

Christ Trusted

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[0 : 0 0] So in our series, if you're visiting tonight, we've been doing through a series of the person of Jesus, the person of Christ. And in our series tonight, as I said, we've reached Christ trusted.

Christ trusted, Christ trusted God. He trusted the Father and he trusted the Spirit. And so what we're saying right at the outset, having seen so far in our series that Christ was born and he came as a man into the world in the incarnation.

And as he humbled himself and he became a servant so that he might work out this great work of salvation, which was God's plan for us, as he did that, as he humbled himself, he took on humanity.

He became like one of us. Because with all of that meant in that he became dependent and therefore that he trusted.

But he was one who relied on and he was led by and who looked to his Father and who looked to the Holy Spirit in his life.

[1 : 1 1] Now trust, the idea of trust for you and me, it doesn't need a lot of introduction really. I don't think I need to say much about that. Really we know what trust means to us, don't we? You know how the whole issue of trust affects you and your life?

You want to be trusted in your work. You want people to think that you can do what you're qualified to do or what you say you can do. It really matters to us, doesn't it, that we're trusted.

And it also matters that your word, what you say, you know what comes from you is trustworthy. That you're like we were looking at this morning, a person of integrity.

You also want to be able to trust people that you know. Isn't it awful when you think you can't trust somebody? So you know how important trust is. Just as a thing in society, it should be part of the glue or the fabric of society that there's trust.

Often that's what leads to the breakdown of society, isn't it? The lack of trust, people not being able to trust. So trust, just an introduction, what I want to say about trust is that it's not just a concept.

[2 : 1 6] It's not just something you say, I trust in something. It also affects the way that you act. Trusting in somebody changes the way you act towards them.

You know, you will decide who to leave your keys with when you go on holiday based on what you think of your neighbors. That's a kind of trivial example, isn't it? But maybe a more severe example, trust affects the way you act.

If you're in a sinking life raft, when you see the winch coming down from the helicopter, you may believe and trust in that winch as something that can save you, but you're not going to stay in the life raft, you're going to take a hold of it and be lifted to safety.

There's a more extreme example. So what you trust in, what you put your faith in, changes the way you live. We're going to think tonight a few examples of where do we see or what does it look like for Jesus to trust?

How does that play itself out in his life, his ministry particularly? And that's the reason I read from these two readings. We're going to focus tonight on the beginning of Jesus' ministry, that passage that we read from the temptation of Jesus.

[3 : 32] And we're going to look at the end of his ministry. Trust, right at the beginning of Jesus' trust, right at the end. How did that look in Jesus' life?

And I'm going to spend a little bit of time, a shorter amount of time at the end, thinking about what it looks like for you and me to trust in God.

So there's that first thing. What does it look like for Jesus to trust God? The first example is this temptation. That's the passage I want to focus on just in the beginning. So you may want to turn back. A couple of verses are going to come up on the screen in just a minute.

But this is an astonishing passage. Have you noticed the transition ever when you're reading through the Gospel of Luke? Have you noticed the transition?

Not long before this, what happens to Jesus? Jesus is baptized. Very publicly, as Jesus is baptized, God blesses him.

[4 : 30] The Father speaks, this is my son, with whom I'm well pleased. And the Holy Spirit comes down and anoints him. Now, we've seen in previous weeks the way that the Holy Spirit was so present with Jesus, ministering to him and leading him.

And so Jesus gets this very public affirmation and confidence of God's presence with him and of the fact that God was pleased with him. Remember as well, as Jesus started his public ministry.

This wasn't out of the blue, he'd been living perfectly the way that we can't for 30 years. And so as he begins his ministry, he has this public affirmation.

And then the Spirit leads him into the wilderness. That's a pretty remarkable sort of transition, isn't it? That the Spirit has anointed him and as it were, blessed him and then he leads him out into the desert.

And when he's in the desert, he's tempted and the test, the tempter, Satan comes to him and I'm not going to look at all of the temptations just to briefly look at the first one.

[5 : 38] What happens in the wilderness? What happens to Jesus when he's faced with the tempter who comes to him?

The first temptation the devil says to him, maybe we can have the slides up guys. The devil said to him, if you're the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread. Yeah, the last verse.

If you're the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread. The Holy Spirit has led him there in the first place. So Jesus has allowed himself to follow the Spirit's leading into the wilderness, into this nowhere place and there he's met by the great adversary.

And the great adversary says to him, now remember this is at the end of a period of Jesus fasting. So Jesus therefore is really hungry. And remember also we've seen that Jesus was subject to the same physical conditions, limitations that we are.

