

## **The Fear of Trusting God**

Air Dates: July 10-14, 2023

### **Day One**

What do you think is the underlying predominant reason that so many Christians today are not living victorious lives, are not effective for Jesus Christ? Why are so many consumed with fear and anxiety, with doubt and despair? Think about it for a minute.

As I look back over my life, and observe many others, I've come to this conclusion: The basic problem many of us Christians have is that we're afraid to trust God. Oh, true, we've accepted Christ and his salvation, but to trust God with every aspect of our lives strikes fear in our hearts. And because of this, we never know the triumphant joy-filled life God has intended for us.

For ten years in my own life, I fought the Lordship of Jesus Christ, ran my own show, and wasted precious opportunities for God because I was consumed by this fear of trusting God. Oh, I didn't recognize it at the time, but later I realized that underneath my rebellion against God's control in my life was a basic fear that I couldn't trust him.

Could that be where you are right now: Scared to death to really, totally trust God? Are you hanging on to the controls of your life as if to say that you think you can engineer the circumstances and events of your life better than God can?

What I finally had to face was that my fear of trusting God was a result of my misconceptions of God's character and nature and of his intentions and motivation. I was operating under the fear that God would punish me for past failures by depriving me of future happiness, and I was afraid he would direct me in paths that I did not want to take!

I've also come to understand that fear of trusting God is simply sin—the sin of unbelief. There really is no greater sin against the Holy God than to treat him as though he cannot be trusted.

Through various events God began to break through to me. And in the years since, I've begun to learn to trust God. What changes! What a transformation has occurred in my life.

I look back and say, "Why did I not trust him sooner?"

### **Day Two**

Do you find it difficult to truly trust God with all aspects of your life? I believe this fear of trusting God is very real with many Christians. It was with me for ten years, as I refused to allow the Lord to control my life, because I was afraid he would punish me for past failures, or else take my life in a direction that would be miserable and would make me unhappy.

I've discovered in the many years since how foolish I was to fail to trust God, and I've begun to understand that I didn't trust him because I didn't clearly understand the nature of God. You see, when you have a clear understanding of who God is as Scripture tells us, you really have two simple options: to believe it or not to believe it. If you believe God is who he says he is, trusting him becomes the only

logical thing to do. Nothing else makes any sense. To fail to trust him is to say by your actions that God cannot be who he says he is; it is in effect to say that he is not trustworthy.

What are these basic characteristics of God that should lead us to trust him? We learn from Scripture that our God is the only God. In the book of Isaiah, the Lord says, *"I am the first and the last, and there is no other God besides me (Isaiah 45:5) Is there any God besides me, or is there any other Rock? I know of none" (Isaiah 44:8)*. So first, we understand that we are worshipping the true and only God.

Secondly, we need to understand his power. He is the Creator of all that ever existed. He said, *"I am the Lord, the Maker of all things, who stretches out the heavens, who spreads out the earth by myself (Isaiah 44:24)*. God spoke and the worlds came into being, created out of nothing.

The Psalmist said, *"I know that the Lord is great, that our Lord is greater than all gods. The Lord does whatever pleases him, in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all their depths" (Psalms 135:5-6)*.

Thirdly, our God is holy and perfect. He does not make mistakes.

Now, can you honestly say that you believe the God you worship is the only God, the Creator, all-powerful and wise, holy and perfect, and that he makes no mistakes? Please don't glibly answer that question. Give it some thought, because if you say that you do indeed believe God is who he says he is, it leads to some inevitable conclusions and decisions you must make.

### Day Three

Do you believe that the God we Christians worship, the God of the Bible, is the only true God, that he has all power and authority, that he has all wisdom and knowledge, that he is holy and perfect and does not make mistakes? Certainly this is what the Bible tells us, but what I'm asking you is, do *you* truly believe God is like that?

It may be that you have given intellectual consent to the Bible's teaching about God, but that belief has never become a gripping reality in your everyday life.

If you are convinced that God's character, power and personality are as stated, the next important issue to understand is how this God feels about you. After all, you are but a spec in this great mass of humanity. Do you make any difference to God?

Let me remind you of a few Scriptures that tell us how God feels about you individually. Matthew 10:30 tells us *"And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered."* Every time you brush your hair and see the hairs in your brush or on the floor, you should be reminded that God has just recomputed all those lost hairs, and he's keeping a running total at all times! Who else would care how many hairs are on your head? We read that he cares about worthless, colorless sparrows and knows each one that falls to the ground. Can you not believe God cares even much more about you?

