

It is important to ensure fellowship with God before the study of the Word.
If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

Standing on the Promises of God - -

2 Timothy 1:7 For God did not give us a Spirit of fear but of power and love and self-control. *NET Bible*

**The Mystery of Iniquity in Its Historical Aspects -
Lewis Grant Randal¹**

There are two distinct causes of evil among fallen humans, viz., Satan (Luke 22:31; Eph 4:27; 6:11, 12), and man's own sinful nature (Mark 7:20–23; Jas 1:13–15). The manifestation of sin is apparent, but which of these two causes has produced the visible result cannot always be determined. Satan was the original cause in the beginning; hence today he is at least the indirect cause of all iniquity. In cases where lust of any kind is involved, the primary and perhaps sole cause is probably, yes, undoubtedly, the sinful nature. It cannot be known, however, whether or not there is satanic use of one's inherent lust as a means of temptation, except where the Scripture so indicates. Of the covetous betrayer of Christ it is written, "Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot" (Luke 22:3).

It is most reasonable to suppose that Satan used the lust of covetousness in Judas as a means by which the iniquitous result was accomplished. This is, no doubt, often the case.

The Mystery of Iniquity, in its historical aspects, involves the record of satanic opposition to God, the consequent stages of lawlessness, and the culmination thereof in the Man of Sin.

In regard to Satan, it is well to note here that his methods differ according to the type of people with whom he is dealing. When he deals with his own, i.e., the unregenerate, he seems to try usually to produce in them a righteousness, which is a mockery of God's righteousness, but when he deals with God's people he seems to try continually to produce unrighteousness, to offend and grieve their heavenly Father.

One of the forms of unrighteousness that is most grievous to God and the indwelling Spirit is arrogance in the soul of a Christian. It is so subtle, the Christian caught in its snare is unable to detect its presence. A log in one's eye prevents him from seeing reality, is counterproductive to objectivity, being taught by the Spirit, correct application, and the execution of the *unique spiritual life* by the power provided by God the Holy Spirit.

This arrogant believer is fodder for our adversary, the devil, and uses the Christian through "mistaken impressions of duty" to correct others from a superiority complex that develops from a lack of humility.

The arrogant believer is sincere in his claims of being illuminated by God to things that God has allegedly revealed to him, yet he lacks understanding to the exact teachings of Scripture.

We are all susceptible to such peril of falling into the snare of the devil. When we do, we are used as one of Satan's **TASK ORGANIZATION**.

When you hear something from the pulpit that doesn't sit right with you, does that mean what you hear is wrong?

- You may cringe at certain things, but do you really trust in the Lord with the genuine humility of Christ?

¹*Bibliotheca Sacra*. 1998 (electronic edition.). Dallas, TX: Dallas Theological Seminary.

- Are you willing to be taught by the Spirit?
- Do you **pray** in that throne room of grace and hash things out in the presence of your heavenly Father or do you **react**?
- Reaction leads to mistaken impressions of duty in which one attempts to take the sliver out of a brother's eye.

Matthew 7:3-5

“Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?
 4 “Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ and behold, the log is in your own eye?”

- The human eye . . . and sight . . . are the design of Jesus Christ as creator (**Colossians 1:14,ff**).
- Sight is the miracle of God.
- What happens when something is stuck in it? Impaired or obstructed vision?

Unlike a literal wood chip lodged in the eye, **the log of arrogance** is undetectable so that it becomes a splinter in your brother's eye.

POD - Arrogance in the soul of a Christian leads to mistaken impressions of duty.

5 “You hypocrite [*the arrogant believer*], first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.”

Note three translations of **Hebrews 12:2** - -

New American Standard Version

Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

King James Version

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

The NET Bible (The New English Translation)

Keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. For the joy set out for Him He endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

A partial translation recently quoted to me

Concentrate on Jesus the founder and perfecter of our doctrine who exhibited the happiness of God as He endured the cross. . .

Hebrews 12:2 in the original language

ἀφορῶντες εἰς τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν Ἰησοῦν, ὃς ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς ὑπέμεινεν σταυρὸν αἰσχύνης καταφρονήσας ἐν δεξιᾷ τε τοῦ θρόνου τοῦ θεοῦ κεκάθικεν.

- ἀφορῶντες – from APHORAIO - Range of meaning from *A Greek-Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* by Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich-Danker (a.k.a. BAGD)
 1. “To look away, fix one's eyes trustingly εἰς τινα to or on someone; to see”
 2. There is no support for the translation *concentrate*, although performing the verbal action of ἀφορῶντες does imply a task to concentrate on one you have your eyes fixed upon.
- εἰς + ὁ - EIS plus HO – Emphasizes the direction the believer is to fix his eyes *upon* or focus his attention.

- Conjunction **καί** – **KAI** joins two nouns, **ἀρχηγός** and **τελειωτής**.
- **ἀρχηγός** – **ARCHEGOS** – Range of meaning (BAGD) -
 1. “leader, ruler, prince”
 2. “one who begins” something as first in a series and thus supplies the impetus - in a bad sense, *instigator*
 3. “originator, founder”

In all three translations, New American Standard Bible, King James Version, and New English Translation (NET) Bibles, the translation founder is not used.

- ✓ NASB *author*
- ✓ KJV *author*
- ✓ NET *pioneer*

The reason for this falls under the principle of interpretation that the context and the relationship of words to one another drives their meaning.

