

Trusting God

Fellowship of Champions
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Introduction: In our daily Christian walk, we often admonish or encourage one another to “Trust the Lord.” And this we should do, if we could only understand exactly how to go about it. Just what, precisely, does it mean to trust the Lord? “Trust the Lord”, I fear in too many cases has been reduced to platitude status. It’s just something to say to someone who’s going through something or hoping for something or trying to accomplish something or disappointed about something or at a loss about some other something. Then, tragedy strikes, or stresses mount, pressures build, and we can get overwhelmed. We need the Lord. We need to trust Him. But I found myself knowing, but not actually doing that, not really applying the admonition or encouragement to trust Him.

I’m not just talking about trusting in Christ for your salvation, or me for mine. I’m also talking about trusting God each day, after we’re saved through faith in Christ. In every circumstance. I’m talking about walking out – living out the *faith* part of your faith. Its about what or who you and I are relying on, moment by moment, to get us through, and how we deal with things that don’t go our way. We all know that God is the answer to the Sunday School question, “Who should we trust and call on in every situation, boys and girls?” Jesus! Right? But how does that really work? Well, our faith is a practical faith. That is, trusting God should be practiced as a daily, unceasing, exercise of our faith - our normative way of thinking and acting all the time.

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- **Say we begin with a couple of tests to see how we’re doing in trusting God.**
 - Let’s take paying the bills as a test. What are you counting on to get them paid? Honestly, is it your job? Business? Money in the bank? Support from family/friends? Social Security check, or pension? **De 8:18** - *“But you shall **remember the LORD** your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth...”* Trusting God is remembering that He is the source of your ability to pay. **Ps 52:7-8** *“Behold, the man who would not make God his refuge, But trusted in the abundance of his riches And was strong in his evil desire. But as for me, I am like a green olive tree in the house of God; I trust in the loving-kindness of God forever and ever.”* **Pr 11:28** *“He who trusts in his riches will fall, But the righteous will flourish like the green leaf.”*
 - So, what about your health as a test? My health? Are we counting on doctors? The best doctors with the best training and the best reputation? Some new surgical procedure? What about your very life? **Ex 15:26** *“for I, the LORD, am your healer.”*

De 32:39 “See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded and it is I who heal...” Trusting God is acknowledging that He is our healer.

- **So, what does it mean to trust in the Lord?**
- **First**, to trust the Lord is to **trust His Word**. Trust everything it says about God, His character, His promises, His nature and abilities. His Word is the revelation of Himself, and it is the basis for everything that we know about God. We know that His Word is reliable and trustworthy, not because of archaeological, scientific, or historical evidence, and not because of our own experiences, which are subjective and can be interpreted to mean almost anything, but because we have the objective and irrefutable proof of fulfilled prophecy. The Bible was written by a being who transcends time, and alone knows “*the end from the beginning*” **Is 46:10**. Consider...

2Pe 1:16-19 “*For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well pleased" [Mt 17 – Mount of Transfiguration] - and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.*”

- The point of fulfilled prophecy is to demonstrate that its author (God) transcends time and has the power to fulfill it. Fulfilled prophecy validates God’s Word as authentic and trustworthy, and is a proof of His very existence. Without the component of fulfilled prophecy, how could one distinguish one so-called sacred book from the next? The Bible stands alone in this regard.

Isa 46:9-10 “*Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure.’”*

- **Second**, where His Word does not speak directly to an issue, circumstance, or event, to trust in the Lord is to **trust His character and nature**. We rest in the knowledge that He is love, that He is sovereign, omniscient, and omnipotent.

Ps 13:5 “*But I have trusted in Your loving-kindness; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation.*” **1Jo 4:16** “*We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*” **1Ti 6:15** “*...He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords.*” **Ro 8:28** “*And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*”

- **Third**, to trust in the Lord is to **submit to His will** in everything. We can know His will because we have been born again. **Ro 12:2** “*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind [regeneration], so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*”
- Submitting to God’s will is an act of trust that requires the humility of a yielded heart. Jesus exemplified this humility when He said that night in the garden before His arrest and crucifixion, “*Nevertheless, not My will, but thine be done.*” **Lk 22:42**
- When you seek to do God’s will, you can trust Him to bring His will about. **Ps 37:5** “*Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, and He will do it.*”
- Submitting to God’s will requires an eternal perspective. This means that you and I are willing to endure suffering, if it is His will (and it sometimes is), because you know that your future is secure in Him and that our suffering will not last forever. **2Ti 1:12** “*For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day [Paul’s eternal security/salvation].*”

- **So, what does it look like to trust in God?**
- God will never forsake you, if you trust in Him. **Ps 9:10** “*And those who know Your name will put their trust in You, For You, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You.*”

