

TRUSTING GOD

(Numbers 9.15-23 and Matthew 7.24-27)

Introduction to Understanding Trust

A few quotes:

- "I don't understand banks. Why do they attach chains to their pens? If I'm trusting you with my money, you should trust me with your pens?"
- "Don't trust someone who never responds to your texts for two hours but when you are with them they are always checking their phone and replying."

All of us trust whether we are conscious of it or not. The people crossing that bridge in Italy trusted that it was safe but sadly were proved wrong and the consequences have been dire for them and their loved ones. We do pray that God will bring comfort to those who are hurting.

Trust is particularly important in establishing relationships. As a counsellor, one of my primary tasks when I first meet a client is to help the person or couple to develop a therapeutic relationship with me and this is not always and quick process and can take many weeks or months.

Today we are considering our Trust in God.

Are we able to fully trust our Heavenly Father as we relate to Him through our Lord Jesus Christ? What are the experiences of those we read about in the Bible? What can we learn for ourselves about trusting in God?

The Bible and Trust

The passage we have read in Numbers chapter 9 describes the cloud that covered the tent of the covenant and how this huge community of God's people trusted God by following the cloud as commanded by Moses. When the cloud moved they broke camp. The cloud moved after

just a few days or after a year or more. The people were still in the wilderness but nonetheless they experienced God's direction and leaned to trust in Him.

There are many examples of trusting in this way. You might remember Abraham who was called by God to relocate his entire household. At God's command he embarked on a journey and just like the Israelites he didn't know where the journey would lead him but he had trust in his God.

Mandy Hale wrote, "The more you go with the flow of life and surrender the outcome to God, and the less you seek constant clarity, the more you will find that fabulous things start to show up in your life."

It has been said that "Trust is letting go of needing to know all the details before you open your heart."

Another inspiring example of a man who risked everything in trusting God is that of Daniel. In Daniel chapter 6 we read about the enemies of Daniel plotting to get rid of him by tricking the king into issuing a decree that made it illegal for anyone to pray to anyone other than the king for one month. Daniel was faced with the prospect of being thrown into the lion's den if he continued his practice of openly praying to his God.

Trusting God with the outcome, Daniel prayed in his usual manner and was consequently thrown to the lions. We know the story, don't we? In his incredible faithfulness God shut the mouths of the lions and rescued Daniel and his enemies were destroyed. This story highlights that trust in God is a risky business.

Linda Evans Shepherd in a book called "Stress Cure" states, "If you are caught up in situations beyond your control, the solution is not figuring out how God can save you; it's trusting that he will."

Ourselves and Trust in God

We have already established that God desires us to trust Him and to depend on His faithfulness. We have also seen that trusting God is a risky business and for some it means putting their lives on the line.

For me, personally, I haven't had to trust God to that point but many Christian people do just that on a daily basis. More Christians today are being persecuted throughout the world than ever before, and many give their lives rather than compromise their faith in God.

A group of Christian people I know have committed themselves to meeting regularly to pray for the persecuted church in the knowledge that God hears our prayer.

Here at St Mary's, our lives are not under great threat but each of us are still called to trust God and to be obedient to Him.

In order for us to trust and obey we must know what God is asking of us. Are we aware of the pillar of cloud in our lives? Do we understand what our Heavenly Father is expecting of us? For me, the cloud has been expressed through His word, through prophecy, through prayer, through other people's input, through maintaining a sense of peace. How does God lead you? And when He leads, are you able to follow in trust?

Ernest Hemingway once said, "The best way to find out if you can trust somebody is to trust them."

A Few Words of Encouragement to Trust

Horace Bushnell writes, "Trust in God for great things. With your five loaves and two fishes He will show you a way to feed thousands".

We read about the outcome of Daniel's willingness to stand firm and to trust God for the outcome in Daniel Chapter 6.

We read, "Then King Darius wrote to all the nations and peoples of every language in all the earth: 'May you prosper greatly! I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel. For he is the living God and he endures forever; his kingdom will not be destroyed, his dominion will never end. He rescues and he saves; he performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions.' So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

How About Us?

In Summary:

- Trust is an essential ingredient of relationship.
- Trusting often involves being prepared to take action even though we don't have the detail and clarity is lacking. It involves a step by step willingness to follow.
- Trusting God is essentially a risky thing to do, but we know that we have a faithful God who will never desert us. If we do put our trust in our God and obey Him then He will do great things in and through our lives.