We read in Zephaniah 3:17: *"The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing."* Did you know that God delights in you and sings over you? Isn't that incredible?

There are many passages in the Bible that tell us clearly that the God of all the universe cares about each of us individually, knows us intimately, and wants for us only his highest and best. His plans for you are good plans.

Now, if you're with me this far—if you believe that God has all power, wisdom, knowledge and authority, and in addition, he loves you and cares about your good—here's the next logical conclusion that those beliefs lead to: God's plans for you are always superior to any other plans.

You can trust him and his plans for your life without any hesitation. Not only *can* you trust him, but it is the only logical thing to do. Why would you want to trust anyone less—even yourself? If your trust is in anyone besides God, you're settling for so much less than you should.

If you're afraid to trust God, then something must be wrong in either your understanding of who God is or how he feels about you. Or else your belief is just a head belief, and it hasn't yet changed your heart.

## Day Four

If we truly believe God is who he says he is, the only true God with all power, wisdom and authority, and we believe that he cares for us individually and desires only the best for us, then the only logical conclusion has to be that he is totally trustworthy.

Why is it that you can't easily let go and trust God? Well, you have three enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil, and you are getting all kinds of conflicting signals from them. The world tells you to "do our own thing," "find yourself," "do what feels good," "decide what your truth is!" The flesh says, "You deserve happiness and you have a right to run your life the way you want to." The devil says, "If you trust God, you most surely will be left to some terrible life. You'll be miserable and alone."

And if you listen to these voices, then fear takes over, and you're convinced that totally trusting God is too risky. It is meant only for those few people who somehow have the courage to go into "full time Christian service." And without realizing it, you have decided that you can trust yourself better than God.

If that's true, then that fear of trusting God is robbing you of peace and contentment and keeping you from the joyful, fulfilled life that you long for. Overcoming the fear of trusting God begins with a recognition of who God is, with a true understanding that he is much smarter than you are, that he cares about you and loves you and desires to give you good gifts. And that leads you to understand that the only sensible thing to do is to abandon yourself to his care and trust him completely in every area of your life.

God does not negotiate with us. We come his way—through Jesus Christ—or we don't come at all. But once you really comprehend how totally trustworthy God is, you will be glad to yield to his lordship. It takes the monkey off your back. You are no longer responsible for managing your own destiny. Someone far more qualified is now in charge—the God of all ages—and you can be absolutely sure that his plan for your life will be better than your own.

## Day Five

How well do you know God? Knowing God doesn't just happen. You don't automatically inhale that knowledge because you were born in a Christian home or go to church regularly. Knowing God is a result of seeking him and devoting yourself to knowing him more and more all the time. Many Christians never get over their fear of trusting God. They go through life unwilling to yield to him the control of their lives, because they're not quite certain he is trustworthy.

We only overcome that fear by getting to know God because you trust who you know. And you don't get to know God by accident. It happens on purpose. You must purpose to get to know him.

We've seen reports of tests given to high school seniors that show their knowledge of basic facts to be extremely poor. I wonder what kind of scores Christians would have if they were tested on their

knowledge of God. Do you spend more time getting to know television programs or personalities than you do getting to know God? Could you tell me more about your local sports teams than you can tell you about God?

Getting to know God takes time and it takes a plan. Are you really eager to know him? Jesus said, *"This is eternal life, that you may know God"* (John 17:3). Everything hinges on your knowledge of God.

If you really want to know him, I urge you to make a structured plan that gets you into his Word on a daily basis, and that leads you into a prayer life of praise and intercession. You get to know someone by spending time with that person and it will require a commitment on your part. If you feel you don't know how to begin, I have written a Bible study entitled "A Guide on Getting to Know God." It gives you some practical suggestions on how to do that.

But the important thing is that you pursue God. You go after him. Just going to church on Sundays is not enough, no matter how good your church is. You must personally hunger to know him and pursue him, as a deer pants after water.

When you do, I promise you this: You'll start to trust him, and you'll trust him more and more all the time. Because to truly know God is to trust him. And once you start to give him the controls of your life, everything will fall into its rightful place. You'll find the answers you've been looking for. The fear of trusting God will vanish.