- Your heart will rejoice, if you trust in Him. **Ps 33:21** *“For our heart rejoices in Him, Because we trust in His holy name”*
- You will not be shaken, if you trust in Him. **Ps 16:8** *“I have set the LORD continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.”* **Ps 21:7** *“For the king trusts in the LORD, And through the lovingkindness of the Most High he will not be shaken.”* **Ps 62:6** *“He only is my rock and my salvation, My stronghold; I shall not be shaken.”*
- God will deliver you, if you trust in Him. **Ps 22:4** *“In You our fathers trusted; They trusted and You delivered them.”*
- You will not be disappointed, if you trust in Him. **Ps 22:5** *“To You they cried out and were delivered; In You they trusted and were not disappointed.”*
- Aunt Drucilla is my favorite Aunt. When I was a poor kid on welfare, had a single mom with three kids no job, Drucilla, a teenager herself at the time, saw me wearing my ratty sneakers from the previous school year and took me out to buy me my first pair of Converse basketball shoes (Chuck Taylors) when I was in the 6th grade. Indiana is basketball country, and I played for my school on a traveling team.
 - She came to visit me after I lost my leg in an auto accident. She asked me, “Noel Ray, aren’t you mad at God? Are you asking yourself, Why me? I would be so upset. I’m asking God, Why Noel Ray? He’s a pastor, a missionary for You. I don’t understand.” I said to her that I had thought about the question, but never asked it. I’m not mad at God. What came to me was, Why not me? Look at the apostles, and what they endured. They were the Lord’s closest friends and confidants. Things happen, and God uses them to conform us to the image of Christ. That’s the *Why?*.
 - I used to travel a lot for business. I had an accountability partner, Jim Arnold, who also traveled for his business. Some of our traveling friends used to watch pornography on the road in their rooms. Who’s going to know, right? Jim and I would talk about it. We agreed that we would not engage in that, or go down to a hotel bar, or drink alcohol, or be alone with a woman in a room. We decided in advance that we would guard ourselves against such things. So, when opportunities presented themselves, our hearts were already set. We were protected. We had already dealt with the issue, and were committed in our hearts when the temptations came our way. Trusting in God works the same way. We have to already be trusting Him when trouble comes.

- I'm afraid that some of you here today are doing pretty well, things are working, life is good, and something is just around the corner. Trouble is coming. Are you ready? Have you surrendered to God's will, and are you trusting His Word and character? If so, you will be ready. You will not say, why me? You will be able to say, Why not me?
- Loving-kindness will surround you, if you trust in Him. **Ps 32:10** *"Many are the sorrows of the wicked, But he who trusts in the LORD, loving-kindness shall surround him."*
- You will not live in fear, if you trust in Him. **Ps 56:3** *"When I am afraid, I will put my trust in You."* **Ps 56:4** *"In God, whose word I praise, In God I have put my trust; I shall not be afraid. What can mere man do to me?"* **Ps 112:7** *"He will not fear evil tidings [bad news] whose heart steadfastly trusts in the LORD."* **Isa 12:2** *"Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; For the LORD GOD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation."* Trusting in God is the antidote to fear.
- God is your refuge, who you run to in times of trouble, if you trust in Him. **Ps 62:8** *"Trust in Him at all times, O people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us."* **Ps 91:2** *"I will say to the LORD, My refuge and my fortress, My God, in whom I trust!"*
- You will endure forever, if you trust in Him. **Ps 125:1** *"Those who trust in the LORD Are as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved but abides forever."*
- He will teach you how to live your life for Him, if you trust in Him. **Ps 143:8** *"Let me hear Your loving-kindness in the morning; For I trust in You; Teach me the way in which I should walk; For to You I lift up my soul."*
- You will have peace, if you trust in Him. **Is 26:3** *"The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, Because he trusts in You."*
- You will have courage when you share the Gospel, if you trust in Him. **Php 1:14** *"...that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord ...have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear."*
- You will be blessed (happy), if you trust in Him. **Jer 17:7** *"Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD and whose trust is the LORD."*

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- **Okay, so what should we NOT put our trust in?**
 - Put your trust in the Lord, rather than politics and leaders. **Ps 118:9** *“It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.”* **Ps 146:3** *“Do not trust in princes, in mortal man, in whom there is no salvation.”*
 - Politics are important because it shapes our culture and influences the way we live. As Christians indwelt by the Holy Spirit, we should participate in the political process to promote liberty and justice, for instance, or to stand up for those who can’t (like the unborn), to influence our culture – all with the dignity becoming the true believer, so that we might live in freedom and tranquility, unmolested by our government. As Americans, it is a privilege and an obligation to vote, to stand for righteousness and promote morality. We should not withdraw from politics – if we know to do right and don’t take the opportunity to do so, it is sin (Jas 4:17). We should vote our consciences, share our biblical worldview, and encourage others to vote for moral candidates. But we should not see politics as our salvation, or debase our character in pursuit of our political desires (Jan 6 – went too far). We should not fall apart when our party or candidate loses or become haughty when our party or candidate wins. We should pray for our leaders, but not count on them for our hopes and dreams, to solve our problems – which are more often than not spiritual. We should not trust in politicians, or ultimately we will be disappointed and disillusioned. The only utopian government will be when Christ returns. God is the only one we can truly trust.
 - Put your trust in the Lord, rather than man. **Ps 118:8** *“It is better to take refuge in the LORD Than to trust in man.”* **Jer 17:5** *“Thus says the LORD, “Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, And whose heart turns away from the LORD.”*
 - Despite what the world, the culture, books, and Hollywood tell us, put your trust in the Lord, rather than your own heart. For it can lead you astray. **Pr 28:26** *“He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But he who walks wisely will be delivered.”* **Jer 17:9** *“The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?”* **Mk 7:20-23** *“And [Jesus] was saying, “That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All*

these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.” The world says, “Follow your heart.” Wrong.

- Trust in the Lord, rather than your own thinking, wits, or resources. **Pr 3:5-6** *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”*
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Conclusion: Trusting in God is a way of life for the born-again believer. We don't have to live in fear, stress, disappointment, unhappiness, or without hope. We must trust God in all circumstances and at all times. We can live in peace and security, with assurance of our eternity, and the hope of a blessed eternity with Christ, if we trust in the Lord. Let's take a few minutes to reflect on our test results and do a little self-examination. Let's consider whether we are truly trusting in God, and where we come up short, both in the areas we don't trust Him as we should, and in the blessings that could be ours if we did.

Prayer of Reflection and Conviction