

Mar 7 (C) “Unwavering Trust” (Trust) (Proverbs 3:5-10)

A Proverb is a saying that is generally true. A proverbial way of life:

“Early to be, early to rise....makes a man healthy, wealthy & wise.”

“A bird in the hand...is worth 2 in the bush”

“A fool and his money...are soon parted”

“An ounce of prevention is worth....a pound of cure”

“Don’t bite the hand...that feeds you.”

“Don’t burn your bridges”

“Don’t cross a bridge before you come to it”

“The harder I work... the luckier I get...”

“Stupid is as stupid does”

“If you pay peanuts, you get monkeys”

“It takes two to tango”

“Too many cooks spoil the broth”

“A bad workman blames his tools”

“A closed mouth catches no flies”

“A camel is a horse designed by committee”

“All cats love fish but hate to get their paws wet”

“All hat and no cattle

“Buy the best and you only cry once”

“Proverbs are long life experiences told in one short sentence”

The Book of Proverbs uses the term, “My son” 23 times. Think of Solomon sitting down with his son and giving him advice. “Son, I’ve been through all of this, and I’m telling you, that this kind of lifestyle is a whole lot better than any other way. If you do certain things, then most likely you will have certain outcomes. While nothing in life is guaranteed, I can tell you that if you do certain things, you’ll have certain results.”

I think that there are a few simple things that if you’ll do, you’ll generally find success:

*Don’t drop out of school – get your education

*Avoid addictions: particularly drugs/alcohol

*Don’t get a divorce

*Find a job you like & work hard at it

I’m not saying that people who experience any of these things can’t find happiness in life or can’t turn things around, but if these things happen to you, it will set you back to some degree and you will have to work harder in life to meet with success. (Asbury is full of people who have done exactly that.)

The **Book of Proverbs** is full of such advice.

It warns us about **Anger:**

29:8 *Mockers stir up a city, but wise men turn away anger.*

29:11 *A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.*

Pride:

11:2 *When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.*

13:10 *Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice.*

Lust:

6:25-29 *Do not lust in your heart after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes, for the prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread, and the adulteress preys upon your very life. Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned? Can a man walk on hot coals without his feet being scorched? So is he who sleeps with another man's wife; no one who touches her will go unpunished.*

It also tells us to develop positive traits:

Generosity:

11:25 A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.

22:9 A generous man will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor.

*This sermon series is about **generosity**. Generosity begins with a **relationship** with the Lord. The relationship with the Lord begins with **trust**.*

Trust:

3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

22:19 So that your trust may be in the Lord, I teach you today, even you.

We all trust. We trust the people who prepare our food, that they won't poison it. We trust that other motorists will stop at red lights. We trust the architect and builder of this facility that the roof won't collapse. Trust is about a relationship. In healthy relationships, there is deep trust. I think about it with my parents, and my wife, and my children. Because I've grown up in healthy environments of blessing, love, and guidance; my natural default setting is to trust. It is my nature. On top of this, I have made a connection with God – and that greatly strengthens my capacity to trust. I know my life is ultimately linked with Him.

There are **certain conditions** linked to this text:

Conditions of trust: *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him,*

Promise: *he will make your paths straight*

V 7-8 **Conditions:** *“Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil.*

(“To shun” is really a strong word. Cut off. Pluck off. Turn entirely away. “Shunning” in the Amish tradition)

Promise: *This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones*

V 9-10 **Conditions:** *Honor the Lord with your wealth & with your firstfruits”*

Promise: *then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine*

There is a certain randomness to life. Because we trust God does not mean a 100% guarantee that everything is going to work out favorably. Generally, it will. But, since we're all going to die, there will come into our lives an eventual sadness because some of those we love will precede us in death. Nevertheless, those who trust in God, believe in heaven as our final destination.

Trust is an “A-B-C” thing. It's: **Attitude, Behavior** (action), and **Consistency** (over time). Life is built upon trust. It's a way of life. It's not a fad or a weekend event, or an hour sitting in the pew.

Maybe the only thing the “**great people**” in the Bible all had in common was that though they all had “issues” they were also able to trust God in spite of those problems. They were “even though” believers.

Noah builds the boat, **even though** it seemed crazy and undoubtedly he was taunted by his neighbors.

Abram answers the call, even though he left his hometown and family and went to an unknown destination.

And even though he was past age, he and Sarah trusted God enough to have a son.

Moses shows up in the Pharaoh's court, even though he didn't volunteer and didn't feel qualified.

David confronts the Giant, even though he was the last one picked. And he trusted God, “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death.”

Job said “even though he slay me, yet will I trust Him.”

The **3 Hebrews** tossed into the fiery furnace trusted, even though they didn't know if they'd be incinerated.

Mary trusted, even though she had severe age and resource limitations.

Peter trusted enough to get out of the boat and try to walk, even though his faith was incomplete.

John trusted, even though he lost his congregation, and was exiled to Patmos.

Jesus said, He who believes in me will live, even though he dies;

Trust seems to happen a lot in the context of those 2 words: “Even Though...”

1 Peter 1:8 *“Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy”*

Some of us today are really struggling: Major health issues, job problems, kids out of control, loneliness, marriage issues, grief, depression, spiritual heaviness, fear, insecurity, and worry.

Much of what Jesus taught in the **Sermon on the Mount** is opposite to the way we live and think. He talked about giving instead of hoarding; forgiving instead of plotting revenge; cooperating instead of fighting; being selfless instead of being selfish; praying and asking for God’s help rather than going it alone; glorifying God rather than being puffed up and proud; stooping and washing feet, instead of waiting on others to serve us; to trust in God, rather than in ourselves, in Caesar, or in our money.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Period. Whether we’re wealthy or poor; healthy or sick.

Why should I trust God?

1.) God is Good! That’s WHY we can trust Him.

Romans 8:28 *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*

2.) The impact of your life will be greater!

“Trust” defined. Trust God = let Him control our lives. Cling to, rely upon. Hope. It’s about relationship. How much time have you invested in it? To create/build the relationship, you’ve got to start @ the beginning.

God’s not biting his nails pacing the floor – he doesn’t need me to execute his divine plan...but we need it. Just like sending kids on mission trips – it would be easier/cheaper to just pay someone in KY to paint the house – but we’re trying to help our kids, too. Not to minimize the good we accomplish, but we’re there primarily to build relationships with those folks & to help develop our kids. Trusting God builds our faith.

I’m asking you to make an investment. Like any investment, there is a certain amount of risk involved. Maybe the atheists are right – there is no god, and the oxygen we breathe, the water we drink, and temperature of the earth and its axis, and so on, are just cosmic jokes and accidents. Maybe Jesus really was a fraud. Maybe there’s nothing to it – and we’re just junk – nothing special or nothing sacred.

But I believe...it’s what the Bible says. That God created the heavens and the earth. And that God is concerned about your life...to the extent that Jesus came, taught, lived a perfect life, died for our sins, and was resurrected. He gives us the Holy Spirit to be with us now, to make our lives meaningful; and not only that, but we have a whole new life ahead of us – no more tears, sorrow, or pain.

It all comes down to this: Who are you going to trust? The way you answer that question is going to determine the ultimate direction of your life. If you trust God, here is one thing that you’ll start noticing in your life:

You’ll become a generous person.