts. **There is a line that connects them**, as there was a furrow, or track left in the ground as the result of rolling the stone from one place to another. And the same parallel follows in one's life before God. As the believer goes through life, he is faced with many decisions. If he decides to handle a problem in his own strength, using his own ideas and resources, or if he makes a decision excluding God from the process, then his decisions and acts will have certain consequences, usually, not too good. But if he decides to bring God into the process, asking him what to do, trusting in him to do it, he then too will have certain consequences, always good!

So *gahlal* means to roll your burden, or problems, your life on the Lord, to commit them to him, to trust him to do it with the idea that there will be good consequences and results that come out of it. It is this idea of trust and consequences that are found in Psalms 22:8, only in a mocking sense by the ungodly. *“He trusts in Yahweh, let him rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him.”* They were mocking the Lord, while he was on the cross dying for our sins, and they were saying, “Look where his trust in God got him. Look at the consequences of his faith in *Yahweh*!”

Jesus was trusting in *Yahweh* and look where his faith in the Father got him. He ended up having his nation reject him, people hate him, his friends turn away from him, even his own Father! But the story doesn't stop here **because the Father's will wasn't finished!!** He was raised from the dead and in his atoning death on the cross Christ paid the penalty for our sins thus gaining for us entrance into heaven and an eternity with God! Christ knew what the Father had promised in eternity past; Christ knew about his death on the cross; he knew about his resurrection from the dead, all these things that the Father had promised – and Christ believed the Father! Now in the flesh, as a man, he is going to have to go through all that. And this is where his trust comes in, to trust in the Father's plan, trust in the Father's promises, trust in the Father's provisions, trust in the Father's protection, trust in the Father's power and trust in the process that the Father used to bring about all these things.

Now when we talk about our faith today, of living the faith rest life as believers in Jesus Christ, **we are called upon to live the same kind of faith life that Jesus Christ lived – faith in the Father!** And the Hebrew word used for faith, *gahlal*, brings out the results of the faith rest life. As the stone was rolled from point A to point B, one could see a line on the ground that let us see the consequences of our decision to live by faith.

Sometimes, when we go through hard times in our lives, we wonder if we had made the right decision years ago to stay with Bible Doctrine and serve the Lord, especially when you see all the others who rejected the Word end up wealthy, or in a great career, or having much of this world's goods. Or we wonder when we made a decision by faith to move to a certain town, or go into business, or some other matter of faith, and because we're going through a hard time we wonder if we made the right decision to live the faith rest life, or to stick with Bible Doctrine! What we're doing is doubting the process, or doubting the provisions, or doubting the plan by the premature results of what's happening in our lives. **Just remember, the “stone” isn't finished rolling!**

Our decision to trust the Lord as our Savior, and our subsequent decision to live the faith rest life trusting in the promises and doctrines of God's Word that we made sometime ago has taken us to this place, but God's not through. In his process of completing our faith he is going to take us through a variety of things, which would include suffering, and at the end he will have the finished, desired results in our soul and in our lives!

“Who for the joy that was set before him” - ος αντι της προκειμενης αυτω χαρας

Again we have the use of the word that we had in verse one, *prokeimai*, where it says, *“the race that is set before us,”*. Where *prokeimai* referred to the particular course that had been established for the individual running it. The will of the Father for his Son, Jesus Christ, was the course that he had to run when he was here on earth, or the path that he had to follow. In his course was, of course, the cross on which he died to pay the penalty for our sins. But also in his course was the joy that was set before him, *prokeimai*, when he entered back into heaven to be seated at the right hand of the Father on high.

Ever since the beginning all of God's people on earth at one time or another, to one degree or another, in one category or another, have lived by faith. But none of us have ever lived by faith as we should. We have all failed to live by faith, or to live by faith to the degree that we should. Even though there were some who grew in their faith to the place of absolute confidence where they no longer doubted God, there were many times that they had doubted God before they got to that place.

But then Jesus Christ came into the mainstream of human life on earth and took up the mantle of faith and showed us what it meant to trust God. By his life he demonstrated to us the complete and perfect exercise of faith in the Father in every area and overcame everything that the devil and this world could throw at him and was subsequently promoted to the right hand of the Father in heaven.

And because Christ himself lived by faith, and because he was completed in his own faith through the sufferings that he had to go through, he is qualified to perfect other believers in their faith! This is why **Christ is not only the Author of the faith, but the Perfector of it as well!**

The idea is about taking faith and bringing it into a perfected or completed state and there are words for that. The verb *teleioo* is to make someone perfect, and if faith is involved, then it's to make their faith perfect. *Teleiotes* means that the believer now lives in a state of perfected or completed faith. And *teleiotes*, with the long *o*, refers to the one who makes the believer perfect in his/her faith. And that's the title of Jesus Christ here. He not only is the Author of this kind of faith, he's also the one who perfects it in others using himself as the supreme model and example for us to go by.

