






Faith-Rest Drill: Connect, Trust, and Rest

 Various
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Alright, today we will sum up the Faith-Rest Drill, sometimes called the Faith-Rest Life. This is a helpful tool that breaks down the walk by faith. Scripture implores us to walk by faith. The reason is because apart from walking by faith it's impossible to please God. There is simply no other way to please God and we are here to please God. That's the ultimate point of our existence. So, to take some time to unpack what is involved in walking by faith is a useful exercise. It really challenges us to think about what is going on in our soul.

Let's review these four steps. What are the four steps? RECALL, CONNECT, TRUST and REST. Let's look at RECALL. What do we have to do to recall? We have to know something from the word of God. We start off knowing little to nothing in the Christian life but we need to be in constant training so that we are building a logistical base of operation. The NT uses athletic imagery to describe the kind of training we need so that we have a depth of resources to draw from in a time of trial. Nobody else can do this for you. Like an athlete you have to discipline yourself to godliness. Joshua was a good leader, he reminded the people of Israel of what God had done for them. Why did he do that? To get their focus off of themselves and upon the God who is there. He reminded them of the plan of God and said, alright, now you have a choice to make, "choose you this day whom you will serve."

I want to add one more passage to RECALL; James 1:2. This is an interesting verse. I've always thought this is one of the most counter-intuitive verses in all of Scripture. James 1:2, "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials..." Note "when you encounter trials," not "if." You are going to encounter trials. That's just the way it is. So you might as well get prepared. And what is supposed to be your response to trials? That's what I've always felt was so counter-intuitive. "Consider trials all joy." Really? C'mon. That is a most unnatural response. What's the natural response? Emotional. We fall apart, get angry, take it out on everybody else and go have a pity party. We want to blame someone else even though half the time it's really our own fault. But we have to find a place to put the blame other than ourselves because it makes us feel better about ourselves. That is a response of the flesh. So, how are we going to stop doing that and get to the point where we consider our trials a joy? Well, what is interesting is this word "consider" - it is a word that means "to lead with the mind." It's saying be led, guided or supervised by something in your mind. What? Verse 3, "knowledge," knowledge "that

the testing of your faith produces endurance." You have to be led by that knowledge. If you don't know that there is a purpose to your trial you can't consider it all joy. It's all pain. Our problem 99.9% of the time, even if we know this verse, is that we can't see what the purpose could be. We want God to come down here and explain where it's all going first, then we'll consider it all joy. But that's not the way it works. He's not going to show you where it's all going. He's simply going to tell you I'm working something into you. I'm building you into the person I want you to be. I'm producing endurance in you. Can you accept that? Note that word at the end of verse 3; "endurance." I want to produce endurance in you with these trials. What do we usually think of when we think of "endurance?" Maybe a long distance runner. The word means to bear up under some pressure. If I'm running a marathon I've got to have endurance. When I was an athlete, our coach would be over there telling us to do this sprint and do that drill and we were going through all of this and he was just sitting over there blowing the whistle. What might I conclude? That there's no purpose to this, coach is just having fun with us. But there is usually a purpose to it. The coach knows what muscles we need to develop, what skills we need to master, and he has purposed the drills to strengthen the muscles and master the skills. The athlete doesn't always see that. He's not always considering these drills all joy. He's thinking, I've got to get out of this, I'm in pain. But if he knows that these drills are producing endurance to help him perform with excellence so he can win the game, then the drills can become enjoyable. There's a purpose to it all. Now transfer that idea to the Christian life. You face some trial, if you see that it has a purpose that changes everything. Now you can see that the Lord, like a coach, has sent this trial into your life in order to produce endurance in you, make you a stronger Christian, get you ready for the next trial. He's building you up. And there's no other way. So to know this enables you to RECALL this verse when the trial hits. If you don't remember it you immediately fall back into thinking, "This has no purpose, why do I have to go through this," blame everybody else and have a pity party. Wha, wha, wha, you big cry baby. Grow up and start recalling this verse...

