

# Who Do You Trust?

**Our habit as a human being of trusting in ourselves is generally the last great obstacle blocking our pathway to victory over eternal death in our faith in our Saviour Jesus Christ.**

**John 15:3-5** [New King James] *“You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. **He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.**”*

This is a very powerful statement made by Jesus Christ to all Christians [verse 3] and because of our natural human nature very difficult to accept.

**God had to deal harshly with the very “religious” Paul [still named at first Saul], on the road to Damascus to, as he considered, to do the work of God by crushing this new sect, [Acts 9:1-9].**

**Paul in his letters and actions made it very plain that only after giving up the last inclination to trust in himself that he became immersed in the sufficiency of Christ, [Romans 7:13-25].**

**2 Corinthians 12:6-10** [New King James] *“For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me. And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”*

**This thorn could be poor eyesight after the brilliance of the meeting with Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, [Galatians 6:11].**

**2 Corinthians 4:7** [New King James] *“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.”*

**All Christians have been entrusted with a message that is beyond price inspite of being in frail human bodies.**

Paul’s focus was on the message, **not** the perishable container, knowing that its power all came from the One who brought it to humanity from God the Father, His Son and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, **not** from us.

**Paul was continually thrown into spiritual combat with Satan and his physical servants as he preached the Christian message, but he knew the blessing and the power of operating from a position of strength, dependent totally on the active presence of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, [Romans 8:9] working in him.**

**1 Corinthians 15:9-10** [New King James] *“For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”*

Because of his actions before he met with Jesus Christ his Saviour, Paul considered himself the worst of sinners, [1 Timothy 1:15].

**To become an effective servant of Jesus Christ we must know and acknowledge that every grace and every virtue proceeds directly from God alone, not even a good thought can be generated in us unless it is the work of the Holy Spirit in us.**

**Self-trust is very subtle –**

Our self-trust is such a subtle thing that it still whispers to us even after we are sure it has gone from our lives.

Now this is a caution, after having humbled ourselves there is a possibility that our subtle self-trust may prove to be stronger than ever, for it has a better foundation upon which to build.

After we have put away our sins, given up our will and taken a position of confession and humility, our self-trust is quick to whisper its consolation deep within us; mistakenly this can be considered as coming from the Holy Spirit.

**We believe we have attained a victory, we are really maturing spiritually, really getting somewhere, with God's help, of course!**

**This is merely a kind of consolation and comfort, yet in truth we are reverting back to self-trust.**

**What then is true encouragement? –**

**In view of what we have learnt, where can we find true encouragement that is not based on self-trust?**

The fact that the Triune God loves us beyond measure, and that He is keenly interested in our spiritual progress and maturity that He faithfully continues to teach, instruct and discipline us as His dear children.

**Hebrews 12:1-8** [New King James] *“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: ‘My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.’ If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.”*

The only eccentricity about God is that He should love sinners such as we all are, [**Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8**] but this does **not** really answer the question, “*Why does God love sinning humans?*”

[Please download and study our article ‘*God Cannot Help Loving*’ listed under the main heading ‘*God*’ for our attempt to answer this question.]

**We can put all our confidence in the Triune God, He knows that we are dust and He is loving and patient towards all who seek to know and worship Him.**

**Psalms 103:8-14** [New King James] *“The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy. He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.”*

**Part of the patient love is seeking to assure us just how necessary it is for us to place all our trust in Him and come to a position of complete distrust in ourselves.**

**How can we completely distrust ourselves? –**

Occasionally this lesson is learnt by direct holy inspiration as we meditate on what God the Father has done for all humanity through the life, sacrifice and resurrection of His Only Son Jesus Christ.

**Knowing that the only real response to such mercy is to surrender ourselves to His will.**

**Romans 12:1** [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship.”*

The Greek word translated “*bodies*” is “*soma*” meaning whole life, physical life, mind and “*human spirit*,” [Job 32:8; Proverbs 20:27; 1 Corinthians 2:11].

**Romans 12:2** [NIV] *“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

The Holy Spirit will then begin to “*re-educate*” our minds to harmonise with that of the Triune God, [Galatians 5:22-25].

Only then can God place our names in the “*Book of Life*” and offer us eternal life as a gift, [Romans 6:23] allowing us a life that is continually learning to be more like Him, [John 17:3].

**This new life can begin now, [1 John 5:11].**

We must come to understand that the nature we have as human beings with all its pride is an inherent evil from our parents.

King David understood this and it was part of what he confessed and repented of.

**Psalms 51:1-6** [New King James] *“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight, that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.”*

Part of that “*truth*” King David knew God wanted him to know as his total dependency on the Triune God he worshipped and had sinned against, [verse 4].

**Another way we can completely distrust ourselves is with harsh scourging –**

Job is an example of this method. Have you noticed that Job was far from being humble!

Job knew that he lived a life of obedience to God, and had been blessed by God as a result of this obedience, [Job 1:1-3].

Job was a great man and he knew it, [Job 23:1-12; Job 29:7-16].

**Job could not understand why the God he worshipped and obeyed would subject him to so much pain and shame, until God revealed His power and glory to Job, [Job 38:1-41; Job 39:1-30; Job 40:1-2].**

**Job 40:3-5** [New King James] *“Then Job answered the LORD and said: ‘Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth. Once I have spoken, but I will not answer; yes, twice, but I will proceed no further.’”*

**The mind of Job began to see how insignificant he was in comparison to the Creator God.**

God continued to re-educate Job, who was now partly humbled, [**Job 40:6-24; Job 41:1-34**].

**Only after all this revelation from the Creator God did Job reject his self-trust.**

**Job 42:1-6** [New King James] *“Then Job answered the LORD and said: ‘I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You. You asked, “Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?” Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. Listen, please, and let me speak; You said, “I will question you, and you shall answer Me.” I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.’”*

**There are several records in God’s Word, the Christian Bible, where God revealed His power and glory to us through the personal experience of specific people like Job.**

**We need to use what they experienced to help us to be totally dependent on our Creator God, on a day-to-day basis.**

Some Christians are prone to sink into discouragement when called to face temptations. But I think that these disciplines should become a spiritual encouragement to us.

**James 1:2-4** [New King James] *“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”*

**God intends such times of trial to be a time of joyful spiritual growth and maturing in Godly wisdom, [James 3:17-18].**

**God must expose our real selves –**

None of us can really tell how weak and useless we are until God has exposed us, and no-one wants to be exposed in any way.

**The apostle Peter was an example of God doing this to deal with his self-trust.**

When we read the record of blustering Peter and his eventual denial of the Saviour he loved so much.

God knows so much better than we do that He must expose our weaknesses for our own eventual good.

We do **not** really know how unstable we are until we have been exposed by the Holy Spirit.

That is why it is too dangerous to trust in our good habits and virtues and that is why our distrust of ourselves must be the work of God’s hands.

**If we insist upon trusting ourselves, our training, education, talents and our human judgement, we make God less than He is and make humans more than we are.**

**We take the glory from God and give it to our converted and sanctified self. Such action is shameful, because it takes from the Creator God the ultimate and final trust, even when we know that God is the source of all that is good and perfect, [James 1:16-17].**

We can recite God's attributes, become an expert in theology and yet still believe in our hearts that we are more than we really are!

This is why we need repentance and forgiveness from our Creator God.