

Reflections on Trusting God

The Secret of His Love

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For I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.

I will sing to the LORD, for He has been good me (Psalms 13: 5-6).

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 3:14-21

Introduction and Message Reflections: (Carol)

Can I TRUST God? Can I trust God? It is only in the Scriptures we find an adequate view of God and answers to our questions. "*For what comes into our minds when we think about God is THE most important thing about us*" [Tozer].

Trusting God's Sovereignty: [God is in control.] "*Who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him? **But we have the mind of Christ***" (I Corinthians 2: 16). The sovereignty of God is a well-established fact in Scripture, but how may we expect Him to act towards us? With the Holy Spirit's help, we can understand more and more of the will and mind of Christ in our lives as we read and apply the Word of God. To have "the mind of Christ" is to look at life from our Savior's viewpoint, having His values and desires as ours.

- **Trusting God is a relationship.** It's so simple we often miss it. You trust Someone you love and even more importantly, Who loves and cares for you. The Lord Jesus' greatest desire is to know Him in a personal way (John 17: 3).
- **The Lord Jesus cares for me . . . and I don't want to let Him down.**
Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you (I Peter 5: 7).

Trusting in God's Names and Character [See Sue Field's handout.] *Those who know your name will trust in You, for You, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you (Psalm 9:10).* To know God's name is to know Him in a personal way—it's knowing more than just facts about God. It's trusting His name, His character and discovering Him to be trustworthy. **And don't forget: God knows your name.**

- **Jesus' many names paint a multi-faceted portrait of our Savior:** "*The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many*" (Mark 10: 45).

Trusting God in Suffering: *My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness* (2 Corinthians 12: 9). We are justified freely by His grace, but God wants us to learn practically what that grace means for us to live by grace. Quite often, trials and suffering are a part of our growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Grace and the Lord Jesus Christ are inseparable.

Grace Grows Best in Winter (by Margaret Clarkson)

[Trusting God is] always initiated by an act of will on our part; we set ourselves to believe in the overruling goodness, providence, and sovereignty of God and refuse to turn aside no matter what may come, no matter how we feel. I mistakenly thought I could not trust God unless I felt like trusting Him. Now I am learning that trusting God is first of all a matter of the will. I choose to trust God, and my feelings eventually follow" (p. 21).

- **Trials are much more precious than gold** (Object Lesson: A Gold Bar): *That the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 1:3).*

Trusting God When Life Hurts: *He heals (Rapha) the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds* (Psalms 147:3). When Jesus came to earth, He personally demonstrated His *Jehovah Rapha* name—the Healer heals us spiritually and restores the brokenhearted (Isaiah 53 & Luke 4: 17-21).

Living Out Your Identity in Christ [See Sue Field's handout.]: *He has made us accepted in the Beloved* (Ephesians 1:6). The Holy Spirit lives in us to work out in practical experience the unspeakable riches of our life in Christ, to the glory of God. As God looks at you, He sees you united to His beloved Son—that's why you are beloved to Him. "Accepted" means "highly favored." (Object Lesson: A Ruby): *For your worth is far above rubies. Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised* (Proverbs 30: 31).

Trusting God in Marriage: *Now abides faith, hope, love, these three, but the greatest of these is love (I Corinthians 13: 13). It is the vertical relationship between God and you that is to give expression to the horizontal relationship in marriage (Colossians 3: 18-19).*

God is working in your daily circumstances to change you and affect your husband, part of His sanctification process in marriage (I Peter 3: 1-6). God is in the middle of your circumstances, and He is using them to mold you (and your husband) into His image, the image of Christ.

It's God's *agape*, divine love, a fruit of the Spirit that makes a marriage work (I Corinthians 13). Sacrifice is a big part of marriage, but sacrifice is worth the relationship: "Love does not seek its own." Remember: You are "heirs together of the grace of life" (I Peter 3: 7): Each for the other and both for Christ. Pray for your husband—daily. Prayer is the ultimate influence that you have for your husband. "Love never fails."

Trusting God and Giving Thanks: *Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you (I Thessalonians 5: 16-18). Our thankfulness reflects our trust in God. Are we known for thankfulness . . . in everything? That takes God's power, doesn't it? We are thankful because the Holy Spirit shows us all for which to be thankful. For "in everything" God has some hidden blessing for us. At the center of thankfulness is joy, a fruit of the Spirit.*

Five "Trusting God" Principles and Message Reflections: (Faye)

1. The Gospel reminds us daily of God's grace and love.
2. We think we know what a good God should do.
3. God is good and always good.
4. You can't trust a God you don't know.
5. This moment is a preparation for our eternal life in Christ.

Turning Fear to Faith—The Story of Esther: God turned Esther's fear to faith. Fear is Satan's ace trump, but we are saved from fear of circumstances as we trust God. We serve and love a great God—a sovereign and providential God Who cannot lie and whose purposes for us (and Israel), in spite of Satan, cannot be defeated.

Just like Esther, as we look at the end of the book, God wins. God sees our story, too, and He wins, also. Our job is to trust Him. He will come along side as we go through trials and make His presence known in ways we could not have planned nor figured out.

Trusting God in Loss: Loss affects all of us in various ways and can cause a struggle of trust, doubt, or fear. The Lord helps us in our loss, however: 1. By His peace; 2. By our giving thanks; 3. By being kept busy. Life goes on after loss.

We have a choice: Focus on the Lord or focus on our loss. May we see beyond our loss and this broken world to Jesus Christ and His great and precious promises (II Peter 1: 2-4). As you spend time in the Word, the Holy Spirit reminds you that God is with you. Jesus Christ is our Overcomer. He arose triumphantly over death and is now at the Father's right hand. And in our weaknesses, when we do not know what we should pray for, the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us (Romans 8: 26).

Trusting God with Our Children: It's important for children to see God's love in everyday moments. Reflect God's love to your children; consider the old-fashioned ways of entertainment; be a prayer warrior; seize every opportunity to love your children (I Corinthians 13 & Titus 2: 4). The main goal is for our children to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Conclusion (Carol): "The Secret of His Love" (Object Lesson: A Diamond)

We are participants in the great story of God's love. The love of God in the Gospel gives you its value, just like a beautiful cut of diamond. God proved His love for you at Calvary. He wants you to not only know this but also that He loves you now. He has the same love for you as He does for His Son because you are in Christ. The more we understand God's love, the easier it is for us to trust Him. Faith-rest in His love for you.

Verses on God's Love