

Trust and Obey
Learning to Trust God

Introduction

1. When we look at the world, it is hard to know who we can really trust.
 - a. Whether on the news or in the papers, you hear of financial institutions betraying the trust of its members; you see politicians continuously not delivering on their promises, business partners taking one another to court over breaches in trust.
 - 1) In 1991 there was the Mirror Group pension fund scandal that left thousand of employees of the pension they had been promised due to fraudulence and mismanagement. The employees who had contributed to the pension fund over many years found that their retirement savings had been severely depleted or entirely lost.
 - 2) There is also a lack trust in our political leaders. Like the Liberal Democrats' pledge before the 2010 general election, only back track while in coalition government to support a rise in fees, which many saw as a major breach of trust
 - b. These stories could be multiplied many times over and can breed a sense cynicism leaving us wondering who we can truly trust.
2. It is comforting to know when everything and everyone keep letting us down, God is always faithful.
 - a. In Psalm 22, when David is surrounded by his enemies, He expresses his joy knowing that he can always rely on God. Though the psalm opens with "*My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?*" by the end of it David recognizes the truth: God had never left him. He was always with him (vs.22-24).
 - b. In 2 Kings 18-19, when King Hezekiah is trapped inside Jerusalem, surrounded by the Assyrian army. They mock him for trusting God. Humanly speaking, he didn't stand a chance. But instead of giving in to fear, Hezekiah turned to God—and God delivered both him and the city from an enemy far greater than they were.
 - c. And then there's Job. He lost everything—his possessions, his children, his health. Even his wife and friends turned against him. Yet Job could still say, "*Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him*" (Job 13:15).
4. You see, it's moments like these that reveal whether we truly trust God. It's easy to say, "I trust God" when life is good. The real question comes in hard times: Do I still believe God is with me? Do I still trust Him to help me?

I. Why Should We Trust God?

A. We should trust Him because He never fails or forsakes His people

1. God is never going to leave us in times of need; He is never going to keep from keeping a promise that He has made. Both Joshua and Solomon testify to this fact.
 - a. Joshua reminded Israel that not a single good promise God made had failed (Joshua 23:14).
 - b. Solomon said the same thing—*not one word* of God's promises had failed (1 Kings 8:56).
 - c. God's record is flawless. What He promises, He fulfills.
2. He never forsakes His people, even when they fail him. When Israel rejected had God as their king and asked for a human ruler, God did not forsake them.
 - a. When they finally realize their sin, Samuel assures them that God has not forsaken them (1 Sam. 12:22)
 - b. This is why they could always turn to Him for refuge in times of distress, even of their own making (Psalm 9:9-10)
3. Everyone we will ever trust will let us down in some way or another; but God never will. God never turns His back on those who trust Him. That is why He alone is worthy of our complete trust.

B. We should trust Him because He never misleads or betrays.

1. Well-intentioned people often act in their own self interest; but God never goes back on His word.
 - a. When Balak asked Balaam to curse Israel as they passed through his land, Balaam said he could not curse those whom God had blessed, because He does not lie or change His mind (Numbers 23:19-20).
 - b. That means every promise, every warning, every assurance in Scripture can be trusted (Ti 1:2; Heb 6:18).

2. The world will often try to make us doubt the truth of God's word - as in Bible times.
 - a. Satan convinced Eve she wouldn't really die if she disobeyed God (Gen.3:1-5)
 - b. The Assyrians mocked God's power to save Jerusalem (2 Kings 19:10-13)
3. In both cases, God's truth was challenged—but God proved faithful. These examples remind us that when God's promises are questioned, we must resist doubt and trust fully in His faithfulness.
4. Because God does not change, His truth does not change. We can trust Him fully—today, tomorrow, and forever (James 1:17, Malachi 3:6; John 17:17; Dt.6:24; Psalm 23:3; 25:9-10).