Jesus is hungry. So the tempter says, you have the power to change those rocks. Just do it. What would it matter if you just change those rocks and satisfy your hunger?

[6 : 49] What he's really saying is become self sufficient. The Jesus is there being led by the Spirit and the tempter comes to him and says, you can do this by yourself.

All of the temptations beginning with this one are attempts to undermine Jesus's trust, Jesus's faithfulness too, and Jesus is following the Father.

Their attempts to divert Jesus and to get him to set himself up as self sufficient. Self sufficient from God, doing his own thing, looking out for himself.

Of course what the test that is really doing is what he did in the garden to Adam and Eve where he said, can you really trust what God says? Can you really trust that?

Maybe you should just look out for yourself. Maybe you should just do your own thing. Provide bread for yourself. Seems like a harmless thing to do, but in Jesus's reaction what we see is him saying right at the start of his ministry.

[7 : 53] Now get how important this is. He's just been baptized. He's just begun. He's just begun the process of his earthly ministry, these three years, and immediately he's faced with this temptation.

And he has the power, don't doubt that for a minute, but he answers, man does not live on bread alone. There are more important things than me just satisfying my hunger.

The primary concern for Jesus is to follow the Father's will and to know and to follow the leading of God. And you see that as this passage ends, Jesus has been faithful and he is then provided for.

Also you notice if you look in Luke chapter 4 down at verse 14, that as the Spirit had led him into the situation of testing, and as Jesus had been faithful, not giving an image, remaining faithful to the Father and obeying at every point, then it says again, verse 14, Jesus returned to Galilee, in other words, back to his life of ministry in the power of the Spirit.

So then at the beginning of that little episode and right at the end, he has led and he has taken. Jesus is following the leading of the Spirit.

[9 : 18] He sustained by the ministry of the Spirit and he himself resists the really important significance of this. Jesus at that point in his life, expressing complete trust and reliance on God.

This is one example of what it looks like for Christ to trust, simply to say that he would not use his power to his own ends. And he did that, didn't he, consistently through his life, through his ministry.

He didn't come down off the cross. He didn't call down legions of angels to make it more comfortable for himself. So the summary of this little section here, very briefly as we just look at this, first of all, is he didn't become self-sufficient?

If anybody could have done at this point, if anybody could have assumed, used all the power that was at his disposal, it was Jesus, but he doesn't.

Now that obedience, that trust which led to obedience is the foundation for us. It's the foundation that we trust in.

[10 : 25] It's the reason that we can say Jesus is a worthy Savior. It's the reason tonight that you can know that Jesus is the one that you should trust in because at this primary point in his ministry and at every point, every point throughout his ministry, he trusted and he followed and he obeyed.

So Jesus begins his ministry in the way he means to go on. Secondly, the end of his ministry.

Turn to Luke chapter 22. Now in Luke chapter 22, Jesus is at the point where having ministered and having been faithful as he was faithful for 30 years.

So now he's been faithful. He's been a healer. He's been a miracle worker. For these three years, he's been testifying that he is the one that people need to follow.

He's been proclaiming the kingdom and now he knows and he senses that this is his time. Again, think about how that would have been for Jesus as he began to realize that time was now here for him to go to this ultimate sacrifice where he would give his life.

[11 : 45] And Jesus is with his people. He's with his disciples and they eat this meal together. The section that we looked at in Luke chapter 22 verse 39 is his prayer, his prayer in Gethsemane.

Again, an astonishing prayer. So Jesus here is at the end of his ministry and he's gearing for what's coming.

He's preparing himself. Please never think that what Jesus went through was easy or was a breeze. He's preparing himself in many ways for the great unknown.

Don't think that Jesus, that this was easy for him because he kind of knew what was coming. He may have had an awareness of the sense of the importance and the horror of what was coming but it's not like he'd done it before.

The thought of Jesus' man and as divine going to the cross is a thought that should always stop us in our tracks.

[12 : 43] And so Jesus in his humanity, remember, facing this prospect going to the cross is preparing himself. And of course, this passage contains that great expression of trust.

Verse 42, Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me yet not my will but yours.

How could he do that? How could he say that when he was faced with what he was faced with unless he had absolute confidence in the Father to whom he prayed?

He knew who he was praying to. This wasn't some speculative, desperate, maybe prayer. This was a prayer of deep anguish but of absolute confidence because of the one who he prayed to.

And it's a prayer of trust and it's a prayer of submission and it's a prayer of obedience. You see the way that because he trusted, he was able to submit and he was able to obey and therefore he was able to go to the cross.