The second step is CONNECT and that's what we're going to capitalize on today. This is the most difficult part. Somehow we have to connect our situation with something we have recalled. There is a choice here. Your volition is involved. The choice you make is based on some rationale that is going on in your mind. There are always reasons underlying our choices, a certain thinking pattern. You can go one of two ways. You can go with the pagan solution, what we might call human view point, or we can go with the divine solution, what we call divine view point. But either way we have to have some rationale in our minds, some ideas that are logically connected. Our hope is that we will demolish the pagan solution. Turn to 2 Cor 10:5. In this passage Paul is addressing some of the Corinthians who were arguing that Paul was walking according to the flesh in order to justify their walking by the flesh. But in 10:5 Paul says, "We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God..." Notice that, destroying speculations. That's paganism. Paul says you have to destroy that in your thinking. That stuff is around us every day. It permeates our culture. It's garbage. We have to destroy it as having any substance. It's all just vanity, hot air on a cold morning, appearing to have substance initially, but fleeting. You have to be convinced that paganism is a lot of hot air and baloney talk. But

the only way to do that is be convinced of the word of God. There is no neutrality. That's what Paul says next, "and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ..." It's one or the other. There is no middle ground. Note how Paul said "Every thought," take every thought captive, not just religious thoughts; but scientific thoughts, mathematical thoughts, political thoughts, historical thoughts, you name it, every thought must be taken captive to the obedience of Christ. Why? Because paganism seeps into all these areas. Paganism is a complete system. It's not consistent to itself, but it is a complete system and they are trying to improve it all the time. So you have to recognize it for what it is. Paul calls it "speculations." They are just making guesses; they don't really know. But we do know, the word of God is knowledge, real substance.

I want to show you how this knowledge works by taking you to another guy in Hebrews 11. We've seen Joseph, get my bones out of here. This is Abraham. Abraham faced a uniquely difficult trial and we want to see how he developed the rationale to trust. Verse 17, **By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; it was he to whom it was said, "In Isaac your descendants shall be called."** You wonder, how did Abraham ever get to the point where he could exercise faith and raise that knife up to slaughter his own son? If you read the passage in Genesis you are never told. What we are told, turn to Gen 22. We're told clearly in 22:1 "that God tested Abraham." To test means to show something's quality, to try it in order to prove it. This was after other tests and so Abraham was no neophyte. When God said to him, "Abraham!" Abraham said, "Here I am." This is showing us that Abraham had learned to respond immediately to the word of God. You know, there are many Christians who read the word of God and they say, I'm not so sure about that, that's your interpretation. They're not responsive to the word of God. You have to grow past that. Abraham was past all that. He knew what God said was what God said. In verse 2, "God said, "Take now your son, your only son," there was no question about what God meant. "Take now your son, your only son." And by the way, where else have you heard that phrase? John 3:16, your only begotten son. What does that phrase mean? It can't just mean the only biological son Abraham had because Ishmael was also his biological son. It must have some special significance. What's the difference between Isaac and Ishmael. Ishmael was not the heir of the Abrahamic promises. Only Isaac was the heir. The author of Hebrews picked up on this. It was through Isaac that Abraham's seed would come. So "take now your son, your only son." Take the heir, he had no other heir. So when you read John 3:16 you might think of it a little different. Jesus is the only begotten Son. He's the heir of the world. The one the Father loved. So Abraham is a picture of the Father and Isaac a picture of the Son. "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you." To offer a burnt offering was to demonstrate total surrender. But to offer a human sacrifice as a burnt offering would have sounded radical to Abraham. His Canaanite contemporaries offered human sacrifice. And this was nothing God had ever requested. In fact, there were a lot of things that must have gone through Abraham's mind. What are some of them? First, Gen 9:6, "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man." Can the God who said we should not murder now command murder? That must have been