“Looking unto Jesus” for Church Age believers entails us looking at the faith of Jesus Christ and how he lived his life here on earth; how he ran his race. He lived his life by faith in the Father; he ran his race by faith. He left his throne in heaven, became a man, entered into the stadium of life in this world, ran his race by faith in the Father, and at the end when he crossed the finish line he was awarded a wreath of thorns; he died still trusting in the Father's plan, promises, power, provision, protection, and process; he was still trusting in the Father when he was there in Hades for three days and three nights; he was raised from the dead; he ascended into heaven the victor over Satan, sin and death and was seated at the right hand of God the Father on high, where he was made Lord over heaven and earth and the High Priest in the Order of Melchizedek. The Son believed the Father when he promised to give him the ends of the world as his inheritance and it was this faith in the Father's promise that caused him to endure the sufferings of this life. *“Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.”* Psalm 2:8

“Endured the cross” - υπεμεινεν σταυρον

There are two words that deal with endurance or patience, *makrothumia* and *hupomeno*. *Makrothumia* was the word used for dealing with people, while *hupomeno* was used for dealing with situations or things. *Makrothumia* was holding your temper in the face of provocation from someone elsewhere you had the power to do something about it, but chose not to. While *hupomeno* meant that one had to bear a bad situation because there was nothing you could do about it. Such as: being sick, or out of a job, (you can look for work, but you can't make someone hire you), the death of a loved one, sitting in the dentist's chair, going through a divorce, etc..

Christ had to endure the cross. He had the power to come down from the cross; he had the authority to summon legions of angels, but he had to stay on the cross and endure it. Why? Because the Father had given to him a multitude of people from this planet as his very own inheritance, but these people were sinful and under the legal indictment of sin and were on their way to eternal destruction. The only way that he could acquire these people for himself was to pay their debt concerning their sin, which meant that he had to suffer their penalty by dying on the cross as their substitute.

There was no other option for Christ in this matter. He had to die. If he was going to get this body of people for himself, then he had to satisfy the righteous demands of God's justice and take their punishment on himself. Therefore Christ had to endure the cross! *“Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”* Isaiah 53:12

But *hupomeno* was not about enduring a bad situation by grim determination, but relying upon God's grace provisions. Even in Christ's death on the cross, the Father had a provision for him that would enable him to endure the cross and come out the other side. Even in the darkest of hours and situations, where he was abandoned by family, friends, disciples, the nation and his very own Father; the Father had left him a provision that would sustain him and carry him through the cross!

What was that grace provision? **Faith, Bible Doctrine and the promises of God!** Jesus Christ knew the promises of God and he knew the teaching of God's Word. He not only knew them, but he believed them and lived by them. *“The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.”* Isaiah 50:4

And it was in the darkest of hours, when he was wracked with pain, abandoned by God the Father, abandoned by God the Holy Spirit, surrounded by monstrous evil, his soul being poured out to death, there was one thing that sustained him through all that and that was his faith in the Father's promises! **And if his faith in the Word would sustain him in the worse thing ever to occur on this earth, then it will sustain us in our lives.**

You see, the cross was on the course of the Father's will for his Son. Being born of the virgin, Mary, into that particular human family, was on the course of the Lord's life, the childhood he lived was also a part of it, going out into the wilderness for forty days and nights was on that course he ran, being tempted by Satan, being baptized by John, being baptized by the Holy Spirit, the disciples that the Father gave to him, the people that the Father gave to him, the opposition along the way, all on the course of his life, the cross, Hades, his resurrection from the dead and ascension into heaven.

“*Despising the shame*” - αισχυνης καταφρονησας

To have a fuller understanding of what guilt and shame are see my Online series, “Sin, Guilt and Shame”. **Real guilt** is where one has actually done something wrong, such as the breaking of one of God's Laws. He is guilty. **Sensed guilt** is where the conscience has the inner conviction of having done something wrong. He feels guilty.

Shame is not guilt. It is associated with guilt and proceeds from it, but it is a different dynamic. Shame is a group related emotional dynamic caused by no longer being wanted by the group, of being an outcast from the group, or being rejected by the group. It brings a sense of feeling inferior to others, of being no good, or not good enough to be with the others.

Because people are social creatures it is vitally important to their self esteem, stability, security and sense of identity, that they feel like they are attached to a group. Putting someone to shame by casting them out of the group is a shattering experience for anyone because they feel like nobody wants them any more. Banishment from tribes was one of the most severe punishments meted out.

