

Trusting God: Practical Applications

This study considers how faith relates to man's actions in our lives as Christians.

I. Trust and Action Work Together

Many people think that trusting God means people need not do anything. God does it all.

Psalm 37:3 – **Trust** in the Lord and **do good**.

1 Timothy 4:10 – To this end we **labor**, because we **trust** in the living God.

Galatians 5:6 – What avails in Christ Jesus is **faith working** through love.

So God requires His people both to trust Him and to labor. Notice some specific examples.

Proper Relationship with God

In becoming Christians

The doctrine of “faith only” says to trust God, then there is nothing for us to do to be saved.

Mark 16:16 – He who believes and is baptized will be saved.

James 2:24 – A man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

Verse 22 explains that faith works together with man's actions.

True faith in God requires man to obey God in order to be saved.

In maintaining fellowship with God as His children

Some teach that, when Christians commit sins, there is nothing they need to do to be forgiven.

Acts 8:22 – Repent and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.

1 John 1:9 – If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us.

So, faith and obedience work together, whether for an alien sinner or an erring child of God.

Physical Necessities

Some people are afraid to decide what job to take or where to live, thinking they may choose something different from what God wants. Others hope for a “sign” from God.

Matthew 6:11 – Jesus taught us to pray to God for our daily bread.

1 Timothy 5:8 – A man must provide for his own, especially his own household.

2 Thessalonians 3:10 – If a man will not work, neither let him eat.

We pray, then we do what we can to work on a job, then we trust God to use our effort to provide the blessing that we need. Most people understand this, but what about other areas?

Care for Health and Life

Some believe trusting God for health means they should not see doctors.

3 John 2 shows that we should pray for good health.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 – Paul prayed three times for God to remove his thorn in the flesh.

Colossians 4:14 – Luke, who wrote much of the New Testament, was a physician.

Luke 5:31 – Jesus said that those who are sick need a physician.

Using health specialists does not contradict faith. The doctor may be God's answer to prayer!

Number of Children

Some couples claim that they should leave the number or spacing of their children up to God. But every conception necessarily requires human action.

Genesis 1:26-28 – God said to reproduce and put all the earth under our dominion

Do not kill a child who has been conceived. But God has not revealed how many children a couple will have. They should pray, do what they can, and trust God to bless them as He chooses.

Choosing Rulers

Daniel 4:32 – The Most High rules gives (authority) to whomever He chooses.

1 Timothy 2:1,2 – We should pray for rulers. So some claim we should pray but not vote.

Esther 7:1-10 – A godly woman used her influence to bring down a wicked ruler.

Acts 22:24-29; 23:12-33; 25:10-12; 16:35-40 – Paul used his rights as a citizen for his protection and to help further the gospel. Likewise, the right to vote can help protect our families, maintain our freedom to preach and practice the truth, and even help bring down wicked rulers.

We are accountable to obey only what God has revealed in Scripture. God does not impute sin in matters regarding which He has not revealed His will (Romans 4:15; 5:13). We should pray and trust Him, but we should also do what we can to bring about the answer to our prayer, acting in harmony with the general principles God has revealed.

The idea that faith means to leave everything up to God is based on Calvinistic thinking. Pure Calvinists believe God has decreed from eternity everything that will happen; they believe nothing they do can affect anything. The proper approach is to study the general principles God *has* revealed. If His *specific* will is *not* revealed, we should make a choice based on our best information, then pray to God to bless our actions to produce the outcome He desires.

II. Trust Depends on God as the Ultimate Provider of Our Needs.

We need to act, but far too often people show lack of trust in God by depending too much on human ability and wisdom but not enough on God.

Psalms 37:5 – Commit your way to the Lord, trust in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.

Proper Relationship with God

Proverbs 3:5,6 – Trusting God requires us to allow Him to direct our paths, rather than leaning on human wisdom. Some people seek salvation by following man-made plans.

Luke 18:9-14 – Some trust in themselves that they are righteous

We must not think there is nothing for us to do to be saved. But neither should we think we can invent our own way to salvation or that we have been good enough to deserve salvation.

Trusting God means we rely on Him to provide the means of salvation. Then we obey and we trust Him to grant the blessing of forgiveness that He has promised.

Physical Necessities / Care for Health and Life / Number of Children

1 Timothy 6:17 – We should not trust in riches but in God.

1 Timothy 5:5 – A widow indeed trusts God and continues in prayer night and day.

Psalms 34:8-10 – When people trust God, He blesses them so do not lack any good thing.

We should do what we can to meet our needs, but our ultimate trust should be in God.

The end result is always God's decision. Ultimately, He determines what will result in our lives. So even as we work, we must understand that the ultimate outcome is up to Him. We must put our faith in Him to use our circumstances for what He knows to be good in the end.

Civil Government

Isaiah 31:1 – Woe to those who rely on horses, chariots, etc., but do not look to the Lord.

Psalms 118:8,9 – It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man/princes.

The message is not that God does everything so we should reject all government resources. But even as we work to accomplish what we believe to be best, ultimately we must trust Him to use our circumstances for what He knows to be good in the end.

Conclusion

So what does trust in God require of us? It involves at least all of the following:

* We must follow what is revealed in God's word.

* Yet we are responsible to work.

* We must recognize God as the ultimate source of all that we need in life.

* We must trust God to use our effort to produce the results He chooses.

2 Corinthians 3:4,5 – We are not sufficient of ourselves. Our sufficiency is of God.

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