

Weaving the Word

Feeding His Flock

August 11, 2019

Welcome to where we're learning to rest in trust!

How often do you give your heart permission to be troubled?



Last week we ended by saying: **in God we trust**; and **in trust we rest**. So, how do you do *that*? Simple; **you don't give your heart an option**.

Do not *let* your hearts be *troubled*. Trust in God; trust *also* in me. **[Because, it's actually impossible to fully trust in either without the other]** – John 14:1 NIV



The Father's promises will be robbed of their fulfillment, or the Son's actions will be robbed of their purpose. And, those who ignore either will be robbed of their trust.

For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, – John 3:34a NKJ

But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words? – John 5:47 NKJ

So then *faith* comes by *hearing*, and *hearing* by the *word of God*. – Romans 10:17 NKJ

First Thessalonians 5:17 is short, simple, straight to the point, and seemingly impossible to accomplish (“Pray without ceasing”) ... until you realize **our whole approach to prayer is flawed**.



[We're given an astonishing warning] Walk prudently when you go to the house of God; and draw near to hear rather than to give the sacrifice of fools, **[a.k.a. speaking]** ... Do not be rash with your mouth, **[nobody likes a mouth rash]** and let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. **[For your mouth speaks what's in your heart]** For God is in heaven, and you on earth; therefore let your words be few. For ... a fool's voice is known by his many words. – Ecclesiastes 5:1-3 NKJ



It seems, **God will give us rest if we'll give our tongue a rest.**

[When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, He said] When you pray, do not keep on babbling ... – Matthew 6:7-8 NIV

It's like the person who talks during a movie: “*She's the killer. Wait; he is!*” “Lord, give me *this* job. Wait; *that* job.” “*Shh. Watch and wait.* The more you interrupt, the less you're able to follow.” **We think of prayer as mostly talking; but, it's mostly listening. “Amen” shouldn't mean “I'm done”; but, “I'm all ears”.** “Lord, I want to hear Your voice.” “*Here's a Bible!*” “Not now; I'm busy praying *at You*.” **If you want to open your ears, shut your mouth and open His Word.** But, when we see praying as mostly listening, and listening as **seeking, reading, pondering, discussing,** and **applying** God's Word, “*praying without ceasing*” is suddenly surprisingly doable! **It's time to stop giving your heart permission to be troubled.**

You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, [seeking, reading, pondering, discussing, and applying] because he trusts in You. – Isaiah 26:3 NKJ

Now, when we left off on Jesus' journey, He'd taken the Twelve for some R&R in Bethsaida.

But the crowds learned about it and followed him. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, He had compassion on them, because **they were like sheep without a shepherd**. So He welcomed them and spoke to them began teaching them and healed their sick. – Mat 14:13-14; Mk 6:33-34; Lk 9:11 NIV

So, they tried the country shore of Tiberias, and relaxed up on the mountainside. *But ...*



Jesus looked *up* and saw a great crowd coming [over the mountain] [His disciples said] “Send the people away so they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages [as wandering sheep do] and buy themselves something to eat [by themselves without a shepherd].” But *he* [the Good Shepherd] answered, “You give them something to eat.” They said to him, “That would take eight months of a man’s wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?” “How many loaves do you have?” he asked. [The correct answer is ... “One”. The True Bread. (Jn 6:32) The Bread of God. (Jn 6:33) The Bread of Life. (Jn 6:35) The Living Bread. (Jn 6:51)] “Go and see.” When they found out, they said, “Five—and two fish.” “Bring them here to me,” he said. And he said to his disciples, “Have them *sit down in groups on the grass*. There was *plenty of grass* in that place, *green grass*. and the men sat down, about five thousand of them in groups of hundreds and fifties. – Mat 14:18; Mk 6:35-40; Lk 9:14; Jn 6:5-10 NIV

Jesus is training His twelve to shepherd His flock. Imagine the commotion. But, He's teaching them to take authority in His name.

He **commanded** them to make all **recline** in **companies** [symposion-symposion: lit. table company by table company] upon the **green grass**, and they sat down in **squares**, [prasia-prasia: lit. garden plot by garden plot] by hundreds, and by fifties. – Mark 6:39-40 YLT

Did you notice an odd emphasis on the “grass”? Now, **to trust the truth, we must seek it, and see it, and know it.**

[For instance, *this promise waiting in Zechariah*] The Lord will [give] ... *grass* in the field for everyone. ... the diviners envision *lies* ... they comfort in *vain*. Therefore the people wend their way *like sheep*; they are in trouble because there is no shepherd. [So, let not your heart be troubled] ... The Lord of hosts will visit His flock, - Zechariah 10:1-3 NKJ

John (10:11) says, **Jesus is the Good Shepherd, not a good shepherd**. Anyone, for any reason, can choose to believe in Jesus as *a good shepherd*. But, **no one can trust in Jesus as the Good Shepherd without trusting the One who sent Him to visit His flock**. *Jesus said ...*

