

Trust in the Lord

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[0:00] Proverbs 3, 5 through 26. With the firstfruits of all your crops, then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline. Do not resent his rebuke. Because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.

Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding. For she is more profitable than silver, and yields better returns than gold.

She is more precious than rubies. Nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand. In her left hand are riches and honor.

Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who embrace her. Those who lay hold of her will be blessed.

[1:35] By wisdom the Lord laid the earth's foundations. By understanding he set the heavens in place. By his knowledge the deeps were divided, and the clouds let drop the dew.

My son, preserve sound judgment and discernment. Do not let them out of your sight. They will be life for you, an ornament to grace your neck.

Then you will go on your way in safety, and your foot will not stumble. When you lie down, you will not be afraid. When you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.

Have no fear of sudden disaster, or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked. For the Lord will be your confidence, and will keep your foot from being snared.

I've asked the elders to let me teach rather than preach. So I'm going to need your participation.

[2:43] Okay? Be ready, because you high schoolers know I like to call on you without notice. Alright? Turn to Proverbs 3, 5 and 6.

We're going to stick close to this text. Next to John 3, 16. These are probably the most familiar verses in our Bible.

And this chapter is one that, by God's mercy, the Holy Spirit has made this especially sweet to me in the last three to four months.

Justin, would you read verses 5 and 6, please? Trust in the Lord with all your hearts, and lean not on your own understanding. All your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your path straight. Or as the margin says, and I'm familiar with the King James, or He will direct your paths. These are the key verses to this whole chapter.

[3:43] In fact, Matthew Henry says that verse 5 is like the polar star for the child of God. It's something that's always there, and we always look to.

Well, what does it mean to trust? Give me a couple synonyms for the word trust. What comes to your mind? Louder? Relying completely.

Good. Another synonym for trust. Well, excellent to believe.

In fact, that's such a vital part of what a Christian does that we're called believers. Another word that you think of when you think of trust.

Confidence. Good. Good. Good. Faith. Well, we also learn what it means to trust by what it does not mean.

[4:50] And often the Proverbs teach us by contrast, and that's what we have here. In the last half of verse 5, trusting the Lord means that we are not doing what?

Dan? Last part of verse 5. Okay. We are not leaning or relying on our own understanding.

Now, that doesn't mean we're not supposed to use our minds. Okay? The scriptures stress that Christianity is a thinking religion.

But Matthew Henry says, It is to carefully improve my mind through counsel and the word of God.

So, learning to trust the Lord means that I must recognize that His thoughts are much higher than my thoughts and my understanding.

[5:54] That I'm not to lean on my own understanding because I don't always have everything figured out, do I? My calendar book.

Some of you see me carrying this around. This tells me exactly how my world is supposed to operate today. And I have a list of things that I feel like I need to get done today.

But am I excited by an opportunity to trust the Lord when He brings interruptions and changes into my life that I wasn't planning on?

There's another parallel statement at the beginning of verse 7 of what it means to trust the Lord with another thing we are not to do.

The first line of verse 7. Natalie? To not be wise in your own eyes. Okay. Do not be wise in our own eyes.

[7:01] To recognize that we don't have all the answers. That I need to be teachable. And yet we live in a society that places a premium on self-reliance and on self-confidence.

The world urges you to trust your own feelings. Trust your feelings. God says, no. He who trusts in himself is a fool.

Proverbs 28, 26. Do not be wise in your own eyes. May God give us the grace to be humble.

Because that grace is necessary if we are to experience what it means to trust the Lord.

Well, how does God instruct us to trust Him? Here in verses 5 and 6. How are we supposed to trust Him? What's the first one He lists?

Say that louder. That was right. With all your heart. Okay. It's to be a wholehearted trust. A passionate trust.

[8:12] An unreserved trust. Does that define your trust in the Lord? And then there's another way we're instructed to trust the Lord that also includes the word all.

What's the other one? In verse 6. In all our ways acknowledge Him. Okay. That in all our ways, we are to be trusting God.

That every area of my life, no section of my life is to be exempt from this duty or privilege. It's an all-inclusive trust.

So I would ask you, how did your life go this past week? Can you remember trusting the Lord for certain situations and for certain challenges?