There are two kinds of shame, as there are two kinds of guilt. There is internal shame, where one **feels** ashamed. And there is external shame where one is **put to shame** by an outside source. Internal shame arises when the conscience convicts us over what it considers wrong doing, which may or may not be wrong in the eyes of God. External shame arises when society convicts us of what it considers to be wrong and uses a variety of shaming techniques such as: stroking the finger, wagging the tongue, shaking the head, sighs of disgust, a ceremonial slap in the face, incarceration, the stocks, crucifixion.

Putting someone to open shame was designed to evoke feelings of shame in the individual so that it would bring about a change of conduct in them, as well as to act as a deterrent to other people to not follow their example or associate with them. Suffice it to say that shaming techniques were/are very effective in motivating the rest of the people in the group to stay in line.

Christ experienced the epitome of shaming techniques by the society he lived in. He was rejected by the people of Israel, he was cast outside the group, he was taken outside the city, he was handed over to be crucified like a common criminal, he had people showing him every type of disgusting treatment as he was hanging there on the cross! **But he was not ashamed!!**

Christ was subjected to external shame from others, but he had no internal shame! They put him to open shame. They tried to make him feel ashamed. But he had no shame! Why? Because he had not done anything wrong!

There was another concept connected with shame and that is the idea of failing to meet one's objective or goal. A man sets out to build a house, lays the foundation, but the work stops and he never finishes what he has started. This is the idea of public disgrace. Christ was put to open shame, but he never felt any shame because he had not done anything wrong, nor did he fail what he set out to do in following the Father's plan for his life. “*For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that **I shall not be ashamed.**” Isaiah 50:7*

And why is that? Because here is where faith and the doctrines of God's Word come into play. **God provides us the doctrines we need to believe every step of the course of our life as we run our race of faith.** Christ knew that he hadn't sinned and Christ knew that he had not failed in his mission in life and that he would not fail!

“And is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” - εν δεξια τε του θρονου του θεου εκαθισεν

In despising the shame the word is *kataphroneo*, which has the idea of looking down upon something. And Christ could look down on all that **for he was above all that!** He was above it all in his own personal righteousness, in the righteous life that he lived here on earth, and he certainly could look down upon it all **for he is now seated in the heights of heaven at the right hand of God!**

Kathizo is the normal word for sitting down, but context determines what its special usage is. For example we have the Ancient of Days taking his seat in Daniel 7:9, *“And the Ancient of days did sit,”*. I We have the court being seated in Daniel 7:10, *“The court was seated,”* (NIV) Which tells us that God now is sitting for the purpose of judgment.

We have this same concept of judgment with the 24 elders being seated on their thrones and God is going to judge the dead in Revelation 11:16-18, *“And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth.*

Being seated in one's home means that one is going to relax. Being seated in a court means that one is going to judge. But Christ being seated in this context means that he has been enthroned as king over heaven and earth! It's what we call the coronation from the word corona for crown. And it speaks of a newly crowned king who is now beginning his rule.

Christ's faith was in the plan of the Father and he lived his life here on earth in faith every moment of his earthly life. He knew that he was going to die on a cross; he knew that he was going to descend into Hades; he knew that he was going to be raised from the dead after being in Hades three days and three nights; he knew that he was going to return to heaven; and he knew that the Father would give him rule over all things. And reason why is because he believed the prophecies and knew that they spoke of him! *“Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.” Psalm 2:8* *“A Psalm of David. The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” Psalm 110:1* *“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.” Daniel 7:13,14*

But Christ knew who he was, whose he was and what his mission was here on earth. He knew the prophecies concerning these things; that they applied to him; he believed them; and he spoke of them openly even in the face of hostile negative volition, such as when he was being tried before the high priest of Israel. *“But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands. And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest:” Mark 14:61-66*

C. Consider Christ. v.2

“For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.” αναλογισασθε γαρ τον τοιαυτην υπομεμενηκοτα υπο των αμαρτωλων εις αυτον αντιλογιαν ινα μη καμητε ταις ψυχαις υμων εκλυομενοι

To consider is the orist middle imperative of *analogizomai*, which tells us that they are commanded to begin an action that they haven't been doing. It's quite easy for believers to think about themselves and what they're having to go through when suffering in a trial. If we keep on thinking about ourselves, we will end up in self pity, worry and fear. The best cure for that is for us to get our eyes off ourselves and onto the Lord.

These believers had been going through quite a lot of persecution because they had believed on Christ as their Savior and were living by faith in his Word. They had been taken to court, some were imprisoned, others were killed; they had lost their jobs, their homes, their businesses and money; they and their children were subjected to public ridicule and harassment, and many were forced to leave the country fleeing to other nations.

