

Fear of the Lord or Fear of Man (part 2)

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- [0 : 0 0] Well, turn in your Bibles to Proverbs chapter 29, verse 25. Proverbs 29, 25. We began looking at this verse last week, and we only got halfway through it.
- We're going to finish it up this week. 29, 25. Here we have two very distinct ways of living. Two different ways of interpreting life, of reacting to the world.
- Two very different orientations to the world that we live in. 29, 25 says, fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe.
- So we have the fear of man, and we have trust in the Lord. Now, in some ways, this proverb is very much a summary of the entire and the whole book of Proverbs.
- Because all the time we're making a choice between two things. We're fearing the creature, or we're making much of the creature, or we're making much of the creator.
- [1 : 0 9] We're fearing the creature or trusting the creator. So these questions run through the entire book of Proverbs. This heart orientation, this disposition of toward the creature or toward the creator.
- So we're asking and we're answering all of the time. You are in your life every day. Who am I going to serve? Who do I want to please?
- Whose praise do I want? Who am I afraid of offending? Who do I need to come through for me? And this verse paints just a very stark difference and distinction.
- Man, fear of man, the word is Adam, mortal man, dust to dust man. Or I am who I am, Yahweh. The one who is present continually to save his people.
- The one who says, I am here to commit to you, to deliver you, to help you. I'm never changing. I'm committed to be your God.
- [2 : 2 3] And so this proverb really boils down and hits us right where we are. And it asks us the question of where does our heart go out to? Who is our heart going out to?
- Who is our heart open to and responding to? Who? So we saw last week the first part of the fear of man will prove to be a snare.
- Again, so it's this heart orientation towards man. That word fear means to tremble. You tremble at him. So your heart is primarily responding and engaging with men.
- So they're your concern. It's this heart orientation. So verse 26, the next verse. Many seek an audience with a ruler, but it is from the Lord that a man gets justice.
- So the fear of man, it looks like you're looking for your vindication from men. You're looking in all the further you look for justice, for validation, for well done, good job.
- [3 : 2 7] You're right. You're in the right. You have justice on your side. It is towards a ruler or towards the Lord. There's that choice again. And we looked at the next verse, 27.
- The righteous detest the dishonest, but the wicked detest the upright. To fear man is to choose a side in this ongoing, from the beginning, contest.
- This great conflict that runs right through our scriptures, right through history of evil or good. God or man.

And this verse 27 shows us that there can be no ultimate peace between God-fearers and man-fearers, God-trusters and man-trusters. Because fear of man is ultimately a choice for dishonesty.

It's a choice for dishonesty. Because there is nothing more dishonest of a thing to propagate or to believe or to put your trust in.

[4 : 34] There's nothing more dishonest than to elevate a creature over the creator. To elevate man over God. That is dishonest.

And that whole way of living, verse 25 shows us, will trap you into situations that you never want to get into. This word trap, it means to snare.

It means to catch. To control. And so the fear of man inevitably will lead to places and situations that you never want to be in.

You'll be trapped in debt and trying to impress people. You'll be trapped in legal situations. That's how, remember how the book of Proverbs begins. He says, my son, you know, don't go along with these wicked men.

Don't join this gang. Because they're setting a trap for their own feet. They're catching themselves. So fear of man will trap you into all kinds of frantic and frankly stupid decisions.

[5 : 41] Again, Pastor John mentioned this. We've been, in the men's group, we've been following David as he's on the run. And this past Wednesday, we looked at David.

He's running away from Saul. And he runs down to the city of Gath, which is a Philistine city. To the court of Achish. Goliath was from Gath.

Why he went there? Goliath's hometown. It really is hard to think that he was thinking clearly. That he had really weighed all the options carefully.

Well, why there? It seems like the worst possible place to go. Maybe he had a good reason. I don't know. But it doesn't seem that David was thinking clearly. Because pretty soon he's caught.

And he doesn't approach that situation with reasonable calm. And here's my reasons and my response. There's no acting with any kind of composure.

[6 : 38] David pretends to be insane. Drooling on himself. Scratching on the walls. The whole situation reeks of frantic fear.

Fear. And of desperation. Not clear-headed wisdom. Not clear-headed careful thinking.

The fear of man trapped David. And if it trapped David, the man after God's own heart, then how much more do we need to be careful? How much more am I in danger?

The fear of man. It trapped Abraham two times. He denies his wife. Women, how would you feel about that? He denies his wife. Peter denied his Lord.