II. What Does It Mean to Trust in God?

A. It means that we follow Him when we do not know which way to go

1. We do this all the time in everyday life. We trust doctors with our health. We trust mechanics with our cars. We trust financial advisors with our finance.
2. But who can we trust to guide us spiritually?
 - a. "I know, O LORD, that a man's way is not in himself, Nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23).
 - b. In other words, it is not in man, apart from God, to direct his steps - no God, no success.
3. Sadly, many today put their trust in men - preachers, religious leaders - peers - rather than trusting in God.
 - a. If our doctors or mechanic mess up, it may lead to some manner of inconvenience - physical suffering, financial lost; if we put our trust in anyone but God for our soul's well being, we end may end up losing our souls.
 - a. "It is better to take refuge in the LORD Than to trust in princes" (Psalms 118:9). "Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path" (Psalms 119:105).
4. This is the trust Abraham showed when he left everything familiar behind, when called by God (Genesis 12:1 cp. Hebrews 11:8).
5. When King Jehoshaphat faced the prospect of three hostile forces coming to make war, he did not what to do, but trusted in God (2 Chronicles 20:12, 20).
6. When we don't know which way to go, we must look to God.

B. It means that we follow Him even when we do know the way but think our way is better

1. Sometimes we think our way is better, faster, and easier; but God's way is always best.
2. When Israel left Egypt God led them by a way they personally would not have taken; but God saw what they could not see (Ex.13:17-18).
3. When God told Abraham that his heir would be through Sarah, they thought they knew best; but God way was best (Gen.17:18-19 cp. Romans 4:17-25; Galatians 4:21-31).
4. When Naaman is told what he needed to do be cleansed of his leprosy he was dismissive describing God's way as nonsensical (2 Kings 5:11-14).
5. Trust means doing what God says—even when we don't understand or think we know better.

III. How Much Do We Trust God?

A. If We Trust God, We Will Take Time to Listen to Him.

1. Trust naturally leads to listening. If we trust someone, we listen to them.
 - a. When in a stand off with the Philistines, King Saul, noticing a commotion following the actions of Jonathan, his son, asked the ark of God be brought to him, in order that he might receive instructions on what to do. But as the situation became more intense, he reverses the order and rushes into battle, refusing to hear what God had to say (1 Samuel 14:18-20).
 - b. David, on the other hand, waited patiently on the Lord, completely reliant on His word (Ps. 130:5-8).

2. If we truly trust God then we are going to listen to what He says, not like those in Jeremiah's time that wanted to hear what God said but did listen to what He said (Jeremiah 38:14-24; 39:1-9; 42-43:7).
 - a. It means we are going to read, if not study God's word daily; to meditate upon its meaning and application; to allow it to mould and shape the way we think and live.
 - b. "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth" (John 17:17 NASB). "For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light" (Psalms 36:9 NASB). "Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path" (Psalms 119:105).
4. If we truly trust God and believe His wisdom is greater than ours, then His voice should matter most.

B. If We Trust God, We Listen to Him and Make Application.

1. Listening alone isn't enough. Trust always results in action.
2. If we trust experts in medicine or mechanical engineering we are going to listen and follow their advice.
3. James tells us that hearing without doing is useless. It's like looking in a mirror and acting on what we see...blessed in what we do (1:22-25).
 - a. It is only through obedience that we demonstrate our trust in God and will experience the benefits of God's wisdom.
 - b. Take the example of a child told by its mother not to touch a hot stove; listening is not enough; that child must obey.
3. Trust that doesn't lead to action isn't real trust. It is only proved when we obey.

C. If We Trust God, We Will Obey His Word Without Questioning.

1. Real trust produces obedience without delay even when we don't fully understand or disagree on His way or His methods.
 - a. When God told Abraham to offer Isaac—something that made no sense to him - What did he do?
 - b. He didn't argue; He didn't delay; He obeyed immediately (Genesis 22:1-3)
 - c. If we truly believe that God is wise, loving and good, then we won't demand explanations before we obey. We'll simply say, like Abraham, "Here I am" and go.
2. The Jews on the Day of Pentecost, that obeyed the first gospel sermon, demonstrated that unquestioning obedience to the gospel call. "So then, those who had received his word were immersed; and that day there were added about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41).
3. When we hear and learn the will of God are we reluctant to obey; are we willing to trust that God knows best - or do we think we know best - as many in the world: faith only; grace only; baptism not essential; use mechanical instruments; women elders and preachers?
4. Rather than listening to men, the world, our feelings, we need to listen, to trust and obey God; only then we will know true peace, and be confident of a home in heaven.

Conclusion

1. There is much more to trusting God than believing that He will keep us fed, sheltered, and protected from harm.
2. It means that I will seek and follow His counsel no matter what. Trust that doesn't lead to obedience isn't real trust.