So the writer **commands them to start thinking about the Lord and what he went through here on earth**. And in the middle voice of the verb it tells us that they will be benefitted when they do. The doctrinal principle is that **thinking about ourselves and our problems will only make us feel more miserable. But thinking about Jesus Christ will give us peace, strength and courage.**

To consider, *analogizomai*, is the hardened thinking of the mathematician or the accountant. It tells us what kind of mental approach is needed in this matter. *Analogizomai* is the thinking that is based upon facts, not feelings. There is no subjectivity in it, no assumptions, no emotions; it is focused thinking based only on facts, and for us, the facts are the promises of God's Word! So we're to consider the Lord and what he went through over and over again in our lives.

But what are we to be thinking about? Obviously about the opposition from sinful negative people that he continually faced, but also about Christ's faith in the Father's plan, promises, protection, power, provisions and the process that the Father used to bring his faith to absolute perfection. **And what we can conclude is that the faith rest dynamic that the Father has established for all of his people to live by here on earth works!**

Christ was trusting in the Father and his plan for his life when he left heaven and came to earth. He said, a body hast thou prepared me. “Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering ***thou*** wouldst not, but a ***body hast thou prepared me:***” Hebrews 10:5 He trusted in the Father all throughout his years growing up. He trusted in the Father as he went out into the wilderness for forty days and forty nights. He trusted in the Father all those years of his public ministry. And he was still trusting in the Father as he was led away to be crucified and as he hung there on the cross.

But this faith that Christ lived by, (and that we're to live by), does not operate in a perfect or pleasant environment, but operates in an environment of **hostility**. There will be opposition from our flesh natures and others, from the people who belong to the world system, and from Satan himself. It is this opposition that strengthens our faith in the Word and provides the atmosphere by which faith is completed. It is this that we must consider as well when we think about what the Lord went through and how he endured it. It is this atmosphere of extreme hostility and opposition that motivates our faith to be directed to the Father completely.

Christ's endurance of the opposition from sinful men began at John's baptism where he identified himself publicly with the Father's will. The Holy Spirit led him out into the wilderness for forty days and he was tempted by the devil. When he came back and rejoined society in his home town he announced that he was the One chosen by God as Israel's Messiah. Luke 4:14-30

It was first there that the people of Israel tried to murder him! Christ's endurance of the opposition from sinful men began at his public ministry and went on until the day that they crucified him on the cross! Now we want to look at just what was it that the people reacted so violently over concerning Christ? And it was when **Christ identified himself fully with faith in the Father's plan for his life!**

The word for opposition is *antilogia* and it meant to refute, to contradict, to argue against, and was usually accompanied by hostility. Just about every time that the Lord opened his mouth to make a statement of truth, or to state what God wanted him to say, or to express divine viewpoint on things, the people of Israel would contradict him, deny what he said, argue the point, try to discredit him, lie about him, call him a bastard, or say that he was demon possessed, or that he was crazy, or try to kill him! John 5:16,18; 7:1,19,20; 8:13,40,48,59

This is a picture that will go down in history forever. The Creator of heaven and earth, the very God of Israel, the incarnation of truth, going to his people with the truth and these sinful men **are arguing with him, screaming at him, trying to kill him!** Interestingly enough these sinful men were the religious leaders of Israel who were supposed to be leading people to God, not attacking God!

What this teaches us is that, if we are going to do the will of God for our lives, if we are going to follow the Father's plan for our lives by faith, if we are going to identify ourselves with the truth of God's Word, then we will face opposition and hostility, not just from unbelievers, but from believers as well who are negative to these things.

The opposition comes from the sinful flesh nature, the devil and the world system made up of people who are under the control of Satan. And this continual opposition from these three sectors can cause believers to become weary in their souls if they get their eyes off the Lord and onto themselves! So what we have to do is continually be considering the Lord, what he went through, his faith in the Father, and as we get our eyes of faith back up and on the Word our souls will become strengthened and filled with peace.

Christ had to identify himself with us in every way so that he could save us. *“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;”* Hebrews 2:14

He became a man; he lived under the Law of the Old Covenant perfectly. There was only one human being who ever kept the Law perfectly, thereby satisfying its righteous requirements, and that was Jesus Christ. So Christ's legal standing before the Law is Righteous! Christ not only fulfilled the Old Covenant he also instituted the New Covenant. But while the Old Covenant was based upon keeping the Law, the New Covenant is based upon faith, perfect faith, faith in the Father. And while there was never anyone who ever kept the Law perfectly under the Old Covenant, there was never anyone who kept faith perfectly under the New Covenant! **No one except for Jesus Christ!** As a standing of righteousness would be there for those who kept the Law of the Old Covenant perfectly, which no one did except Christ. So a standing of righteousness would be there for those who kept the faith of the New Covenant perfectly, which no one did except Christ. That's why we are justified by the faith of Jesus Christ for it is his faith/righteousness that is imputed to us. Galatians 2:16 Pastor Mike