Aaron built a golden calf. And then comes up with this nonsense story about it just poofing and coming out of the fire. The fear of man will drive you to say, to think, to do the most unreasonable.

[7 : 40] The most harmful, the most ridiculous kinds of things. Even worse than that, the fear of man will ultimately keep you out of heaven. Jesus says that. The Pharisees, he says that you cannot, you will not believe.

How can you believe when you want praise from man instead of God? Your heart is just pointed into the totally wrong direction.

You can't see glory. You can't see salvation. You can't see God reaching down to you, graciously trying to deliver you because you're altogether facing the wrong way.

The fear of man will ultimately condemn you. And so, don't let that happen to you. Don't let that happen to you.

Don't lose your own soul trying to please men who ultimately, ultimately are not 100% committed to you like the Lord would be.

[8 : 46] Who are ultimately 100% committed to themselves. Don't lose your own soul trying to please men who die.

Who will be six feet under in a box and all their power and all the fear that they've released on the world has come to nothing.

Don't fear men. Don't lose your own soul. But how do we do that? Well, the deliverance from this trap, this glorious alternative, is the second half of Proverbs 29, 25.

And that's what we're going to dig into now. So, 29, 25, the second half. But whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe. And again, so this little section breaks easily into two parts.

And we're just going to take them each in turn. We're going to look at whoever trusts in the Lord and then is kept safe. So, we've laid a lot of groundwork for what does it mean? What does it look like to trust the Lord?

[9 : 48] In a certain way, you can take everything that I preached last week, everything that I just reviewed, and sort of turn it on its head. And that is what it looks like to trust the Lord.

Again, it's a heart orientation, not towards man, but toward God. So, now you're open, your heart is directed, your heart trembles, responds to the Lord.

Isn't that the beginning of wisdom? Isn't that sort of the theme of Proverbs, that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom? When your heart begins responding to the Lord, and you're alive to God, and now you're obeying Him, and you're believing Him, and you're looking to Him, that's when you begin to act wisely.

It's this heart orientation towards God. So, to fear men is to tremble to respond to man. Trusting God is the opposite. It's when He's plucking the strings.

He's the primary musician. Now, you used to be dead to Him. Every single one of us, dead to Him.

[10 : 54] Unresponsive, blinded, ignorant, in the dark. And now you're alive to Him, you're open to Him. Now, to trust in the Lord is not a one- or two-time thing.

Again, the fear of man is not something, if this marks your life, that you do once or twice. It's a stated disposition of your heart. Trusting the Lord is the same thing. It's an orientation.

Proverbs 3, verses 5 and 6. This is one of those first passages that we teach children at the very youngest ages.

They memorize a few verses, and this is usually one of those verses that young people, children, memorize. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.

Trust in the Lord with all of your heart. All of your heart. The heart is that internal control center. It's the air traffic control center of your heart.

[11 : 57] So it's your mind as you think. It's your judgment as you weigh things out and make decisions and say, this is valuable or this is not valuable. It's your affections.

It's how you emotionally engage in the world. To people, to God, to yourself, to whatever. It's your desires. It's your will. Now, trusting in the Lord is the organizing principle of your heart.

Of a heart. It's the DNA. It's the computer code. It's what decides what gets printed up on the screen or what gets printed out on the printer. And so, trust in the Lord with all of your heart.

Leave nothing, no part of your being, no part of your heart, no control faculty outside of this disposition that you are fearing the Lord.

You are trusting him. And then it says next, in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your path straight. Again, do you see how comprehensive this is? All of your heart.

[13 : 02] All of your ways. In all your ways, you're recognizing him as Lord. That's what it means when we say, in all your ways, acknowledge him. That's not like a head nod.

Hey, I see you. It's a, I see you. I know who you are. I fear you. I'm concerned about you. I'm responding to you.

And so, I'm responsible to you. You can save me. You're the one I'm living for. You're the one I'm relying upon.

You're the one I serve. You're the one I want to please. Your smile is my pleasure. You're the one I can't afford to offend. You're the one I really need to come through for me. That's what it means to acknowledge him in all of your ways.

He exists. He's there. And he rewards those who earnestly seek him. He's there.

[14 : 03] And I'm responding to him by faith. And he responds with reward. So you see him. You understand him. You own him. You say, I am his.

