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Lakeland Hills Leader

Lakeland Hills Blvd Church of Christ - 2510 Lakeland Hills Blvd, Lakeland Florida 33805

In The Lord I Trust...

By Chuck Richardson

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. (Proverbs 3:5 NASB95).

Trusting in someone is difficult for several reasons, but in the case of the Lord, it's a must. So, what are the things that give me assurance to trust in the Lord? This is the question I will answer as I reflect on my life as a believer in the Lord, and I hope you will benefit from also.

I reason the first trusting act is that I must accept the Lord's ability and desire to save. You may ask me, "If you're a Christian, haven't you already done that?" Yes. I did, but since I haven't received my final reward, my trust needs to continue. It is easy to become discouraged and grow weary in doing good (Gal. 6: 9), and lose spiritual sight (2Cor. 5:6-8; Heb. 11:1,6). My faith is cultivated to grow beyond coming into the faith (2Pet. 3:18; Phil. 1:9-11), and the Hebrew writer puts it this way, *For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. {Heb. 5:12}* Therefore we learn it is not a guarantee that we will continue to trust in the Lord, though we put Jesus the Christ on in baptism (Rom. 6:3,4; Gal. 3:26-28). I conclude then, my trust must mature in vigilant application of the fruit of the spirit (Gal. 5: 22-24) and the working of the building blocks of my faith (2Pet. 1:4-8), day by day until I am finished with my work (2Tim. 4:7,8). Then I can know I'm saved.

The second trusting act I must accept, is the Lord's surety that I can endure tribulation and persecution (Jas. 1:2-4). The Lord says, endurance needs to have its perfect result. And faith tested, produces it. Friend, trusting the Lord in this is hard. I may muster the trust to do the positive works commanded by the Lord, but to endure when those who hate me and despitefully harm me (Luk. 6:27,28) even while inflicted by various other things (i.e., job loss, health issues, suffering children or spouses, tragic accidents and deaths), seems unbearable, but the Lord still says to trust. In fact, the hardest pill to swallow is doing good to those who spitefully use you (Rom. 12:19-21), and if I'm suffering from the tragedies of life on top of persecution, then I'm afraid for my soul's salvation, because I haven't experienced anything remotely like this. So, right now this is an academic exercise, but if I truly trust in the Lord then I must endure even as much as Job.

I struggle with this passage, *indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. {2 Tim. 3:12}* Not because I don't believe persecution varies in type and intensity from place to place or from age to age, but because I confess, I don't believe I have experienced anything that rates as persecution, and I don't believe I'm understating my experience. So, I intend to thoughtfully examine my labor as a child of

God and seek the way to remedy everything lacking (Mat. 19:20; 1Thes. 3:10; Jas. 1:4). I will meditate on the fruit of the Spirit, and examples of persecutions with the aim to endure, and share all I learn and experience, when I put them to practice. Likewise, I encourage all of us to view trusting in the Lord as a continuous work in maturity to progress toward perfection so we may say as Paul, *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; {2Tim. 4:7}*