

#77 “Trust with All Your Heart”

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Proverbs 3:5-6 says, “Trust in the LORD with all your heart. And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”

Trust in the LORD with all your heart.

The command to trust means to put one’s confidence in, to be bold, to feel secure, and to rest easy in the Lord. God desires that we put our full hope in Him, that we turn to Him for strength, and that we rest safely knowing that His heart toward us is good. He does allow distress into our lives, but difficulties are our chance to let God work through our hearts to praise Him through unshaken faith by His grace. If we want to grow in our trusting of God or come to trust Him more, our faith will have to be stretched in order for this to happen. We will have to be pushed beyond where we feel we have things under control and where we sense that we are able to keep ourselves safe by our own means and power. The fact of the matter is that we are not the Sovereign of the universe and that we are not in ultimate control over our lives and circumstances. God is, and He loves us. Therefore, rather than trusting in our own strength, we ought to fall down before Him and give our lives and our circumstances to Him. (Not coincidentally, another rendering for trust is to fall down.)

God doesn’t want to merely come to our aid when things get beyond our control. The fact is that we are never sufficient of ourselves (2 Corinthians 3:5), and apart from Him we can do nothing (John 15:5). Thus, God wants us to trust Him fully all the time. To trust Him with our hearts means that we let Him rule our thoughts, dictate our decision making, sanctify our emotions, and refine our desires. We come to Him as one in total and desperate need, and we let Him have His way in our hearts. God wants full surrender, taking up our crosses, denying ourselves, and following Him (Matthew 16:24). The road to spiritual strength and growth is through trusting God as we come to embrace and accept by faith our own weakness and inability apart from Him. Through Him we can do all things (Philippians 4:13), but without Him, nothing of true spiritual worth or gain is possible (Matthew 19:26).

And do not lean on your own understanding.

It is so very tempting to lean upon our own strength rather than that which God provides. It is not by our might or power (Zechariah 4:6) but by God’s Spirit that anything of true spiritual value is accomplished. If we begin to elevate our own knowledge, abilities, and intellect above the wisdom which God provides us in Christ (Colossians 2:3), we will be prone to fall and be deceived. God wants us to grow in knowledge and wisdom in Christ through His Word, but He doesn’t want us putting our confidence in our own strength

and abilities such that we begin to trust in ourselves more than in Him and in His Word. The knowledge we need to remember so that we can stay humble is that we must not lean upon or depend upon our own knowledge, discernment, and reasoning abilities. They will lead us astray. We will misread people, we will interpret and apply Scripture erroneously, and we will just fail to seek God's will rightly. If we want to walk in wisdom and humility, we must walk by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7), seeking the Spirit's enabling to understand God's Word, to obey, and to do God's will. Those who walk by faith are those who will have true sight to know and do God's plan for their lives. Those who rely upon their own brainpower will be easily led astray by the evil one. *Trusting in the Lord and not trusting in ourselves go hand in hand.* Trusting in ourselves leads to the glory and praise of self. If it is we who pull ourselves through life, then it is we who should be praised. There may be nothing more spiritually tragic and dangerous than pride as we rest in ourselves and put our trust in ourselves, even part way and even some of the time. May God rid us of this spiritual cancer of self-reliance and vain glory.

In all your ways acknowledge Him...

God desires rather that we be mindful of our need for Him such that we choose to trust Him and walk by faith. He wants us to acknowledge Him, to consider Him, and to give Him the glory due Him as we go through life. Life is not about performing for God as if we need to impress Him and gain His favor. That leads to pride. Life, true abundant, eternal life, is knowing Christ (John 17:3). It is an intimate walk with God whereby we let Him live out His life and intentions through us and in us. We remain open to the Spirit's conviction, guidance, and leading, and we obey by faith. God gets the glory for our choices because we don't live by the feeble power of our flesh to gain His approval, but we act by the strength which He provides so that He can be glorified even through these weak jars of clay that we are (2 Corinthians 4:7). If we have a right view of ourselves as weak but strong only because of Christ in us and through us, we cannot help but give God the glory, and pride can be kept at bay. Humility leads to the praise of God and rejoicing in Him because He is acknowledged as our strength, support, and security each day.

...and He will make your paths straight.

As we acknowledge and glorify God rather than be obsessed with ourselves and our performance for God, let alone with selfish ambition and sinful agendas, we can trust God to make our paths straight. This means that we don't have to become crooked, we can maximize our stay on earth, and we can be kept from needless harm. This doesn't mean that we will never walk through a valley of the shadow of death and that all of life will be happy mountain top experiences, but it means that we can remain in a place of ultimate joy and satisfaction because of intimacy with God and a clean, upright, guilt-free conscience. Sometimes the wicked will prosper and the righteous will suffer, but what cannot be taken away from the righteous is a heart and soul that is at peace and at rest because its deepest longing has been met in Christ. There is simply no better place to be than in the arms of God, and there is no better way to walk than by a fearless faith. May God enable us to trust as we lean upon Him and not ourselves such that our lives result in

praise and glory to Him along with the satisfaction and peace of an upright life and heart,
one which has much to look forward to in eternity.