And he is mine. That's Proverbs 3, 5, and 6. That's trusting the Lord. Turn back to Proverbs 16. We have a few Proverbs that we're going to look at other than Proverbs 29, 25.

But this is one of them. Proverbs 16, verse 3. We've already looked at this one, this proverb in a previous sermon. But again, this reemphasizes this.

This is what this is about. Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed. Now, we already looked at this. It doesn't just say commit your plans to him.

We do that. It says commit whatever you do to him. So this is a whole life that is committed, that you've entrusted, and you're living it towards God.

[15 : 03] And give everything into his hands, into his kind hands. And if you are that kind of person that gives all that you are to the Lord, your plans will succeed.

Why? Because, well, you're living in wisdom. You'll make plans that are wise plans and are successful plans. You'll be the kind of person that sees the fabric of God's world, and you'll be living in harmony with it.

Psalms 37, 4 and 5 captures all of this so nicely. Delight yourself in the Lord. And these are all, I want you to notice, these are roughly synonyms for trusting in the Lord.

Trusting in the Lord includes all of these things. Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way, your life to the Lord.

Trust in him, and he will do it. So trusting is delighting in the Lord. Delighting in his goodness.

[16 : 08] Seeing that he is good, and he rewards those who earnestly seek him. And it's living unto the Lord. It's active dependence. That's trust in the Lord. 29, 25.

It's trust, though, in the Lord. And so we want to dig deeper and get more specific. And we want to ask this question of who are we trusting? Who are you trusting?

Who is this comprehensive heart orientation toward? Well, it's capital L, capital O, capital R, capital D.

Yahweh, the Lord, the one who revealed himself to Moses. The one who hid Moses in the rock and proclaimed all his name to him, all of his goodness to Moses.

You remember that. This is one of the defining revelations of who God is.

[17 : 12] So we see this in Exodus chapter 34. This event of the Lord saying, this is who I am. This is what it means that I am Yahweh, the Lord. And I think it's 13 other times in the Old Testament.

This exact definition gets just airlifted out of Exodus and applied in the Proverbs and in different are in in the in the rest of the scripture.

Not necessarily Proverbs, but in the prophets, etc. This is this is who. The God of the Bible is. This is who we are called to put our trust in and listen to what the Lord says.

And look who we are supposed to be responding to. Says the Lord, the Lord. The compassionate and gracious God. He's not just any God.

He is the compassionate and gracious God. Slow to anger. Abounding in love and faithfulness. Maintaining love to thousands and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin.

[18 : 21] And yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished. Now, here's what I want you to notice. When Proverbs is saying trust in the Lord, it is not saying trust in some sort of generic God.

Not some sort of generic higher power. He is the God who relates mercifully to his people.

Who loves his people. Who's engaged with his people. Who forgives his people. But yet isn't flippant about their sin. He's the God who meets us.

He's the God who met Moses with compassion on his heart for what Israel was going through in Egypt. Full of compassion. He's the God who saves.

Remember, that was the whole point of this revelation of in the desert, the burning bush. The Lord is now appearing on the scene saying, Moses, this is who I am.

[19 : 20] Well, who should I tell them is sending me? Tell them I am. Yahweh is sending you. And what is the Lord sending Moses for to save? He loves us. He has a mercy on us.

And yet he will not just forgive our sin with a win. That's not how this works. He must punish sin. So this is the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob who in the fullness of time, the whole Old Testament story is preparing us.

In the fullness of time, he sent forth his son as a propitiation for sin. His son is there to solve this problem of how God can be full of compassion and mercy, maintaining love, forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin.

And yet he doesn't leave the guilty unpunished. The Savior is going to be a propitiation for our sins. Now, do you see what I'm what I'm getting at is our trust in him is not a blind leap into the dark.

It is a faith that is full of content. It's full of specifics. We know him. We've seen him. We've seen him acting in his word.

[20 : 38] We've seen him in the Exodus. We've seen him in the prophets. We've seen him most in all in Jesus Christ acting this way, compassionate and gracious, merciful, forgiving.

That's who the book of Proverbs is saying. Now you trust him. Trust him. You'll be kept safe. Because it's only when we see him as compassionate and gracious and saving, fully committed to us, that we are set free from the fear of man.

John says, perfect love drives out fear. That's a truth that works in many areas. It works in this area.

Now, all of this points us. So this trust, this faith, trust in the Lord. It's pointing us to really how salvation works, how the whole Christian life works.