[13 : 54] Jesus prayed that incredible prayer of trust but even more, not more fundamental, just notice what he's even doing. He's praying. How does Jesus deal with this situation?

He doesn't maybe react the way that we would be tempted to react and lash out or however else you would be tempted, he goes in prayer.

And I want you to notice that verse because it's an expression of his trust but I also want you to notice the way that he speaks to his disciples. What does he tell his disciples to do? Did you notice that when we were reading it?

He says in verse 40, on reaching the place he said to them, pray that you'll not fall into temptation. What does he say to them at the end of the section? Same thing.

You'll notice that after this prayer, in many ways, God answers his prayer by not taking him out of that situation.

[14 : 53] He prays if it's possible, may there be another way but there isn't another way. He is strengthened by an angel but he has to stay there. He has to keep going to the cross and his response is to pray even more fervently.

Being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. He's doing what he needs to do which is be close to the Father and pray.

He needs the presence of the Father. He has to be speaking to him and he has to be with him. And then he says to the disciples as he goes back to them and they're asleep because they're exhausted and we can understand that, can't we?

They are mentally totally stressed and exhausted by this whole situation. Who wouldn't be? And he says to them, why are you sleeping?

Get up and pray so that you won't fall into temptation. Now do you see what he's saying to them there? He knows what's coming for him.

[15 : 54] It's the cross but he knows that that will impact them hugely. Just think about what they did.

They ran away, didn't they? The situation was so extreme that they ran away. They didn't stay with him. Peter denied him. The pressure on them to cave in to not support him was so great and they couldn't do it.

And Jesus, I think, knew that and so he says to them, as we're always taught, I think, in the face of the troubles that will come to us, you must be in prayer.

Don't presume, we heard this this morning, didn't we? Don't presume that things are just going to be a breeze. Pray in advance.

Jesus says pray so that you will not fall into temptation. Now there is where we don't have just a reactive prayer. Now you need to pray sometimes.

[16 : 53] If something desperate happens and you pray, of course you do. Reactive prayers are so important. Don't just pray reactively though. Pray proactively.

Again like we saw this morning, pray when the going's good and especially pray when you feel complacent. Pray when you feel like nobody can touch you and the skies are blue because you don't know what will happen.

Jesus says he almost anticipates the trust that they need to have that he knows they won't have. You see how much he trusts and so prays and he says that exact same thing to them.

So Jesus knows that when faced with trial and persecution, our instinct is often to fall away.

Just let me out of here. I don't want to have to deal with this. I didn't deserve this. I don't have the answers for this. I just want to get away from this.

[17 : 58] But we must be prepared. It would be no good if an army commander went into a battle unprepared. No thought of tactics and also no thought of what the enemy might do.

If an army commander never gave any heed to what the opposition army might be planning, then he'd be hugely careless and he'd put all his people at risk and himself probably.

Now Christian life is described as a battle. It's described as being in a war. We're told to watch out for the one who would try and devour our soul and so pray.

Now before the temptation comes, before the danger comes, go to the one in whom your trust is and recognize that you need him at all times.

At all times. Reactive prayer and proactive prayer. Now I just want to look at one more example. Remember this is still looking at the way that this plays out in Jesus's life.

[18 : 58] What did it look like for Jesus to trust? It would look like him at the beginning of his ministry obeying and being faithful. It looks like him here fully committing himself to the work that the Lord had for him to do and praying and remaining in the presence of the Father.

And one final example, just one verse almost I want to pick out. We just turn into Luke chapter 23. Now this is right at the end of Jesus' ministry and it's right at the end of his life.

You'll know possibly that the two of the Gospels record Jesus's first cry on the cross where as he experiences the horror of the separation from the Father where at that moment in time he takes on himself the anger of God, our sin, he cries out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

That cry of anguish and desolation. But Luke records another cry and he records the moment of Jesus' death and at this point as he dies Luke records Jesus dying with a sense of calm assurance.

I want you to see what he says. I'll just read from this, these few verses here. It was now about the sixth hour and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour but the sun stopped shining and the curtain of the temple was torn in two.

[20 : 32] Jesus called out with a loud voice, Father into your hands I commit my spirit. When he'd said this he breathed his last.

So this is Jesus having finished his ministry and this is Jesus at the end of his life. Jesus is facing death and he knows it, he knows that he's about to die and yet he's able to look beyond his death, isn't he?