a problem in Abraham's mind. How can God be inconsistent? How can God's word contradict? Second, Gen 21:12, which is quoted by the author of Hebrews, "through Isaac your descendants shall be named." Isaac is my heir but now I'm going to sacrifice Isaac? How is this going to work? Isaac didn't have any children yet. If Abraham sacrifices Isaac where is the heir going to come from? There's nobody else. Third, this is my son. I mean, really. Go sacrifice my son! What kind of a God are you? Well, Abraham knew exactly what kind of God He was. He is a good God and a promise making and promise keeping God. Verse 3, "So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him." Abraham knew God. It only took him one night to decide to trust and obey. What happened in Abraham's mind? In verse 4, "On the third day," so they've been walking to this place for three days now, "Abraham raised his eyes and saw the place from a distance." And watch verse 5, "Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go over there; and we will worship and return to you." Do you notice anything strange about that verse? The last phrase, "we will worship and return to you." Who's we? Abraham and Isaac. But I thought you were going to sacrifice Isaac. How is Isaac going to return? We're never told in Genesis. It's the author of Hebrews who was able to penetrate this. So turn back to Hebrews 11 because here we see the rationale that took place in Abraham's mind. We get to see how this man reasoned. Hebrews 11:19, **He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type.** This Greek word **considered** is the word we want to work with today in three different contexts. It's the word *λογιζομαι*. It means "to give careful thought to a matter" and should be translated, "think (about), consider, ponder, let one's mind dwell." A lot was going on in Abraham's soul that night and it's what we have to go through in step two if we're ever going to connect our situation to the plan of God and live by faith. Abraham had information from God. He gave careful thought to that information; all the promises, the command to offer up Isaac, and he connected the promise that through Isaac your descendants will be named to the command to offer Isaac as a burnt offering and this is what he came up with. **God is able to raise people even from the dead.** How did he ever get to resurrection? Abraham was logically interconnecting God's word. He didn't doubt there was a rationale. He never doubted the word of God. And that's a critical point when you're trying to connect. You must be convinced that God's word has the answer. It's not always spelled out for you. It wasn't spelled out for Abraham. Abraham had to figure it out. He knew there was an answer. He just had to find it. So he reasoned that if my descendants will be named through Isaac, and God wants me to kill Isaac, then God must raise Isaac from the dead. And so he saddled the donkeys and set out to sacrifice Isaac. It's interesting, he didn't tell Isaac he was going to sacrifice him. We have no record that he told Sarah he was going to sacrifice Isaac. He may have, we have no knowledge of this. But what we know is that this was Abraham's test. This was God testing Abraham to approve of him. And by this reasoning Abraham took him up, raised the knife and was about to come down before God said, stop. Abraham passed the test because he was able to rationally interconnect the Scriptures and trust. And God is going to test you. That's the way it is. So you better be in training now so you can connect the pieces together as to what God is doing with your life, and trust.

When we talk about trust, and this is the third step in the Faith-Rest Drill; TRUST, or faith, what we mean is “rely upon” or “depend.” When we say that we’re not talking about blind faith. Faith, in the biblical sense, always has reasons underneath it. We have to be convinced that something is true. You can’t just work it up. Faith is a word that was almost entirely ruined by a Christian named Soren Kierkegaard. Kierkegaard invented the notion of blind faith, or what is today known as a leap of faith. A leap of faith is faith without evidence. You’re just leaping out there in the void hoping there will be someone there to catch you. That’s what most people think Christian faith is today. They think you are just blindly believing something. That’s why they think Christians are such fools. That’s why they created the fiction between faith and reason. What Kierkegaard did was exalt blind faith. He said this is the highest kind of faith, so high that it authenticates your faith. It affirms the truth value of your faith. In other words, faith makes it true for you. Yet the Bible never describes faith in those terms. Faith is being convinced that something is true. Whether you believe it or not it is true. Your faith doesn’t change that. What was true in the case of Abraham? That His descendants were to be named through Isaac. That was true whether or not Abraham believed it. How did Abraham know it was true? Because it’s the word of God. That’s what I mean when I say the word of God is substance, it’s real.