It works by faith and repentance. Faith is really then doing what Proverbs says and entrusting yourself, committing yourself, giving yourself to the Lord.

[21 : 52] Because he comes in mercy. He comes to save. He comes to forgive. I need that. So I give myself to him. I throw myself into his arms and he catches me because that's the kind of God he is.

It's putting yourselves in his hands because what he's done in Jesus Christ has more than proven his goodwill and his heart and his love towards his people.

And it then involves it involves faith. It involves repentance. It means turning away from everything else to him. And now you see that sin isn't just merely a bad thing that you shouldn't do.

It's not merely breaking just some sort of objective law. It's not just that. Sin is against the Lord. It's against this God who is full of compassion and mercy, who comes to save and who comes to rescue.

It's against him. Sin isn't just generic disobeying. It's attacking and turning against. And turning away from.

[23 : 03] A good God. Now, when that captures your heart, that that changes everything. And that change, that conversion, that about face is what repentance is.

It's moving from the first part of the proverb to the second part of the proverb. It's moving out. It's packing your bags and saying, I'm not going to live in the fear of the man anymore.

I'm going to live trusting the Lord. And just. Incidentally, that's why those who believe they can't remain in sin.

This this this conversion is something that sticks, that lasts. They can't remain in sin because the organizing principle is different now.

The orientation is different. And so, yes, Christians fall into sin. We fall into sin many, many times, but we cannot remain in sin. We are going to fall down repeatedly.

[24 : 20] But we always get up. We don't wallow. We don't enjoy our sin. For every fall. There's a up. There's a getting up.

And we repent. And we take and we stretch out. And we take a hold of a gracious God again. Now, trusting the Lord, then, is this radical, comprehensive heart reorganization.

And so now your heart is open and responding, not to just God in general, but to the God who saves. The God of the Bible. The God of history. The God who meets people with grace.

Now, Proverbs points us more than that. You know, even as much as that is necessary and good. The book of Proverbs shows us that, you know what?

Trusting in the Lord. Yeah, it is a heart change. It's a radical reorganization. But then it is also followed by a real life of principled obedience.

[25 : 20] It points us further down to the road. So it's not just a reorientation. It's actually putting yourself under and obeying God's word.

So turn back to, or turn over, I'm not sure which way you need to turn, to Proverbs chapter 22. Proverbs chapter 22 and verse 17. We're going to read verses 17 through 19 here.

And this is a very interesting passage because this is obviously, clearly, a beginning of a new section in the book of Proverbs. 10.1 all the way to 22.16 is one big section in the book of Proverbs.

Now, 22.17 begins a whole new section. And it has its own introduction that's just like all those introductions in Proverbs 1 through 9. So he says again, Pay attention and listen to the sayings of the wise.

Apply your heart to what I teach, for it is pleasing when you keep them in your heart and have them all ready, all of them ready on your lips.

[26 : 32] Now, do you see what's next? So that your trust may be in the Lord. I teach you today, even you. So he's saying, why pay attention?

Why apply the teaching of the wise? There's a purpose statement. There's a reason. So that your trust may be in the Lord.

Now, that word trust has several meanings. The first is security or refuge. We just sang that about God being our refuge. That's what it means.

It also means the word trust. And the first definition is refuge. So it's a rock. It's a safe place. And then it's also a trust.

So and I think both are playing here. Why listen to the teaching of the wise so that you can experience the security and the refuge of the Lord?

[27 : 29] It's as we obey the word of God, as we take in the book of Proverbs and we put it into practice, that we actually experience God's protection, God's safety.

We enjoy the benefits of living life God's way. So our security and our refuge is in the Lord.

Proverbs 14, 26 has the same same word, same idea. He who fears the Lord has a secure fortress and for his children, it will be a refuge.

So what is God doing when he is teaching us in the book of Proverbs, when he's teaching us wisdom? When through the sages and through our parents, through our pastors, when he's teaching us wisdom, what he is doing is giving us what we need to enjoy security, enjoy this refuge.

And so we trust him and we put ourselves under his wisdom. That's what it means to trust the Lord. Jesus says the wise man is the one who hears my word and puts it into practice.

[28 : 44] That's the one who actually trusts the Lord. Not the one who just agrees with it, but the doer of it. 1620, Proverbs 1620.

Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers. And blessed is he who trusts in the Lord. So 1620.

Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers. And blessed is he who trusts in the Lord. Now Hebrew poetry is all about parallels.

