

“Three Pennies and a Rock – Trust and Obey” {outline}

Psalm 84; Matthew 18:1-4

November 7, 2021

Introduction

- Braves win first World Series since 1995
- It was great being able to watch those games with my son.
 - o Some of the greatest memories I have with my dad were at or watching Braves games so it is really special to get to do that with my own son
- But, I gotta tell you, if it weren't for Ben, I probably wouldn't have watched many games
 - o Braves and TarHeels
 - They lose a lot of big games
 - Yes, I know it's nice to get there, just wish they could be dynastic like the Patriots or the 70s UCLA Basketball teams.
- IT was Ben who trusted that they were going to win
 - o Final game, I wanted to bail, especially as the game got later and later.
- Ben had faith.
 - o But, beyond that, Ben's trust wasn't so much an intellectual consent as it was an action
- I talk frequently about love
 - o How we primarily view it as a feeling, but the Bible sees it as action
- Same thing can be said for Trust – It's an action step.

Trust

- First of all, we need to get rid of a couple of outcomes of trust so as to not have false expectations of what trusting God will deliver
- **FIRST - DOES NOT MEAN EVERYTHING WILL GO YOUR WAY**
 - o This was my big mistake.
 - Rain, T-Ball game, didn't happen
 - I trusted God **BUT I ONLY TRUSTED HIM TO DO WHAT I NEEDED HIM TO DO.**
 - o That's actually doing a number of things deeply wrong with our faith
 - o The Bible contradicts this
 - Jesus himself
 - **John 16:33-34** – *“I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”*
 - 1st Peter really gets at this awareness
 - o Because the World is broken by Sin, there is no getting out of here without suffering
 - o But, Peter notes, it is far better to suffer for
- We typically trust God to deliver things to us
 - o Where it is easy to trust God
 - Grace
 - I'm not perfect but I get into heaven, anyway
 - o Yeah, I trust God on that
 - Comfort
 - My yoke is easy, my burden light
 - o Oh yeah, that's a really good one to trust
 - Nope, this burden is too hard, can't be from Jesus
- But, make no mistake about it, there are places where it is very, very hard to trust God's Word
 - o How many times have you had a “Love Your Enemy” Party?
 - o What about a prayer vigil for the opposite political party from your own?

- Anybody in here been to a “Turn the Other Cheek Seminar?”
- How many of us are actively evangelizing in this world?
- **Psalm 37:5** – *“Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act.”*
 - Commit your way is specific action
 - The extent to which we trust God through our actions is the marker by which we can anticipate God’s presence.
 - I can’t just say I trust God, do nothing, and expect God to pay out like a rigged slot machine.

How to Trust God MORE

- Read the Bible, especially the Psalms and Proverbs
 - **Proverbs 3:5** – *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.”*
 - **Psalm 28:7** – *“The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him.”*
 - **Psalm 9:10** – *“And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek you.”*

Trust the Bible

- A great many of us don’t
- We’re spoon-fed doubt from the cradle by our educational system.
- Where many of us come out is something like this:
 - Where the Bible agrees with me, man, is it great.
 - But where it does not, it isn’t really God’s WORD
- Right off the bat, that’s not a view of Scripture that the Bible would support. Not at all.
 - **2 Timothy 3:16-17** – *“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”*
 - Problem is, our own denomination undermines this understanding of the Bible
- How do they do it?
 - Theologically.
 - Karl Barth
 - Caruso – opera singer
 - Very romantic but it basically boils down to “I dunno”
 - Is it the Word of God?
 - I dunno? Maybe, at points
 - But where it disagrees with culture, it MUST be wrong
- Our denomination is being led by a host of subordinate thinkers who, even though they don’t recognize it, trust Immanuel Kant’s thinking more than the Word of God.
 - Faith and Reason are split with the clear winner being reason
 - Faith is viewed as something like blind luck when it works, comforting delusion when it doesn’t.
- Presbytery of Charlotte Emails
 - Cheryl, Reg and I went through the most recent one
 - Hosts of reading groups, lectures, seminars about social justice
 - Not one mention of Jesus
 - Not one mention of the Bible, studies, seminars, lectures
 - Which we can extrapolate to mean that the members of our denomination trust academic philosophers more than the Word of the God they claim to worship.
 - It isn’t the case that racial reconciliation is going to be reached through scholarship

- Rather through the Word
- Most of us trust the Bible only when it agrees with us
 - That's not a high level of trust.
 - Think about if I were to do that with my wife.
 - I'm only going to trust Natalie when she agrees with me doesn't seem like a recipe for success. In marriage or in our relationship with God.
- Without a trust in the Word of God to deliver God's Truth to you always, you don't have faith and, as a result, you're only going to trust God so far.
 - Billy Graham Tree Stump story
 - Challenged by intellectualism, Bible on tree stump
 - That acceptance of God's authority

Only Total Trust Will Lead to Obedience

- Boiling Eggs in one of my first restaurant jobs
 - Cool them off. Ice bath
 - Vinegar and peel them semi-hot.

Mouse Utopia and the Church

- 1960s a series of experiments
 - Crowds – behavior sink
 - More crowding, less morals
 - Philadelphia
 - Largely been debunked under the banner, humans can cope with excessive crowding.
- Now though, we see other important things
 - No resistance, plenty of space
 - They still died off
- How do I know that the broader church doesn't trust God's Word?
 - We're dying.
 - Only now, as there is starting to be greater pushback against God's Word and God's Ways are people coming alive.