**In Christ We Trust**

Based on [Luke 18:31-43](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Lk18.31-43)

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Quinquagesima

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We are saved--not by our own works--but on account of our **faith** in Jesus Christ. (1) This faith is not just head knowledge about Jesus Christ. Faith is trust, and by that I mean involves the heart and soul and will,--*as well as the mind*. As our gospel well illustrates, (2) Trust is submitting to the person of Jesus Christ even in blindness, that is--before understanding his ways. But (3) trust in Christ also leads to a knowledge of his ways, as he wins over our hearts and enlightens our understanding.

1) Trust is different than knowledge. It’s common, even biblical, to say that whoever ***believes*** in Jesus Christ is saved. That is true, but what do you mean by “believe in Jesus?” Do you believe he existed? Fine, but that doesn’t mean you believe in him.

Do you think that “believing in Jesus” means that you believe he died for your sins? Knowing what Jesus did…Is that the “belief in Jesus” that saves? It’s not. ***The devil knows everything Jesus did. The devil knows Jesus died for your sin. He believes it, and he’s still evil.***

If faith is simply *knowing who Jesus is*, then the most evil creatures in the world have such faith. Even the deamons believe, (scripture says), and they shudder. They shudder because a so-called faith that simply *knows who Jesus is or what he has done* saves nobody, and we remain condemned.

Justification by faith is not knowing who Jesus is or even what he did for the sin of the world. ***The faith that saves--is not knowledge, it is trust.*** Saving faith isn’t merely *knowing* Jesus died for your sins, it is *trusting* him to forgive your sins. This involves coming to him to do so, at his invitation.

Trusting Jesus with your sins…confess your sins to him freely, with a plea for mercy and for the grace to do better…that is saving faith. It feels safer to justify yourself or make excuses; but it’s not. Christ will not use your sins against you. He comes to forgive them. *Knowing* this, however, is not enough. You must *trust* him.

You must *trust* Jesus Christ. Your sins put you in debt to God, and yes Christ paid it for you. Your sins require punishment and death, and yes Christ suffered it for you. Justice has been satisfied on your behalf, before you were born and before you had a heart and mind to trust. But hear this…even though your sins have been punished and paid for, you still cannot go directly to God the Father on your own behalf. You must go with Jesus.

Jesus is our advocate with the Father. The Father listense to Jesus.You must go to the Father with Jesus, beside Jesus, through Jesus…and that cannot happen, will not happen, for those who refuse to trust him. This is why his Gospel is so gentle. He says “Come to me all who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly at heart, and you will find rest for your soul. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

There are two aspects to this trust, this coming to Jesus and submitting to his yoke that are taught in today’s Gospel lesson. First, is trust how begins without understanding; the second is trust is rewarded and strengthened with understanding.

2) Trust begins without understanding. Jesus says that you must first become like little children to enter the kingdom of God. Scripture says the wise must first become fools for Christ. The exalted will be humbled, and the humble will be exalted. **So, after Jesus discloses his father’s plan, that he must suffer, die and rise again, scripture says that his disciples understood none of these things.** This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.

This is trust without understanding. It’s not that his words were that complicated…its that it didn’t make sense to them that God would send the messiah to die. **And as it turns out, they wouldn’t understand the significance of his suffering and death until he had risen from the dead.** But they trusted him, because they continued to follow him and believing that he had the words of eternal life.

3) Although trust begins in blindness, it leads to understanding. A blind man called out to Jesus for mercy, and his ***trust*** in Jesus made him well. Then he could see all things. This trust in the person of Jesus Christ, which is a gift of the Holy Spirit, is followed by illumination. You were blind in your trespasses and sins, but now, like the blind man, Christ has given you the sight of faith and you can see—that is understand the true meaning—of the things of God around you.

There are many dangers and evil that assault us, and even the elect have a breaking point. Therefore trust without understanding-though it saves--will eventually fail, just as Peter began in faith to walk on water, eventually became afraid and sunk. But after the resurrection, Peter did see. And we too have been given sight of the spirit. And we have the oracles of God in the Holy Scriptures, corrective lenses as it were--so that we can read them and learn the heart of God to give us confidence in every storm. Jesus gives sight to the blind who call upon him; and he gives understanding to those who trust in him.

And this understanding illuminates many dark things in this world and brings them to light. **The blindness of those who claim to see; the vanity of the world and her promises, the sleep of death, the great apostasy and antichrist; the hypocrisy of those who refuse to forgive others yet excuse themselves**, and the patient suffering of the church and her saints from the days of the prophets and the apostles until today. The final judgment and reckoning. The restoration of the world.

Why do we suffer, because Christ suffers; why do we rejoice, because Christ is raised and will come again. Why do we have peace, because Christ has prepared all things for us. **Why to the nations rage and plot in vain…because there days are numbered,** but the world of the Lord endures it all, and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. In this do we trust.