It's all about one thing and then the next thing and they run in parallel. Often the second phrase clarifies, defines, relates to or restates the first line.

And that's what's going on in 1620. Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers. Now what is that? What's another way of saying that? And blessed is he who trusts in the Lord.

[29 : 53] You see that? Trusting in the Lord is equal to, it's parallel, it's the same as giving instruction or giving heed to instruction.

So who trusts the Lord? Who trusts the Lord? What does that look like? How can you tell? Am I trusting in the Lord? Well, are you giving heed to instruction?

Are you listening and putting into practice the word of God? Trusting God means taking him at his word and then doing it.

Back to Proverbs chapter 30. Another passage here. Proverbs chapter 30 verse 5. Every word of God. This is what it says.

Proverbs 30 verse 5. This is in a different section. Every word of God is flawless. He is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

[30 : 56] Again, what does it mean? What does it look like to take refuge in the Lord? It's to trust him. Trust his word. It's to say, Lord, your word is flawless.

I can't improve it. I can't make it better. I can't take it away. That's what Edgar is going to say later. This word is perfect. It's all I need.

It's flawless. There's nothing wrong with it. And so I'm trusting this word. So there's no taking refuge in God without appreciating the perfection of his wisdom and of his word.

So you can't say I trust you if you don't think my words are any good. If my words aren't reliable. So children, if you trust your parents, you'll trust their commands.

You'll trust their advice. Don't tell me that you trust me if you think I'm stupid and I don't know what I'm talking about. Or that my advice will be hurtful to you or bad.

[32 : 03] That's not trusting me. You show your trust by obeying, by taking seriously the word. So trusting the Lord in very practical terms means you trust his words.

You listen to your parents, young people, children. Because in God's economy, God's world, he gives parents to instruct children. Parents are a gift to children.

To instruct them. To teach them wisdom. To make them wise unto salvation. So it means trusting and listening to your parents. It means listening to your pastors when they are instructing you. Why?

Because this is from Ephesians. Christ gave some. Where do pastors come from? Where do teachers come from? Christ gave some. They come from Christ.

He gave some to be pastors and teachers. To prepare God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ, so that you, might be built up. Until we all reach unity in the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature.

[33 : 07] Attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Teachers, pastors, godly parents are from Jesus. Gifts from him.

Now, that whole passage in Ephesians sounds a lot like James. He says, you know, trials come that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God who gives generously. And you remember about 20 verses later, James is talking about what do you do with the word of God when it comes to you?

Don't ask for wisdom. Don't ask for wisdom. Don't ask for wisdom. Don't ask for wisdom. Don't ask for wisdom and trial. Don't ask for wisdom and trial. And then the word of God comes to you and you don't do what it says.

So, young people, you want security? Don't ask for wisdom and trial.

[34 : 05] Now, what happens as you trust him? What does it say? This is the second part. This is much shorter. You're kept safe. You're kept safe. This is a glorious word.

It means to be put up into a high and inaccessible place. So you're kept safe. We sang it. Not even the stars are in a higher, safer place than we are.

You're put in a high and inaccessible place. The Lord hides you in an out-of-reach place. The same word is used in Psalm 139. Pastor John quoted this. Remember the psalmist was talking about how the Lord knows all about him.

He knows about his rising and his sitting. He knows about all of his thoughts. And the Lord always has him. He's always thinking about him. His thoughts are on him. The Lord's thoughts are on this man all of the time.

And David says, is it David? I'm not sure. He says, such knowledge is too high for me. That's the same word. It's too high for me.

[35 : 10] So it's up here. That knowledge is up here with God. I'm down here with man. And that's where God puts you. That's where God puts the people that trust in him.

Up there with him. Proverbs 18.10. The name of the Lord. That's his character. His ways. Him. The name of the Lord is a high tower.

The refuge run into it and are safe. So where are you? God truster. God follower.

Well, you're in him. You're up there. You're guarded by him. High and inaccessible to men. Nothing can touch you unless God says so.

Now, do you see how that? Do you see how God saves us from the fear of men? He just doesn't say don't fear men.

[36 : 10] He just doesn't command it. There are places where he does that, but there's always reasons. He just doesn't say stop being afraid of them. That's wrong. Now, that's true. But that doesn't have the power to unburden me, to release me from the fear of man.

No, he says, fear not, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God. And he lifts us up into himself.

