

“Three Pennies and a Rock – Trust”

Proverbs 6:12-19; Matthew 18:1-6

October 10, 2021

Introduction

- The Diaper Bag Experience
 - o 2 kids that I drove every day to the daycare. Ben was a toddler, Lillian still an infant in a crib.
 - o This giant diaper bag went with them wherever we went.
 - o I had the tendency to put it on the top of the car as I was fastening in kids into their travel systems.
 - o Leave it on top of car. Boom.
 - o Left it behind the wheels. Crunch.
- I'd forgotten the bag
- We forget the most important thing in our faith.
 - o Trusting Jesus.

Three Pennies and a Rock Recap

- Lillian's story
- Jesus tells us to be childlike
 - o **Matthew 18:1-4** – *“At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, ‘Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?’ And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, ‘Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.’”*
- The point is to learn why we ought to take this holy work of becoming child-like and then talking about the ways and means to do the work.
- Today, we're talking about TRUST, the thing many of us leave behind in our faith lives.
 - o Lillian story
 - Go and sit down in the purple chair and wait for me to fix your dinner.
 - She trusted me!
 - o Just like that darned diaper bag that I kept forgetting even though it was essential to the operations of baby-toting, many of us forget to trust Jesus when the time is right.
 - When is the time right?
 - Always!
- You would think trusting Jesus would be easy, right?
 - o He loves us, He saved us, He prepares a place for us in the coming Kingdom. What's not to like?
 - o But it isn't. Not for most people. Why not?
 - To begin with, Jesus asks us to do difficult, arduous and even to our ears ridiculous stuff on occasion.
 - Carry my cross
 - Turn the other cheek
 - Pray for your enemies
 - That stuff is HARD to trust Jesus on, especially when the world's wisdom seems so much, well, easier.
 - But the second, and perhaps the most significant reason people have a difficult time trusting Jesus?
 - They don't know HIS Word.
 - o God really does answer our prayers, but sometimes seeing it requires a working knowledge of His Word!

The Trust of a Child

- When Lillian was around
- One of the reasons we surround a child with so much watch-care is that they simply don't know the ways of the world yet. They're unaware that people have agendas, tell lies, and that the world is broken by sin.
 - o They just trust.

Trust in Jesus begins with Trusting His Word

- When I think of all the things, I trust without knowing anything about the topic whatsoever, I'm staggered.
 - o Power
 - I know nothing of the stuff but expect, without thinking, every time I turn on a light switch that light will shine. At times, I trust Duke Energy more to shine lights than Jesus Christ
 - o Water
 - Again, no real idea how that stuff works. BUT I TRUST EVERY TIME I TURN ON A WATER FAUCENT, WATER WILL RUN
- I'm guessing that many of us here sadly have a stronger belief that the lights will turn on when they get home than that God would do something wonderful in and through their lives.
 - o That's depressing
 - o That's the chief reason why the church is stalled.
 - *We've got trust issues.*

There is a reason we have trust issues in the church!

- *Not many of us know the Bible very well aside from a few verses and stories.*

The Cost of Distrust

- Sometimes we get to thinking that being untrusting keeps us safe. The opposite is actually true.
 - o Not trusting others actually leads to misery and suffering
- #1 – Distrust delivers distraction
 - o Distrust causes people to lose sight of what's important and become sidetracked by trivial matters.
 - o While I was at my last church, I spent something along the lines of 50 hours in meetings about the changing the church name, or how to configure the website to look more attractive, ways to redecorate the narthex, etc.
 - Distractions – Learn the Word & Clean House, then Make disciples
 - o When I look at my colleagues, I see distracted pastors and congregants
 - Paul story – Really getting his choir director in line and teaching the people they're wrong.
 - We all talk about non-essential things because we don't actually trust Jesus when he says we should be making disciples and not feathering our own nests.
 - I spent 1000 hours helping renovate a church that now sits largely empty on Sunday mornings.
 - o A distraction.
 - o When I look at the PCUSA, I see a distracted church
 - Much of what we do denominationally is more easily attributable to moral narcissism than the Christian faith although they baptize an awful lot of b.s.
 - I've been through training sessions on:
 - o Boundary Issues
 - o Sexual Harassment
 - o Social Justice Matters

- #2 – Distrust Damages Relationships
 - Marriage Counselling – When trust issues hit, things become very superficial
 - Carpools, work issues, what’s on television become the bunk of the relationship
 - Over time, the feelings of love dissipate?
 - But that’s only the symptom, the root problem is lack of trust.
- #3 – Distrust Destroys Teamwork
 - The Church of Jesus Christ is now torn asunder into hundreds of thousands of different pieces, each with its own hierarchy.
 - The last church I was at has now spawned no less than 4 breakaway churches
 - What’s lost is that each of these pastors now earns a living along with a host of other church hangers on all at the expense of actually doing the Lord’s work
 - Why?
 - They distrusted each other’s to interpret the Bible correctly.
 - Why?
 - They didn’t trust Jesus
 - They didn’t know the Word so they couldn’t trust the Word and thus could only take the world’s opinion on matter
- *We would rather trust a theology than know the Word ourselves.*
- Reflection on the failure of theology
- Theology is like playing Jenga with the Bible
 - Maybe I can remove this part here, and it won’t make too much of a difference?
 - Maybe the tower wobbles a bit but then, eventually, so much is removed that it falls to the ground

Advantages of Trusting the Bible

- #1 He will lead you to the right path.
 - **Jeremiah 29:11** – *“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”*
 - Story
- #2 You can count on Him
 - **Joshua 1:9** – *“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”*
 - Story
- #3 He Will Comfort You
 - **2 Corinthians 1:3-4** – *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”*
 - Story

Ways to Expand Trust in Jesus

- So how do we go back?
- How do we unturn the hands of time and return to a time when we hadn’t been burned, stung, conned and bamboozled by others?
- #1 STOP Trusting Yourself So Much
 - For most, when asked to give a list of the people they trust, it would come down to just three:
 - Me, myself and I.
 - But it’s this lack of trust that is killing the world
- #2 CONFESS your sins and seek God’s forgiveness
 - Step one – To Yourself

- Think back on those times and occasions that you've stuffed into the darkest, deepest corner of yourself. I know, it's scary, right?
 - But it's there that the sunlight of God's grace MUST SHINE!
 - Step two – To God
 - Confess those things to Jesus. Tell him everything. He knows already. But, yes, it helps you to think or say it. Makes it more real.
 - Step three – To a Pastor
 - State of North Carolina is really good about protecting clergy-congregant communications.
 - Step four – Share with others as a means to be of help
 - My kids – I was an idiot, now my kids are hearing about every half-brained idea I followed through on to my and the world's detriment.
- #3 INCREASE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WORD
 - **Proverbs 28:26** – *“Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.”*
 - Bible Boot Camp Experience

Close

- Return to Bag STORY
 - Don't drop the most important, child-like part of faith
 - Trust
 - In Jesus
 - In His Word
 - Then you'll start changing the world.