- **τελειωτής** – **TELEIOTES** – Range of meaning (BAGD) -
 1. “perfecter” (hapax legomenon – which means it only appears one time)
 2. To understand this better one has to go to the verb from which it was derived- **τελειόω** - **TELEIOO**
 - A. “complete, bring to an end, finish, or accomplish”
 - B. “bring to an end, bring to its goal or to accomplishment” in the sense of the overcoming or supplanting of an imperfect state of things by one that is free from objection. This is usually understood to mean the *completion* and *perfection* of Jesus by the overcoming of earthly limitations.
 - C. As a term of the mystery religions “consecrate, initiate passively”- *be consecrated, become a τέλειος*
 - ✓ NASB *perfecter*
 - ✓ KJV *finisher*
 - ✓ NET *perfecter*

The translation of these two nouns **ἀρχηγός** and **τελειωτής** hinges on what Jesus was the **ἀρχηγός** and **τελειωτής** of.

The Bible states He was “. . . the author and perfecter, author and finisher, or pioneer and perfecter - of faith [τῆς πίστεως – TES PISTEOS].”

- **πίστις** – **PISTIS** - Range of meaning (BAGD) -
 1. That which causes trust and faith—
 - A. *faithfulness, reliability*
 - B. *solemn promise, oath, or truth*
 - C. *proof or pledge*
 2. “Trust, confidence, faith in the active sense which is tantamount to ‘believing.’”
 - A. *faith, trust, confidence in God*
 - B. Christ— used of belief and trust in the Lord’s help in physical and spiritual distress; often in the synoptic gospels.
 - C. The **πίστις** can also be characterized by an objective genitive of the thing: **ἡ πίστις τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ** *faith in his [Jesus’] name*.
 - D. **πίστις** is found mostly without an objective, *faith* — as true piety, genuine religion.
 - “God has opened the door of faith to the Gentiles”, that is, opened the way for them to participate in a new relationship with God (**Acts 14:27**).

Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, states, “In primitive Christianity, **πίστις** became the leading term for the relation of man to God. This rests in part on the fact that already in the Old Testament and Judaism, “faith” had become an important term for the religious relationship.”

3. That which is believed, *body of faith* or *belief, doctrine*

- Interestingly enough, **Hebrews 12:2** is not listed as a possibility of reflecting this meaning for **PISTIS**.
- Is doctrine found in the acceptable ranges of meaning for *pistis*?
- Context will determine the correct meaning for *pistis*.

Hebrews 12:2 (NASB) -

Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith. . .

Jesus - Ἰησοῦς - Used to emphasize the humanity of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Was the humanity of Christ, the founder and perfecter of our doctrine, *if one holds to that translation?*

Did the humanity of Christ Jesus write the word of God?

Luke 2:52 And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

- Does deity increase in wisdom?
- The humanity of our Savior increased in wisdom through learning things about His environment from the natural world and learning the word of God, **Bible doctrine**.

POD - As one grows in the **grace** and **knowledge** of the Lord Jesus Christ, one increases in favor with God.

Luke 2:41-49

Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. ⁴² And when He became twelve, they went up there according to the custom of the Feast; ⁴³ and as they were returning, after spending the full number of days, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. But His parents were unaware of it, ⁴⁴ but supposed Him to be in the caravan, and went a day's journey; and they began looking for Him among their relatives and acquaintances. ⁴⁵ When they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem looking for Him. ⁴⁶ **Then, after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions.**

By asking questions of the teachers of the Law, He learned about what they believed.

⁴⁷ **And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers.** ⁴⁸ When they [*Joseph and Mary*] saw Him, they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, “Son, why have You treated us this way? Behold, Your father and I have been anxiously looking for You.” ⁴⁹ And He said to them, “Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's house? [*about My Father's will*]”

He was the leader of our spiritual life and we are to follow that lead to the finish line that He crossed.

In crossing that finish line, He fulfilled the Father's will for His life – in its entirety.

“Concentrate on Jesus the founder and perfecter of our doctrine who exhibited the happiness of God as he endured the cross.” *Partial translation.*

- Did He exhibit the happiness of God as He endured the punishment for our sins?
- It was for the **joy set before Him** that He endured the cross!

The verse continues with the preposition **ἀντί** followed by the genitives **πρόκειμαι** and **χαρά**, in between the dative of **αὐτός**, which indicates that joy was the goal or destination of the Father's plan for the Son.

Where was that destination?

Where would that joy be experienced by the humanity of Christ?

Not on that cross - separated from the Father crying out "**ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI.**"

But where seated "**. . . at the right hand of the throne of God**" after accomplishing the Father's will.

τῆς πίστεως is not a reference to our doctrine in **Hebrews 12:2** it is a reference to our SPIRITUAL LIFE.

The mind of Christ is a reference to the attitude of our Savior, which incorporates doctrine, humility, and dependence.

2 Timothy 4:2 - *commands the pastor to - -*

Preach the word [*with authority and conviction as a herald*]; **be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience** [*steadfast endurance*] and **instruction** [with **διδασχῆ** - **DIDACHE** - *doctrine*].

“Reprove” - **ἐλέγχω** – **ELEGCHO** – *“bring to light or expose sin”*

Titus 2:15 - *commands the Shepherd-Teacher to - -*

These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

Closing thoughts

- There is a huge difference between listening to a man teach the word of God and being taught by the Spirit *from within*.
 - When the believer is taught by the Spirit, he is able to distinguish the *emphasis* that fallible men make as they teach the word of God.
-

All Scriptures quoted are from New American Standard unless otherwise noted.