He lifts us high up in an inaccessible place in his heart. He keeps us safe. He takes us to himself and he surrounds us. The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him.

And it's as we experience that high up there security that we are able to slowly be freed and dissolve, the fear of man dissolves.

So all those snares that we talked about last week, not able to say no. People are putting stuff on you and you just can't say no to them. Saying yes to people to our own hurt.

[37 : 15] Running ourselves ragged. Heaping up debt. All trying to impress people. Getting ourselves into legal problems. Whatever that trap might be. Where you're dominated. You're controlled by the fear of man.

You see, bit by bit, we're set free. We experience liberty. And we experience it as we experience, I'm safe in God.

He's got me. He loves me. We don't need to impress them. We don't need their well done. I'm hidden in the Lord's heart. We don't need them to come through for us because he comes through for us.

Matthew Henry says we are able to have a holy and gracious contempt for men.

And all that's just saying is we don't need them. We can put them in a lower spot with God above. Because we're experiencing the goodness of God.

[38 : 20] So now we can also finally slow down. That felt safety allows us to be careful and thoughtful.

This is what I think David needed to experience. He needed to slow down. And once he slowed down and had his bearings, he was able to start praying, to start reengaging with the Lord.

He got his senses about him. So now we aren't rushing around trying to stay ahead of everyone and everything. Trying to make sure that we're corralling public opinion.

Making sure everyone thinks well of us. Now we can slow down. Remember we talked about this a month ago. That wisdom slows down. It slows down our speech. It slows down our judgment.

It slows down how we use our money. Because hidden in the hollow of his hand, I can actually breathe. I can slow down.

[39 : 22] I can think. It's not all on me. So I'm not David frantically lurching from one side to another. I can slow down.

I can think of what to say. What I want to do. I can think through situations. I can be careful.

And I can be wise. So he keeps me safe. And that makes me this interesting combination of both careful and confident.

That's something the world doesn't do very well. Of putting those two things together. They're usually very confident or not very careful. Or extremely careful. But not at all confident. But this is what the fear of the Lord.

Or what trusting in the Lord does for us. We can both be careful. And confident. Man doesn't dominate me. And fear doesn't dominate me. The Lord is with me. I will not be afraid.

[40 : 21] What can man do to me? You see the glory of what God is working in us. Careful. And confident at the same time. And so now I'm not trapped by that ineffectiveness.

That we talked about last week. Where I'm unable to do what God has called me to do. Because I'm just so bound up in my fear of man. No. My heart is open. He set me free. And now I can go out.

And I can do what God has called me to do. I can do it carefully. But I can do it confidently. I can be a mom or a dad to difficult children. Carefully and confidently. Because it's not about me, me, me anymore.

It's not about protecting me. Or guarding me. Or promoting me. No. I'm now free. The Lord. His love has set me free. So now I can be about his business. Now you notice.

I said this last week. Fear of man is this dying, shrinking thing. When we engage in it, it makes us actually smaller. And less effective. Less confident.

[41 : 18] But to trust God is a growing, thriving thing. And that's God's agenda. That's what God's doing in the book of Proverbs.

It's not advice to just help me make my life go better. It's to make me humble and confident. Careful and thoughtful.

And yet, I'm just like Jesus. I'm going out. I'm being a fountain of life. I'm being, I'm available to people. I'm helping people. I'm thinking less of myself and more of them.

And that's what he's doing. That's what the Lord is doing in your life. He's giving you every reason to trust him. And as you trust him, he's transforming you.

He's changing you more and more into the image of his son. He's going. He's taking us from glory to glory until we're ready for heaven.

[42 : 21] Until we're ready for life to really, really begin. Well, let's pray and ask God to help us do that.

Ask him to work that in us. Heavenly Father, you have acted on our behalf marvelously, amazingly, repeatedly.

And so you've given us in your word and you've given us many times in our own experience. Reasons, plenty of reasons that we should trust you.

And we've seen men are unreliable, but we've never seen you to let us down. And so I pray that you would teach us more and more to trust you.

To give ourselves into your hands. And that as we experience that safety that comes from believing, that you would make us fruitful and effective, careful and confident.

[43 : 20] Make us to be a people that are a glory to you. In a world that is dying and shrinking and filling up with hatred and anxiety and overwhelmed with care, that you would make us to be blossoming flowers to your glory.

Please do that work in us. We can't do it by ourselves. Help us, Holy Spirit, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.