

## I. Pause and Pray

*Search me, O God, and know my heart!  
Try me and know my thoughts!  
And see if there be any grievous way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting!* Psalm 139:23-24

## II. Do We Really Trust God?

### A. Let's start with a quick definition of what that means:

1. **Warren Wiersbe** noted that the word translated "trust" means "to lie helpless, facedown." It pictures a servant waiting for the master's command in readiness to obey, or a defeated soldier yielding himself to the conquering general.
2. In the NT, TRUST is used interchangeably with BELIEF and FAITH - The Greek word **pisteuo**, means an adherence to, committal to, faith in, reliance upon, trust in a person or an object, to be persuaded of or convinced of something, to place one's confidence in, to trust. Trust carries the idea of having **unreserved confidence in God** to keep His promises to never forsake us as His children and to provide all our needs.
3. To paraphrase a respected linguist, W. E. Vines, trust or a real saving faith involves
  1. A firm **conviction** which produces full acknowledgment of God's revelation of Truth
  2. a personal **surrender** to the Truth and
  3. a **conduct** inspired by & consistent with that surrender.

### B. When life doesn't make sense

### C. The "Problem" of Evil

Rabbi Harold Kushner put into words what many religious people actually think in his book, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*. In agreement with many professing Christians who think they have to defend God, Kushner wrote concerning the suffering of Job: "forced to choose between a good God who is not totally powerful, or a powerful God who is not totally good... Job chooses to believe in God's goodness... God wants the righteous to live peaceful, happy lives, but sometimes even He can't bring that about. It is too difficult even for God to keep cruelty and chaos from claiming their innocent victims" (*Trusting God*, p. 43).

### Discussion Questions:

1. What was helpful regarding the definition of Trust in the Bible?
2. When was a time in your life that you experienced trusting vertigo?
3. Do you ever try to defend God? How so?

### III. The Character of God

#### A. God is Sovereign

##### 1. We use that word, but what does it mean?

- a. John Piper: *Power and authority to the extent of being able to over ride all other powers and authorities.*
- b. A. W. Pink wrote in The Attributes of God

*The sovereignty of God may be defined as the **exercise** of His supremacy... Being infinitely elevated above the highest creature, He is the Most High, Lord of heaven and earth. Subject to none, influenced by none, absolutely independent; God does as He pleases, only as He pleases, always as He pleases. None can thwart Him, none can hinder Him. So His own Word expressly declares: "My counsel shall stand, and I **will do** all My pleasure" ([Isa. 46:10](#)); "He doeth according to **His** will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand"*

##### d. Charles Spurgeon wrote:

"I believe that every particle of dust that dances in the sunbeam does not move an atom more or less than God wishes – that every particle of spray that dashes against the steamboat has its orbit, as well as the sun in the heavens – that the chaff from the hand of the winnower is steered as the stars in their courses. The creeping of an aphid over the rosebud is as much fixed as the march of the devastating pestilence – the fall of . . . leaves from a poplar is as fully ordained as the tumbling of an avalanche."

#### B. The Goodness of God

1. John Frame writes, "A good person is one who acts to benefit others.... Psalm 145:9 says that he is 'good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made.' He is good to his people, but is good to them even before they become his people... nobody can complain that God has not been good to him. Even the lost in hell cannot complain that God has never done anything good to them." (Systematic Theology, p. 234).
2. Genesis 50:20-21

#### C. The Wisdom of God

C.H. Spurgeon spoke in a sermon on divine providence, "Providence is wonderfully intricate. Ah! you want always to see through Providence, do you not? You never will, I assure you. You have not eyes good enough. You want to see what good that affliction was to you; you must believe it. You want to see how it can bring good to the soul; you may be enabled in a little time; but you can not see it now; you must believe it. Honor God by trusting him!" (Trusting God, p. 127).

1. Wisdom is commonly defined as good judgment, or the ability to develop the best course of action, or the best response to a given situation.
2. Wisdom is the right decision, at the right time, in the right way, for the right reasons!
3. God is infinite in wisdom. Bridges writes, "God never has to agonize over a decision. He does not even have to deliberate within Himself or consult

others outside of Himself. His wisdom is intuitive, infinite and infallible: "His understanding has no limit" (Psalm 147:5).

Bridges writes, "We are unwilling to live without rational reasons for what is happening to us or those we love. We are almost insatiable in our quest for the "why" of the adversity that comes upon us. But this is a futile, as well as an untrusting task. God's ways, being the ways of infinite wisdom, simply **cannot be comprehended** by our finite minds" (p. 125-126).

Romans 11:33-34 tells us, "*Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How **unsearchable** are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?"*

"God is God. If He is God, He is worthy of my worship and my service. I will find rest nowhere but in His will, and that will is infinitely, immeasurably, unspeakably beyond my largest notion of what He is up to...God is the God of human history, and He is at work continuously, mysteriously, accomplishing His eternal purposes in us, through us, for us, and in spite of us... For us widows the question as to why the men who had trusted God...should be allowed to be speared to death was not one that could be smoothly or finally answered in 1956, nor yet silenced in 1996. God did not answer Job's questions either. Job was living in a mystery – the mystery of the sovereign purpose of God – and the questions that rose out of the depths of that mystery were answered only by a deeper mystery, that of God Himself." ~ Elisabeth Elliot, *Through Gates of Splendor*

#### D. Conclusion

God is completely sovereign  
God is perfect in love and goodness  
God is infinite in wisdom

Jerry Bridges writes, "God in His love always wills what is best for us. In His wisdom He always knows what is best, and in His sovereignty He has the power to bring it about."

#### IV. Verses to Examine

Look up each verse and the surrounding context if necessary, and write down what it says in your own words.

##### A. God is Sovereign over all

1. Jeremiah 32:17
2. Job 1:6-19; 42:2
3. Daniel 4:34-35
4. Proverbs 16:9, 33
5. Amos 4:7
6. Matthew 5:45
7. 1 Samuel 2:6-8
8. Psalm 33:6-10
9. Proverbs 19:21
10. Psalm 115:3
11. Acts 4:23-31
12. Psalm 39:4
13. Colossians 1:16-17
14. Isaiah 46:10
15. Jeremiah 10:12-13

B. God is perfectly Good

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| 1. Genesis 50:20    | 2. Deuteronomy 7:6-8 |
| 3. Psalm 34:8-10    | 4. Psalm 84:11       |
| 5. Matthew 10:29-31 | 6. Matthew 7:11      |
| 7. Psalm 145:9      | 8. Matthew 5:44-45   |
| 9. Romans 8:28-39   |                      |

C. God is infinite in Wisdom

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|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Proverbs 2:6     | 2. Proverbs 4:6-7        |
| 3. Proverbs 1:7     | 4. 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 |
| 5. Romans 11:33-36  | 6. 1 Corinthians 1:30    |
| 7. Colossians 2:2-3 | 8. James 1:5             |
| 9. Psalm 147:5      |                          |

V. Discussion Questions

- A. Do you struggle to see these conclusions of God's character?
- B. How do you struggle to trust God and how does that affect your life?
- C. In what ways can God not make sense to you?
- D. What ways can you see that God has worked out evil for good?
- E. How does God's sovereignty impact any temptations you may have to be bitter or unforgiving towards those who've sinned against you?
- F. How does your heart respond to natural disasters?
- G. Do you find yourself asking God "why" in an untrusting way?
- H. How can we turn an untrusting questioning of "why" to worship?
- I. What are ways you can think that you're wiser than God?
- J. What is the greatest good that God has for us?
- H. How do we grow in trusting God?