When they entered your life, were you quick to trust Him? Did this privilege permeate the whole of your lifestyle? With all your heart, be passionate in your trust of Him.

[9:17] In all your ways. Don't hold back anything. Every aspect of our life is to be a trust in our Lord.

And when I learn to trust God this way, He has a merciful promise for me. It's the end of verse 6. And I like the note in the margin.

Because that's how I memorized it in the King James. That He will direct my paths. To have the promise that Almighty God will be so intimately involved in my life.

That He will direct and make things happen. That will be best for me. And that will help mold me into the likeness of His Son. For those of us who are older, there's another benefit for trusting the Lord. And I'm going to jump all the way down to verse 24 for this one. When you lie down, you will not be afraid.

[10:24] When you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. The older I get, the more my fears increase and the less I sleep.

But not so when I'm trusting the Lord. No fears? Sweet sleep. Trusting God is also synonymous with walking in the fear of God.

And we see this at the end of verse 7. Fear the Lord and shun evil. Now the fear of God is a huge topic.

What does that mean? And I'm going to try, if I could summarize it in a few words, I would use the language of David in Psalm 16.8. Where he says, I have set the Lord always before me.

Sproul says, Coram Deo, to live before the face of God. Whatever I'm doing, the fear of God is to live in such a way that I set the Lord always before me.

[11:39] And that's synonymous with trusting Him. Now David wasn't talking about putting an idol in front of him, was he? We know that because of the commandments.

He's not talking about setting a little caricature of something before him to worship. And it's here where I appreciate Paul Tripp and what he says about trusting God and how he says, To trust God, we have to use our imagination.

And imagination is not the ability to dream up things that aren't real. Okay, a lot of times we think, well, that kid has a vivid imagination.

And they can dream up all the wildest things. So he says, he's not talking about the imagination to dream up things that aren't real. But he's talking about the ability to see what is real, but not seen. Okay? Imagination is that ability to see what is really there, but it's not seen. We can't see it with these eyes.

[12:53] We have to use our imagination. Now I want you to think about one of your challenges or problems that you had this week. It might have been a little one.

I lost my calendar book yesterday for about 10 minutes. And my wife will tell you, I was a little stressed out. Or it might have been a bigger problem.

And when that problem or challenge, it can get distorted by what we don't see.

Actually, it was about an hour that I was stressed out and that this problem got so distorted.

Because what didn't I see?

For that hour, I wasn't seeing God and his provision to meet my needs. And that's what David's saying when he says, I have set the Lord always before me.

[14:01] That's trusting him and bringing God into our picture and his provision to meet our needs. Remember the example of Elisha's servant in 2 Kings 6?

Elisha's servant.

Of the reality of God's presence and his all-sufficient provision for us. And notice his promise in verse 8.

Verse 8, Chris. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones. Very interesting.

To learn to trust God in all things is an energizing way to live.

Living this way invigorates and nourishes the whole person. Stress zaps our energy, doesn't it?

[15:22] But trusting God and learning to cast all of our cares on him because we know that he cares for us is the healthiest way to live.

And then he gives us two very practical areas that we can work at trusting God in our lives. First one's found in verse 9.

Scott Lady, verse 9. I'm the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops. You say, well, wealth.

I don't have any of that. But his description is anyone that has crops. Or my description would be anybody that has a job. Okay?

And you say, well, you just don't understand. There's not enough money at the end of the week to give. And that's our problem, isn't it? That too often we think backwards.

[16:20] And giving begins with trusting. Giving to God begins with trusting. God says, bring the first fruits. The first fruits of all your crops.

So giving to God is to be a priority in our budget. It's like we talked about in the worship service. We're not to just bring him our leftovers.

Because he is a great king. Children, I want to remind you. Remember to honor God with a portion of whatever money that he gives you.

And what is his promise? Verse 10. Then your barns will be filled to overflowing. And your vats will brim over with new wine. He's simply saying, you'll never out give God.

You'll never out give God. We honor God when we trust him with our finances. And make giving a priority. The second area that we can practice trusting the Lord.

[17:24] Is when things don't always go the way we like them. Does that ever happen in your life? I know it doesn't, Brother Jim.

Because he shares a few of those on Wednesday nights with us. And I appreciate being reminded of that. That the Christian life is going to include hurts and disappointments.

