

TO DEPEND UPON

If a man saw the world upside down, with all the trees and towers hanging head downwards as in a pool, one effect would be to emphasise the idea of dependence. There is a Latin and literal connection; for the very word dependence only means hanging. It would make vivid the Scriptural text which says that God has hung the world upon nothing. If Saint Francis had seen, in one of his strange dreams, the town of Assisi upside down, it need not have differed in a single detail from itself except in being entirely the other way round. But the point is this: that whereas to the normal eye the large masonry of its walls or the massive foundations of its watchtowers and its high citadel would make it seem safer and more permanent, the moment it was turned over the very same weight would make it seem more helpless and more in peril. It is but a symbol; but it happens to fit the psychological fact. Saint Francis might love his little town as much as before, or more than before; but the nature of the love would be altered even in being increased. He might see and love every tile on the steep roofs or every bird on the battlements; but he would see them all in a new and divine light of eternal danger and dependence. Instead of being merely proud of his strong city because it could not be moved, he would be thankful to God Almighty that it had not been dropped; he would be thankful to God for not dropping the whole cosmos like a vast crystal to be shattered into falling stars. Perhaps Saint Peter saw the world so, when he was crucified head-downwards.

GK Chesterton, St. Francis - Chapter V

[\(http://catholicsaints.info/saint-francis-by-g-k-chesterton-chapter-v/\)](http://catholicsaints.info/saint-francis-by-g-k-chesterton-chapter-v/)

THE CONTINUED GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- The Kansas City Statement of Faith - GCCC
 - Depending, as did our fathers, upon the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, we work and pray for the transformation of the world into the Kingdom of God, and we look with faith for the triumph of righteousness, and the life everlasting.
- Continued guidance - always present and always searching (seek God's will)
 - Demands a deep and intimate relationship *of listening*. We are guided. We are not demanding, exerting, pushing, rushing.
 - We cannot be aware of the guidance of the HS when our goal is to outrun and get ahead of the presence of the HS. It is a great way, though, to cloud oneself and others to your personal agenda - use the HS as your reason for saying, doing, or ignoring suffering, pain and despair in others and the world.

TO LEAD US

- What does it mean for stubborn, hard-headed, individualistic, traditionally minded Congregationalists to be led?
 - Luke 22:24-30 - Christ does not lead like the rulers of this world. The HS does not lead like the world leads.
- To be led is an act of **trust**.
 - Trust depends on:
 - *Character - the character of the HS is the character of God*
 - *Competence - HS is able to do what we cannot but should*
 - *Communication - HS communicates with the deep parts of us to God*
 - Human leadership mirrors these aspects of the HS, but -
 - *Character of human being is easily manipulated to appear*
 - *Competent for the sake of selfish gain and flawed character which determines how*
 - *Communication among one another will occur or not occur*
 - This is why **we** subject ourselves to the HS to lead us
 - (from Leader's Insight: Can I Trust You? by Angie Ward, Christianity Today)

INTO ALL TRUTH

- Translation issue - KJV leaves out the article "all THE truth"
 - What is "THE Truth"?
 - John 18:38 - The Pilate Question!
 - What, indeed, is the truth?
 - The Truth is
 - something the HS leads us toward
 - it is something that is continually revealed to us
 - as a progressive revealing of a stable, unchanging truth
 - or as an ever-changing expansion of truth into constantly new ways of being and seeing and experiencing
 - we depend upon
 - "the truth" whether it is progressive or stable is the ground we stand upon, the Solid Rock.
- Process of discovery in the Christian tradition is called "Discernment"
 - Scripture
 - Tradition
 - Reason
 - Experience

- All predicated upon a deep and humble trust in the guidance of the HS
 - A gift from Jesus Christ - John 16:1-7
- Proverbs 24:3-4

- Dependence
- Guidance
- Leadership
- Truth
 - Are all qualities of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit which we seek to emulate
 - The HS can only be depended upon if we
 - **LEARN** the Faith - Covenant Pt 1 - “to seek God’s will as taught in the Holy Scriptures”
 - **LIVE** the Faith - Covenant Pt 2 - “to walk together in the ways of the Lord”
 - **TELL** the Faith - Covenant Pt 3 - “to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all people”
 - **TRUST** God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit - Covenant Pt 4 - “to depend upon the continued guidance of the HS into all (the) truth”