This is what he's doing here, isn't it? He's able to look beyond his death. Now this quote here, this line what he says here is actually a quotation from another Psalm, Psalm 31, this is taken from Psalm 31 verse 5, I won't look it up just now, you can do so yourself later.

But in that Psalm what the Psalmist is expressing is his sense of being a righteous sufferer. In other words somebody who follows God and who is sought to follow God all of his life but who is surrounded by evil men as it were, evil people who would seek his life.

In other words this follower of God is oppressed, he faces terrible trouble and what he does in that situation is he cries out to God for relief and for vindication.

[21 : 52] And as Jesus takes that prayer, as he takes out that cry, Father into your hands I commit my spirit, he himself is saying that he is the, in a sense the ultimate righteous sufferer because he's the perfectly righteous one who is suffering ultimately in our place as he dies on the cross but he trusts in the Father to be the one who will bring him through that and who will raise him again and resurrect him to new life.

Now we know that because Jesus says at different times in Luke's Gospel to his disciples, he prepares them because he knows how traumatic this is going to be for them. He prepares them by saying to them, the time is coming when I will be delivered and when I will be delivered to death but after three days I will be raised again.

So he gives that information to his disciples and he has that knowledge inside himself and so you see what's happening here, you see what Jesus is doing.

Jesus's trust is in the Father, he says I am going to die now, I know what's coming to me, I know what's happening and as I die I entrust myself to you as the one who will raise me again, who will fulfill the purposes which we have always planned, the goal to which we have always been working.

Jesus had fulfilled the work that was given to him to do and now he looks to the Father into your hands, I commit my spirit and he expresses that incredible sense of trust in the Father as he dies.

[23 : 38] So he is looking at the moment of his death, beyond death and he is looking to the Father. This then is the reason that we can trust in him again, isn't it?

Jesus finished the work that was given to him to do. Jesus himself looked at the Father and trusted the Father and it also means for us that as we look towards death, maybe some of us feel that is neater than others but nevertheless every one of us must think about this as we look towards that issue that we don't like to think about, it means that for the Christian we can do the same, you can pray Father into your hands, I commit my spirit.

Because what is promised for you also is what happened to Jesus. We are not those who look towards the end of our lives with desolation and hopelessness, we are those who look towards the end of our lives knowing that as whenever that happens we come to the end of our life, we will go to be with the one who is our Savior and one day he will raise us again as he first raised Christ and he will take us to be with him.

That is the promise that we have as believers and you can trust in that promise because Christ trusted and because Christ was raised again and so that promise is there for us also.

So this is what it looked like, snapshot really, just from the beginning of Jesus life and the end of Jesus life for him to trust in the Father.

[25 : 24] And the immediate application as I have said is that obviously Jesus looked to the Father as one who was trustworthy and so can we and the work that Jesus was able to do because he followed and because he trusted is the foundation, is the gospel, the good news in which we trust because he did this great work for us.

But I want just for a minute to think slightly more practically, just a few things, what does it look like for us then to trust? What does it actually look like in your life this week in the month to come for you to trust?

Because you may place your faith in God, you may be a Christian. Again I think as we were looking at this morning, sometimes the actual reality of what it looks like for us to be Christians can be very different from what it could be.

We may assent to Jesus, we may say, I believe in Jesus but trusting in him, I don't even know what that begins to look like. I feel like I've got so much opposition coming my way, I feel like I've got so much opposition on my own heart because of my own sin, I'm really struggling.

So just a few thoughts then, what does it look like for us to trust God? First thing I want to say is that to trust you need to know, I think in this case, know the one who you trust in.

[26 : 40] If you have only passing acquaintance with Jesus, if you're relying on something that you did 13 years ago or whatever, if it's vague in your memory, in other words if it's not that you daily go to him in desperate need and call on his name and just know him and seek to follow and know him, if you don't remember the work that he has done for you, if you're not sure of the promises that you can believe in because of what he suffered for you and because of the fact that he was raised again, then you will find it more difficult to trust.

So knowing God, I don't just mean knowing in some hyperintellectual kind of way, I don't just mean knowing about, I mean knowing in person.

But also just a few things, how does this change the way we think about the way we behave? Think about ethics, for example. How does this enable you in your neighbourhood or in your office to make biblical, ethical decisions when it feels like nobody else is?

Now I don't mean to suggest that you can only be, make good ethical decisions if you're a Christian and everybody else is awful and scamming the system and all that. But I think it's a reality, isn't it?

Sometimes we face the pressure from outside not to live the way Christ wants us to live. And what that does is it shakes our trust because it really says you don't really have to live this way.

