

The Simple Truth

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight (Proverbs 3:5–6).

Scripture: Proverbs 3:1–10

Song: “Trust and Obey”

In the fall of 1866, at a Dwight L. Moody revival, a young man stood and announced to the group that he wasn't quite sure whether Jesus could forgive his sins, but he was going to trust and obey. The words *trust and obey* resonated with Daniel B. Towner (1850–1919), who was leading the singing for the revival services. He wrote that simple phrase and then added some context. He sent it to J. H. Sammis (1846–1919), who wrote the popular hymn indicated as today's song.

The words may be familiar to some of us: “Trust and obey, for there's no other way / To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.” Today's reading also reminds us of this essential truth about living as God's people.

The world seems to be constantly changing, leaving many people dissatisfied and distressed. Yet the Lord has a plan and a path for His people. We don't need to make sense of the nonsense going on around us. Following the Lord will get us where we need to be. A life of faith really is, at its essence, about trusting and obeying. There is no other way.

Father, I want to trust You more and more. In Jesus' name, amen.

May 26–May 31. **Bill Thomas** lives in Moberly, Missouri. He works in a local church and at a Christian Bible college.

Warning!

It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Hebrews 10:31).

Scripture: Hebrews 10:26–34

Song: “Faith Is the Victory”

I watched the television show *Lost in Space* when I was growing up. At the time, it was a cutting-edge show about a family of space explorers and their adventures on the *Jupiter 2* spaceship. It wasn't just the Robinson family aboard the ship. There was also the co-pilot, Don; the troublesome stowaway, Dr. Smith; and of course, Robot. One of the consistently funny parts of the show was that whenever trouble was at hand, Robot would wave his robotic arms, and warn, “Danger! Danger!”

In today's passage, the writer of Hebrews raises a warning of potential danger. His strong words implore readers not to reject Jesus and His sacrifice for sin. Allegiance to Jesus is not always respected by those around us. To wear the name of Christ is not always received with joy by others. Sometimes we can feel like Elijah did and think we're the only ones left who put the Lord first (see 1 Kings 19:10).

When so much of the world around us is pushing autonomy, self-sufficiency, and self-gratification, it can be difficult to stand firm in trusting Jesus. When it's hard to trust, let's trust anyway. Today's song reminds us why: “To him that overcomes the foe / White raiment shall be giv'n; / Before the angels he shall know / His name confessed in heav'n.”

Father, I am grateful that I can trust You with all my life. Help me keep growing in my trust as I walk with You. In Jesus' name, amen.

Rest Assured

Faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see (Hebrews 11:1).

Scripture: Hebrews 10:35—11:4

Song: “I Know Whom I Have Believed”

The movie *I Can Only Imagine* is based on the life story of Bart Millard and how he came to be the lead singer of the Christian band Mercy Me. This film follows Bart’s relationship with his father, Arthur. Arthur was mean and abusive to his son until he met Jesus, and then everything changed. Before his death from cancer in 1991, Arthur would tell Bart that he had full assurance he was going to be with the Lord and felt he was getting the better deal by leaving rather than staying on earth.

The word *assurance* in today’s passage means “confidence” or “certainty.” Millard’s dad had confidence that, because of Jesus, he was going to a better place. That kind of confidence matters. It mattered when the book of Hebrews was written, and it matters to each one of us today who trust in Christ as Savior.

At times we may deal with painful realities that threaten to erode our confidence and steal our peace. Where do we turn when we feel abandoned or receive a troubling health report? Who do we look to for comfort when we are struggling, hurting, lonely, discouraged? Faith points us to Jesus. Even though we don’t see Him yet, we can have full confidence that Jesus is there with us in every circumstance.

Father, I will live in the assurance that You are worthy of my trust and here with me, even now. In Jesus’ name, amen.

People of Integrity

[Peter said to Ananias and Sapphira,] “What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but to God” (Acts 5:4).

Scripture: Acts 5:1–11

Song: “Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!”

Sherri Papini was released from federal prison in California in late August 2023. Her story is sad and difficult to understand. She faked her own kidnapping and lied to the FBI about it. She disappeared on Thanksgiving 2016 and reappeared three weeks later. She concocted a story about captors who’d tortured her. It was all a lie—a lie for which she served 18 months in prison.

Lying doesn’t pay off. Ananias or Sapphira lied to God, and it ended in tragedy for both of them. Today’s passage reminds us that God is holy. He is wholly pure and just. And today’s song expresses it this way: “Only Thou art holy, there is none beside Thee, / Perfect in power, in love, and purity.”

In the presence of such holiness, we see our sinfulness clearly. It can be humbling. It can also be inspiring and motivating. God’s Word tells us, “Be holy, because I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16). God is a God of truth and integrity. While the world may think of lying as normal and expected, we are called to live as people of truth. Because God is so different from the world, we must be too.

Father, I stand in awe of Your holiness. I want to walk in integrity today to reflect the beauty of Your holiness to those around me. In Jesus’ name, amen.

The Best Kind of Gift

[Jesus] said, “This poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on” (Luke 21:3–4).

Scripture: Luke 20:45—21:4

Song: “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”

The Gift of the Magi by author O. Henry (1862–1910) is a moving story of sacrificial giving. In the story Della and Jim, a young married couple, are struggling financially. Jim treasures two things: Della’s long red hair and the gold pocket watch his father had passed on to him. With no money for Christmas presents, Della sells her hair to buy Jim a chain for his watch. Without telling her, Jim sells his watch to buy Della a set of combs she has long admired. Each one gave their best and their all for the other, and the author said these gift-givers were wisest of all in their giving.

The poor widow in today’s passage was such a giver. Jesus saw her bring a gift to the temple treasury—a tiny amount—but He understood how costly it was to her.

God’s great love for us inspires us to express our gratitude and love. Our giving reflects our heart’s response to His love. The last line of Isaac Watts’ famous hymn, today’s song, describes it well: “Love so amazing, so divine, / Demands my soul, my life, my all.”

Father, I treasure Your amazing love. I want to respond by giving in ways that honor Your goodness to me. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Justice Is on the Way

[The martyrs under the altar] called out in a loud voice, “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?” Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer (Revelation 6:10–11).

Scripture: Revelation 6:9–17

Song: “Sing to the King”

True-crime television episodes reveal how slowly the wheels of the justice system move at times. Victims and their families may wait months, years, or even decades for a case to come to trial. After the long wait, those wronged may get the justice they’d hoped for, but sometimes the outcome can be disappointing.

Revelation 6 reminds us that, like the martyrs under the altar, we are in a waiting period, anticipating a time when God will carry out the final justice He promises. We don’t know when that will be, but we do know that with Him presiding, there will be no loopholes, oversights, or mistrials. Perfect justice will finally be served.

As wickedness increases on the earth, it may seem like evil is winning, and we may feel we are about to be overrun by it. But as believers we can remain calm. God’s plan will not be thwarted. We can take comfort in knowing that His timing is perfect, and His grace is sufficient for us as we wait. We can trust Him in this waiting.

Father, I believe You are good and just. I look forward to the day when You’ll wipe out evil. Help me stand strong in Christ as I wait for Your perfect timing. In Jesus’ name, amen.