Look at Hebrews 11:1. 11:1 is not a definition of faith. This gets used a lot for a definition of faith but it’s really a description of what faith does. If you want a definition of faith, it’s “reliance or confidence in someone or something.” But what we have here is a description of what faith does. The NASB says **faith is the assurance of things hoped for**. The word translated **assurance** is *υποστασις* and refers to subjective **assurance**. In other words, what faith does is brings subjective assurance to the believer. The word translated **hoped for** is from *επιζω* and means something “expected.” The believer expects something because of its objective truth and what faith does is give us the assurance now of the things we expect in the future. In this way faith is making a future expectation so real to us that it gives us confident assurance. That’s what Abraham had. He didn’t hesitate to offer Isaac because he was confident that God would give him descendants through Isaac. Then the verse says, **faith is...the conviction of things not seen**. This is parallel. The Greek word **conviction** is *ελεγχος* and means “the presenting of evidence for the truth.” That is, to be convicted of the truth value of something. Faith shows we’ve been persuaded to accept **things not seen** as if they had already taken place. The descendants of Abraham through Isaac were not yet seen. But Abraham was convicted that they would be in the future. This is what we meant the first week when we said in one way we can remember the future. Like Joseph remembered the Exodus. We can remember the future when the promises of God are so real to us that even though they have not taken place they have in our minds.

So the second step, CONNECT, ties in closely with the third, TRUST, but the second step really does have to be dealt with before we can trust the Lord, and that means we have to have some sort of a rationale in our minds; some underlying reasons that are Scripturally and logically interconnected. These reasons are the basis for our faith. Faith is not a blind leap; faith is not a guess. Faith is knowledge that results from being convinced of the truth of God’s word. And being convinced involves logical reasoning in the mind. You can’t just make yourself

believe. The human mind is designed by God to be persuaded by logical reasoning. These reasons for faith give you the intellectual power to “cast down” HVP gimmicks, demolish HVP and walk by faith according to DVP. To go through these steps effectively you have to be training constantly in the truth of God’s word.

We’ve looked at OT saints and how they were able to develop the rationale in their minds for living by faith. Let’s look at two passages in the NT that exhort us to develop the rationale in our minds for living by faith. Romans 6:11. These passages use the same Greek word that was used of Abraham in Heb 11. It’s the Greek word *λογιζομαι*, which means “to give careful thought to a matter, think (about), consider, ponder, let one’s mind dwell on.” This is what we have to do in order to get to step three, Trust. Romans 6 is telling us how to have victory over the sin nature. The sin nature is the propensity to sin that we all have, but as believers we’ve died to it, in the sense that we are not slaves to its mastery and we are no longer required to obey its desires. In verse 11 he’s telling us the rationale, how we are to think of ourselves now. “Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.” In other words, you’re actually supposed to dwell on this doctrine. You’re supposed to play this over in your mind’s eye. I’m dead to sin. You have to dwell on that fact. The imagery is more explicit in verse 3, “Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? ⁴Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.” See how visual that is? Usually the NT seems abstract. But this is highly visual, what happened when we had faith, we were identified with Christ Jesus in His death on the cross, buried with Him, raised to live a new life. All that happened right then and there. And verse 11 is saying contemplate that deeply, realize who you were and who you are now, because that’s essential to overcoming the pull of the sin nature. This is important because it’s saying you’re not obligated to sin. Christians get it in their head that because they still sin that it’s inevitable and therefore it becomes something they accept. That’s not a valid response. That’s throwing in the towel. What does Hebrews 12 say? You have not resisted to the point of shedding blood. How we resist is by dwelling on a passage like Rom 6:11, considering that we’re dead to the sin nature and alive to Christ Jesus. We don’t have to sin because we are not slaves to sin.

Turn to another one, Phil 4:8. This is a famous one. Many of you probably have this one memorized. It uses the same word *λογιζομαι*. “Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.” That last expression, “dwell on these things” is the Greek word. He’s saying think about these things deeply. Meditate on these things. Meditate on true things, honorable things, right things, pure things, lovely things, things of good repute or anything of excellence and worthy of praise. I think the news completely obliterates this. The news is all bad news. It gets you thinking on evil things, how bad a world this is, disreputable things, impure things, evil things, ugly things. I’ve thought about this verse as basically commanding Christians to stop watching the news so much. I’m not trying to be legalistic, I’m trying to say that

if Scripture states you should do one thing and you do a lot of the opposite, you're going to have problems. If you do this you are able to TRUST because all these things are the ultimate plan of God, they are what counts.

And the fourth step is REST. Rest is really the result. When you live by faith you can remain cool and calm, you can be content, because while the world may be falling down around you, the Lord is holding you up, that's rest, it's a relaxed mental attitude in the midst of adversity.