

Put Your Trust in the Lord
Psalm 4
March 16, 2024

Trust; how do you know you can trust something or someone? How do you know that the little rope bridge over the ravine is going to hold you as you cross that chasm? Which would you choose? A horse and rider or a mouse running on that rope bridge? You would trust that bridge if the horse and rider made it over safely.

If you just met someone on the sidewalk and they told you of some new great invention that they had made and they were wanting some ordinary people to invest what they could in it. Would it make any difference to you if the person was someone who was out on bail for bilking investors of their life savings or it was Elon Musk who just sent up a rocket to the International space station to retrieve a couple of astronauts who were to be there for a few days but ended staying a few months?

We would look at the proof or at least enough proof to make you willing to trust the thing or person. The amount of proof needed would normally depend on what was at risk.

In the Psalm for today, a Psalm of David, David is trusting the Lord and is pointing out to those who are speaking lies about him and really about God who has chosen him.

David is pointing out who they should trust in. He is telling them to trust in God as he has. As David has called out to the Lord to rescue him, the Lord has come through and given Him relief. David trusted the Lord because he has seen Him work in his life, time and time again.

When did trust in the Lord, first begin? We could go back to Adam and Eve. Did they trust the Lord? At first, no. They listened to someone they shouldn't have trusted. He got them to go against the one and only warning of the Lord. They were not to eat from that one lone, singular tree in the garden. How many other trees were there with perfect fruit hanging from them, just ready to have their fruit taken from them? Adam and Eve could have enjoyed the sweet juice filling their mouths grin the other trees but they chose to eat from that one tree. Who knows, but there were probably many thousands or more trees to choose from.

Yet, instead of, lets say, the tree of life, they chose this other tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. What a choice. They had it all and yet, like us, they wanted more. They got more, they got to see the promise of God come true, they were

going to die but they also got to see another side of God and that was His grace and mercy, as He allowed them to live for a long time. Adam lived for over 900 years but he too died like everyone since except a couple, Elijah and Enoch.

David is telling them and us to offer right sacrifices and put our trust in the Lord. We all could offer accounts of our trusting in the Lord but has that trust gone to the extent of the 3 fire boys, you know them as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego who refused to bow down to the golden statue of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. How did they trust in the Lord? They responded to the fury of Nebuchadnezzar over the fact that they would not bow down to the image with: *Daniel 3:16-18 "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."*

Not only did the Lord save them but He also saved Daniel, who also was in hot water for worshiping God. As you know, He was tossed into a den of hungry lions but they didn't open their mouths or even try to attack him. Yes, the Lord miraculously saved Daniel without harm and furthered His renown with the King.

David had seen the Lord work miraculously in his life and we too may have seen the same. So what is our response to the Lord for His work in our lives? David said to offer right sacrifices. What sacrifices are those? David, in another Psalm tells us: *Psalm 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.*

David gets, no pun intended, to the heart of the matter. It is the heart where the problem lies as Jesus said to Peter: *Matthew 15:18-20 But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone."*

David was just chastised for having Bathsheba's husband killed, thinking he wouldn't be found out for getting Uriah's wife pregnant. He was found out as Nathan the prophet told the parable of the reich guy and the poor guy with only the one little ewe lamb that he was forced to give up to the rich man. The poor man was probably thinking to the future when that one lamb might have been the start of a flock to increase the wealth of the poor man and now it was gone, the only one he had.

David was that rich man who had taken the wife of one of his soldiers, one who fought for him and the nation. Not only did he take his wife but caused him to lose his life, uselessly.

David, an adulterer and murderer saw his heart. He knew what he was capable of. He knew he had defiled himself and was at the mercy of God as to what the Lord would do to him. He would learn that the Lord would take his son from that union as a child. David would live with that throughout his life as he dealt with others under his rule.

How many times have things gone on in your hearts that would fit with those that David brought up to Peter? Jesus says it is those things that defile a person. I know you may say you can cross a few of those off the list but have you ever taken something that wasn't yours, something even small? Yes, we all have. How about saying something that wasn't quite true? You probably have stretched the truth a time or two.

We may look at the list and think some are worse than others but they all made the list that Jesus pointed out. Guess what, we too, have hearts that have been defiled at one time or another which doesn't bode well for us if it weren't for Jesus.

David lived about 1000 years before Jesus came to the world. We look to Jesus for forgiveness. We are a couple thousand years since Jesus but what do we have in common with David? David knew to put his trust in the Lord. David put his trust in the Lord and also knew what the truly right sacrifices were. It is the same for us.

David offered animal sacrifices but he knew that there was an even greater sacrifice that came from the heart and that sacrifice got another warm blooded body involved, you as well as him. Yes, this sacrifice is personal. It should be as your sins are your own they are not another's.

They are our own sins and yet what did Jesus come to do? He came to take those sins on Himself, suffer and die for them on the cross. He wanted to relieve you of your sins so that you could be free to serve Him by serving your neighbor.

David knew where his joy lay. He was wanting others to see and know what he knew. He knew they wanted to do him bad and yet it would have meant a lot if they would change their ways and instead of seeking his harm, they would enjoy the mercy of the Lord.

We, too, would wish those who have something against us or want to do us harm would get to know the Lord. We know, if they knew the Lord, then life would be easier

for us and for them as they would seek to worship the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

At the end of the service the Aaronic blessing is said over you. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace. David uses a portion of it here as well. He, in response to those who want to see the Lord show some good to them, asks that the Lord work good by lifting up the light of the His face. If the Lord is shining the light of His goodness on our lives then we will have good in our lives for the Lord is making it good.

We want the Lord to work not only in our lives but the lives of others even those who are not believers as we tell of God and His work for all. Jesus says it well in *Matthew 5:44-46 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?*

David is dealing with those who are trying to make him look bad as a ruler. Yes, they are trying to undermine his rule, rule put in place by God who chose him to do the work of a ruler for the people of Israel, God's chosen people. God thought well of David even though David sinned greatly. The Lord forgave him and blessed him and told him that the Messiah would come from his line. The Lord thought a lot of David as Luke wrote in *Acts: 13:22 And when He had removed him (Saul), He raised up David to be their king, of whom He testified and said, 'I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after My heart, who will do all My will.*

David was a sinner, we might even say a great sinner and yet the Lord, because of His great mercy, sees David as a man after His own heart. Some may think they are too sinful for the Lord and yet in Jesus we all have one whose salvation is greater than any sin.

David looked to the Lord and the coming Messiah. We look to the Messiah, the Savior Jesus as we trust that the one who has saved us would want us to be with Him forever. He continues to provide us with His forgiveness, as we put our trust in Him to take us to be with Him as Paul put it in his first letter to the Corinthians: 15:23 But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at His coming those who belong to Christ.

Paul put