And Hebrews 12 says, we need to endure those hardships as discipline. And often our natural reaction to difficulties, we resent it, don't we?

But what does God say? Okay. Dennis Berry verses 11 and 12. My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline.

Do not resent his repeal. Because the Lord disciplines those he loves. As a father of a son of a life. Okay. I need to have faith to believe that those difficult times are saturated in God's love for me. [18:31] Just as a father of a son he delights in. Not because he's necessarily mad at me. Or forgotten me. But sometimes God puts us in situations where the only way to look is up.

And we're learning today that that's the best way to live. That's the best way to live. Am I trusting God to use those times to teach me more of himself?

And more of my heart and how much I need him. Well, maybe you're wondering, you know, can I really trust this God with my life?

Especially some of you young people. Because I believe one of Satan's strongest arguments is to tell you. You're giving up all the fun if you trust God. And it's just going to be no more joy. Does he really know what's best for me and what will make me truly happy? Well, we already sang it in our worship of God's wisdom in creation.

[19:41] But look at verse 19 and listen to our gracious God. By wisdom, the Lord laid the earth's foundation. Scott, I can remember about 30 years ago, set in concrete forms for your Uncle Dwight.

And one of the most difficult parts of setting a foundation is getting it to be precisely square. At least it used to be with the old forms we had.

I don't know if you've got new ones that do that automatic now. But you'd get this whole wall set and then you'd be two and a half inches off. And you had to get it square before you poured the concrete.

Can you imagine Scott laying a foundation for the entire earth? I mean, we just did those little basements. And yet, God did.

And he used his wisdom and the earth spins in perfect and precise rotation. Trust him wholeheartedly. Trust him wholeheartedly.

[20:50] The last half of verse 19. By understanding, he set the heavens in place. He uses his understanding and his incredible wisdom to place the stars in the universe.

Children, which is bigger? Our earth or the sun? The sun. It doesn't look that way, though, does it? You're not supposed to look at the sun, okay? But if you look at the sun, it doesn't look too big. And our earth looks huge. And yet, the sun is over a million times bigger than our earth.

And it's just one little star in that whole universe that, by God's understanding, he set the heavens in place.

So go out on a clear night and look at the sky. And then be passionate when you trust your God. He knows what he's doing.

[21:57] Amen. In verse 20. By his knowledge, the deeps were divided and the clouds let drop the dew. God used his knowledge to divide the oceans and to set up the whole water cycle.

Piper says that rain is one of the great unsearchable wonders that God does. That when one inch of rain, and we've seen a lot of it lately, when one inch of rain falls on one square mile of farmland, it drops over a billion and a half pounds of water.

That's pretty heavy. Well, how does that water get up in the sky and stay there if it's so heavy? And you children know it's called evaporation.

Well, then how does it get down? And it starts with condensation. But if it dumps that billion of pounds at one time on that one acre of land, then all the crops would be smashed and probably we would too.

And so the sky dribbles that billion pounds of water in little tiny drops called precipitation. And once in a while, to remind us that this wonderful cycle is all by God's mercy, he demonstrates his power by turning it into hail.

[23:34] And we've seen on the news, sometimes they're coming down in big clops that make things dangerous. And sometimes there's floods to demonstrate God's power.

Well, may these truths grip us to trust him wholeheartedly in every area of our life when we see how incredibly wise God is.

And the more we trust him, the more we'll adore him and worship him. Some of you are thinking about trusting Christ with your eternal soul.

And without question, your greatest need is to trust Jesus to take care of your sin problem. He's the only one who can make you right before a holy God.

And I want to encourage you to run to Christ and trust him with all your heart. Don't hold back. His blood is sufficient to save every sinner who has a grip of their sin before a holy God and will put all

their hopes for eternity on the merits of Christ and what he's accomplished on the cross.

[24 : 49] Let's pray. Our God, we'd beg you that you'd forgive us for our lack of wholeheartedness and trusting you and for forgetting to trust you in many areas of our life.

We pray that you would give us grace. Give us persevering trust, as we just sang, to trust you forever. That's all by your grace.

You're such a sweet Savior. You're such a wonderful refuge to run to. Thank you for being our God and for condescending to us.

We give you our thanks in Jesus' name. Amen.