

MAY 2005—*Trusting and Trying*

Coming to faith in Christ as one's Savior is sometimes referred to as "trusting Christ." Yet as we begin to follow Christ in the realities of day to day life, we discover that there is a lot more to trusting Christ than a single prayer of commitment. In fact, we struggle at times between trying our best to think, speak, and act in a Christlike manner and trusting God to work his nature in us and through us.

As he so often does, C.S. Lewis masterfully speaks to this matter and helps us with valuable insight:

I know the words 'leave it to God' can be misunderstood, but they must stay for the moment. The sense in which a Christian leaves it to God is that he puts all his trust in Christ: trusts that Christ will somehow share with him the perfect human obedience which He carried out from His birth to His crucifixion: that Christ will make the man more like Himself and, in a sense, make good his deficiencies. In Christian language, He will share His 'sonship' with us, will make us, like Himself, 'Sons of God'. . . . If you like to put it that way, Christ offers something for nothing: He even offers everything for nothing. In a sense, the whole Christian life consists in accepting that very remarkable offer. But the difficulty is to reach the point of recognizing that all we have done and can do is nothing. What we should have liked would be for God to count our good points and ignore our bad ones. Again, in a sense, you may say that no temptation is ever overcome until we stop trying to overcome it—throw up the sponge. But then you could not 'stop trying' in the right way and for the right reason until you had tried your very hardest. And, in yet another sense, handing everything over to Christ does not, of course, mean that you stop trying. To trust Him means, of course, trying to do all that He says. There would be no sense in saying you trusted a person if you would not take his advice. Thus if you have really handed yourself over to Him, it must follow that you are trying to obey Him. But trying in a new way, a less worried way. Not doing these things in order to be saved, but because He has begun to save you already. Not hoping to get to Heaven as a reward for your actions, but inevitably wanting to act in a certain way because a first faint gleam of Heaven is already inside you.¹

*I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.
The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*
GALATIANS 2:20 NIV

¹ C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Touchstone, a division of Simon & Schuster, 1996), pp. 130-131.