

TRUSTING GOD – SWEET! (TIS SO SWEET TO TRUST IN JESUS)

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Trust. Heard that word lately? Unfortunately, in the world we live in, the word trust is most often spoken of in a negative sense. Congress doesn't trust the president, the people don't trust judges and the courts, most don't trust the church, parents don't trust their children, politicians don't trust the media. And frankly, I'm not sure I can trust you, and you surely don't trust me.

Perhaps I've overstated it a bit, but the reality is that mistrust is more common than trust, and day to day life is consumed by skepticism, doubt and a fear of being misled. Older people—not me, really older people—speak of a time when people in general were more trusting of one another. I do remember when I was a kid, my family went to my dad's company picnic and we left the house unlocked (a common practice in those days). We came home late, went straight to bed, and were awakened in the middle of the night by a man who had hidden in the bathroom tub. When we came home we had surprised him in the midst of his attempt to burglarize our house. From that day on, we locked the house when we left it, because we just didn't trust as much as we did before.

But what about trusting God? What does that look like, and how do we do it? What does it really mean when we say that we trust God? It is printed on our money, and in other prominent government and private documents and buildings. Does printing it on our money mean that we really do trust in God? Does saying it over and over indicate unity in terms of how we live life trusting God?

In the early days of ministry, when I had a rare opportunity to preach, or in my words, speak-preach, I spoke about the importance of trusting God. And this trust that I was speaking about was defined by action, or exercise, "doing something", not just saying the words. To demonstrate the active nature of trust, I had my older son (I think he was six or seven at the time), join me on the platform. I asked Landon to stand with his back to me, facing the side of worship center (this was at the church in Nashville, TN), and to place his hands by his side. I then asked him to lock his arms and to slowly lean back, without looking over his shoulder.

I asked, "Landon, do you trust me?" "Yes Sir," he said.

"Do you trust if you lean back as far as you can that I will catch you before you hit the floor, or before you in any way hurt yourself?" "Yes, Sir."

Then do it. I remember how difficult that was for him. He wanted to do it, but he was afraid. He wanted to check to see if I was ready, but I asked him not to turn his head. Eventually, he did it.

I believe that this is the essence of trust. Not saying or writing or imprinting that we trust but learning how to demonstrate in our behavior that we believe. Someone once said, you can purchase a ticket to fly on an airplane, demonstrating your belief that the airplane will take you to your chosen destination. But the only way to demonstrate real trust is to get on board the plane and take your seat—that's trust.

The words to another old hymn we used to sing, *Trust and Obey*, express it well:

*When we walk with the Lord, in the light of his word, what a glory he sheds on our way,
While we do his good will, he abides with us still, and with all who will trust and obey.
Trust and obey, for there's no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.*

It's one thing to say we trust God, that our faith is in him, that we believe in God. But it's another thing to actually trust. For when we truly trust in God, we act on his words, we do what he says, we live out of his wisdom and knowledge, not out of our own understanding. The writer of Proverbs said,

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” Proverbs 3: 5-6

Oh Lord, we believe you are who you say you are. Help us to trust you with our plans, our hopes, our fears, our lives, by obeying you, giving in to what you ask of us, giving up our ideas and ways of doing and thinking, for your ideas and your ways. WE put our trust in you. AMEN.