When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, [that's just baseless faith in your own faith in Jesus] but in the one who sent me. [If, that is, he's sought it, seen it, and knows what the Father sent His Son to embody, fulfill, and reveal. *But*, if and when he *does*] When he *looks at me*, he *sees* the *one who sent me*. [He can't not] ... For I did not *speak* of my own accord, but the *Father* who *sent me* [by the Spirit] **commanded me [by the Word] what to say and how to say it [to confirm the truth]**. – John 12:44-49 NIV

[Ezekiel said] The word of the LORD came to me, saying ... “Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? ... The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick ... So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; ... My sheep wandered through all the mountains ... ‘I Myself will search ... As a shepherd seeks out his flock *on the day he is among his scattered sheep ... I will feed them in good pasture ... rich pasture [you know, green grass]* ... and I will make them lie down,’ [in groups] ... ‘I will establish one shepherd over them, and ... *He shall feed them [with bread to symbolize My Word]* ... I will raise up for them *a garden of renown, [and they’ll sit garden-plot by garden-plot]* ... Thus they shall know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, [unless they haven’t received My Word and don’t have ears to hear (Ezek 3:10)] - Ezekiel 34 NKJ

[But, everyone who does will know that] The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; ... *You prepare a table before me [and we sit table company by table company]* in the presence of my enemies; – Psalm 23 NKJ

[Jeremiah said] Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture! ... [You have] not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you ... [and] I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them ... - Jeremiah 23:1-4 NKJ *condensed*

And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with *knowledge and understanding*. – Jeremiah 3:15 NKJ

The disciples came to him and said, “... Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food.” Jesus replied, “They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.” – Matthew 14:15-16 NIV



How big do you picture these loaves and fishes?

[Andrew] spoke up, “Here is a boy [lit. *small child*] with five small barley loaves [flat wafers, 1-2 servings each; picture soft Ritz pita crackers] and two small fish [*opsarion: a relish or a dried sardine-like condiment*]. It’s a small child’s little lunch. *It’s a Lunchable!* Andrew said], but how far will they go among so many?” – John 6:8-9 NIV

“*What do you say we stop talking and find out?*” The size of the food brings a silly, joyful humor to the moment, underscoring Jesus’ playfulness and this miracle’s profoundness.

Taking the five *loaves* [crackers] and the two *fish* [sardines] and looking up to heaven, he *gave thanks* and broke them. [How do you picture the miraculous multiplying? We’re actually told] Then he *gave* [the imperfect tense of this verb literally means, “kept giving”! Did you need some more?] them to the disciples to set before the people. – Luke 9:16 NIV

Your heart needs to know just how far our sad little Lunchables can go, when we give ‘em to God with faith and thanksgiving.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer [speaking little and listening much] and petition [asking and seeking], with thanksgiving [appreciation expressed in praise], present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. – Philippians 4:6-7 NIV

A fool has no delight in understanding, but in expressing his own heart. – Proverbs 18:2 NKJ

The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge, [in God's Word] but the mouth of fools feeds on foolishness. – Proverbs 15:14 NKJ

A scoffer seeks wisdom [in himself and this world] and does not find it, but knowledge is easy to him who understands [where to seek]. – Proverbs 14:6 NKJ

The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, [in His Word] but not to them. – Matthew 13:11 NIV

[So] Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance – for understanding proverbs and parables, – Proverbs 1:5-6a NIV

When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, “Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.” So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves and fish left over by those who had eaten. **five thousand men, besides women and children.** After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, “Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world.” Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself. – Mt 14:21; Mk 6:43; Jn 6:12-15 NIV

“This guy could feed an army on a handful of crackers, and instantly heal the wounded and the dead! He even commands the wind and the waves! Let’s take on those Romans!” **How often do you try to force Jesus’ hand to your agenda?** They were like sheep *without* a shepherd. So, He gathered, healed, and fed them. **Now they’re like sheep that’ll lead the Shepherd!**

Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias [in His final public appearance after His resurrection] ... Jesus stood on the shore ... [and] said to them, “Children, have you any food?” ... [when] they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread. ... [He] took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish. ... Jesus said to Simon Peter ... “Feed My lambs.” He said to him again a second time ... “Tend My sheep.” He said to him the third time ... “Feed My sheep.” – John 21

[The book ends with Jesus saying] Behold, *I am coming quickly,* [Really? It’s been 2,000 years] and My reward is with Me, [That’s just half of Isaiah’s quote] – Revelation 22:12a NKJ

Behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He will [1] *feed His flock* like a shepherd; He will [2] *gather the lambs* with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and [3] *gently lead* those who are with young. – Isaiah 40:10a-11 NKJ

You see, **when Jesus was finished, He was just getting started!**

Your salvation is coming; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. [That’s His work; now, here’s the result] And they shall call them The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord; and you shall be called Sought Out ... – Isaiah 62:11-12a NKJ

Trust doesn’t remove troubles from life, just from your heart.

[So] Trust in the Lord with all your heart, [Don’t let any part be troubled; keep it occupied seeking] and lean not on your own understanding; – Proverbs 3:5 NKJ

We’re meant to rest in the Lord’s understanding. Because, **trust is more than just belief. It’s confidence.** In Christ *and* the One who sent Him. There’s no other option.