[28 : 13] How the Lord wants you to live isn't really that important. Being a person of integrity, just give a little bit because you look like such a goody-toeshoes to everybody else in the office.

I think the key thing for us to remember at this point is that as we follow the way of the Lord, we do so first of all because He gave Himself for us and because to follow is to recognise His love for us.

You know if He gave Himself for me, why would I want to go back to darkness? If He died to set me free so that I might live in the light and so that I might follow the ways of the Lord, why would I want to give all that up and as it were go back to the gutter?

He loved us so much and so our obedience, our biblical ethics as it were, the way we live as an expression of that but also it brings glory to Him and that's what we're for.

You know that's what we should really want is to bring glory to God because that's what we were created for. The second thing is trials and suffering.

[29 : 33] How will you deal in the week coming when you're faced with something that you really, really hate, that is really, really horrible and that you feel that you can't get through?

Now the temptation is to rebel. The temptation is to throw up your hands and say I cannot believe this is happening to me, I don't deserve this.

The temptation is to just leave God. I'm done with God. How do we deal with that? Well trust looks like remembering that the Lord knows us, the Lord knows the situations that we're in and the Lord knows the end from the beginning and His goal is to make you more like Jesus and as He works in your life and brings suffering and as He brings difficulty He's saying to you come to me, know me, know that even as you go through this you know my salvation, you know the hope that I have called you to, you know that I will raise you again and I will bring you to be with me in glory but now for a little time you may have to suffer in all kinds of trials.

You know in other words you trust the suffering produces perseverance and that produces spiritual maturity.

So the way we behave our ethics, the way that we deal with suffering and finally testimony, being able to testify, that's one of the hardest things isn't it?

[31 : 07] Being able to say in your school or your university class or whatever you are that you trust in Jesus, that sounds so crazy to so many people doesn't it? And the temptation of course is that it makes us sound ridiculous and so we won't do it.

It makes us sound outdated and a fool. And the key I think here as we trust in the Lord and as we are faced with the opportunities at times to testify and to testify to Him, really what we are faced with is whose opinion matters.

So what stops us speaking for Jesus sometimes is other people's opinion because we think they will think we are ridiculous, because they will be angry at us because we believe in what they see as exclusive.

And so it silences us and it stops us speaking. But when we know the Lord and when we trust in Him what it does is it frees us because He doesn't think we are ridiculous.

He's our Lord who loves us. He's loved us from before the world began and He sent His Son to die for us. He loves you so much that He knows your name and your name is written in heaven and you are just testifying to His faithfulness.

[32 : 27] And so when others think ill of you and when you're tempted to not speak then I think we remember simply that He knows us and He loves us and we testify to Him because of what He has done.

And I think that's a matter of trust. It's a matter of trust because we recognize that His opinion of us frees us, doesn't it, from other people's opinions. I don't mean to say it doesn't still hurt.

I don't mean to say it's not still difficult but it frees us because He loves us and because He knows us and because amazingly He calls us to be workers in His vineyard.

So these are just a few things. There's loads of different ways, aren't there? And I think thinking through what does it look like for us to trust and then to live is the important part, isn't it?

But I think also just in closing the final thing, remember to go back to what Jesus says to His disciples, pray. Pray, watch and pray so that you'll not fall into temptation.

[33 : 28] Go from here tonight trusting. Put in your trust in Jesus, who put His trust in God. But also go from here tonight. Don't go from here on your knees because that would look weird.

But go from here and in your heart be on your knees already for the week to come. Then Lord help me to trust so that in every situation I face I will trust and I will understand what that looks like and how I will respond and how I will live.

I think especially that proactive prayer I was talking about before the storms come and before we're shipwrecked. Amen.

I'm just going to pray and I'm going to ask that the Lord will help us. We praise you again Lord Jesus because of your incredible trust.

Thank you that you knew the Father. Thank you that you had been with the Father from before all time and that was expressed in the way that you lived. It was expressed in the way that you trusted and followed and obeyed.

[34 : 32] And we recognize that tonight that you perfectly obeyed where we cannot. We still find it so difficult Lord. We find it difficult sometimes to trust in you to think about you.

We find it difficult to behave as those who trust in you. We find it difficult to believe that you're with us even though we suffer and we find it difficult to testify to you.

And we ask for forgiveness from. We just lose sight of you. We pray tonight that you would increase our faith. We pray that we would look to you and as we look to you we would take heart that you would give us great strength that you'd prepare us for the week ahead and that you'd help us to rest in Christ but be prepared for the battle.

And we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.