

Trusting Directions

February 10, 2013 ~ Proverbs 3.5-8

Trusting Directions

- ❖ III: Story of when Bill and I were asked directions to Valley View
 - ✧ My friend and I differed in treatment of strangers
 - ✧ This man learned to distrust teenage boys for directions
- ❖ III: “Ask no directions – Read no instructions – for this is the way of the Dad”
 - ✧ This is a stereotype – but probably true more often than not
 - ✧ It may be pride – but it may also be experience

v5a ~ “Trust in the Lord with all your heart,”

- ❖ To trust someone/something is to rely upon them / to have confidence in them
- ❖ Scripture warns us **to NOT trust** in many things:
 - ✧ In Deut 28.52 we’re not to trust “high and fortified walls”
 - ✧ In Psalm 20.7 “Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will trust ..”
 - ✧ Psalm 49.6 warns of “those who trust in their wealth and boast in .. riches”
 - ✧ “Do not trust in oppression or vainly hope in robbery” (Psalm 62.10)
 - ✧ Psalm 115.8 says we’re not to trust in idols or we will become like them
 - ✧ “do not put confidence in man .. or princes” (Psalm 118.8,9)
 - ✧ “He who trusts in his riches will fall” (Prov 11.28)
 - ✧ “He who trusts in his own heart is a fool” (Prov 28.26)
 - ✧ Isaiah warns against ~ “carved images .. wickedness .. empty words”
 - ✧ Jeremiah of ~ “allies .. fortified cities .. lying words .. brothers”
- ❖ We are to NOT trust in an awful lot . . .
- ❖ Not that we’re never to trust anyone or anything other than God
 - ✧ This is said in Prov 31 by King Lemuel, “Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. The heart of her husband safely trusts her; so he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.”
 - ✧ But with sinful humans, “**Trust, but verify**” (Ronald Reagan) is the watchword
- ❖ We’re commanded here to “trust” but not just in anything or anybody
- ❖ We are commanded to “Trust in the Lord”

Xition: We’re to trust in God because only He is worthy of total trust . . .

v5a ~ “Trust in the Lord with all your heart,”

- ❖ The phrase “all your heart” is a popular one in Scripture ~ 1st occurrence
- ❖ **Dt 4.29** “you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul”
 - ✧ Heart and soul are used 7 more time together in Deuteronomy . . .
- ❖ Strength is added in **Dt 6.5** “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.”
- ❖ Jesus adds mind with Pharisee in **Mk 12.30**, “you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.”
- ❖ Heart, soul, mind and strength
 - ✧ **heart** – seat of man’s existence (**Prov 4.23** – “wellspring of life”)
 - ✧ **soul** – seat of man’s emotions, our affections, our greatest desires
 - ✧ **mind** – seat of man’s intellect, of his will, of his goals and plans
 - ✧ **strength** – seat of our abilities, our accomplishments, our energy
- ❖ The phrase “all your heart” captures all of these meanings

v5b ~ “And lean not on your own understanding,”

- ❖ What to do and what not to do / affirmations and denials
- ❖ **Prov 28.26** says ~ “He who trusts in his own heart is a fool,”
 - ✧ “What does this mean? God gave us our minds, our hearts, our wills . . .”
 - ◆ “Are they entirely defective?”
 - ✧ The rest of the verse reads, “But whoever walks wisely will be delivered.”
- ❖ So trusting in “our hearts” is contrasted with “walking wisely”
- ❖ **Prov 22.15** says, “Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child;”
 - ✧ “Can a rod successfully drive it all out? And, even if, would it then stay out?”
- ❖ This caution does not mean our understanding is total rubbish . . .
 - ✧ Implied – is we’re to found our understanding on God’s wisdom
 - ✧ **Ps 119** (*God’s Law*) says 10 times understanding comes from God ~ the Word
 - ✧ All true understanding is a miraculous gift ~ outside of our direct control
- ❖ All of man’s intelligence, understanding, skill and wisdom is derivative (*God’s gift*)
 - ✧ We have only copies of an original ~ a lithograph of a famous painting
 - ✧ Our copies are all flawed / they vary in quality / some are like crayon drawings

v5 ~ “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding”

Xition: “In all your ways acknowledge Him, and he shall direct your paths.”

v6a ~ “In all your ways acknowledge Him,”

- ❖ This is the 2nd occurrence of the word “all”
 - ✧ We are to trust Him with all our heart – and acknowledge Him in all our ways”
 - ◇ The contrast is between “heart” and “ways”
 - ◇ Between trusting God and acknowledging Him
 - ✧ We can trust someone quietly, privately, even secretly. . .
 - ✧ But acknowledgment is done vocally, publically, NOT secretly
- ❖ Note that this acknowledgement is not extraordinary ~ “your ways”
 - ✧ But this all is all encompassing . . .
 - ✧ Just as we are to trust God with all our heart ~ holding nothing back
 - ✧ We are also to acknowledge God in every aspect of our lives
 - ◇ We all have different lives spent with different people
 - ◇ The most cloistered of us have networks of friends and acquaintances
- ❖ To acknowledge God is to render Him His due . . . To bow the knee . . .
- ❖ “And what do we get for this?” “Is there a reward?”

v5 ~ “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding”

v6a ~ “In all your ways acknowledge Him,”

v6b ~ “And He shall direct your paths.”

- ❖ “How valuable is this – that God would direct your path?”
 - ✧ “You might think, but God directs my path anyway... I’m a Calvinist...!”
 - ✧ We must ask, “What happens if we don’t do these things...?”
 - ◇ “Will He then NOT direct our path..? What will He do – ignore us..?”
- ❖ Before we address these questions, let’s also remember the ever popular . . .
 - ✧ **Rom 8.28** ~ “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”
- ❖ “How do we reconcile these verses – and address the questions . . .?”
- ❖ Note the different scopes and purposes of these texts. . .
 - ✧ **Proverbs** is giving practical advice ~ follow this advice and be guided by God
 - **Romans** is speaking to persecuted people ~ seeking hope & meaning
 - ✧ **Proverbs** says God can steer us around much headache and heartache
 - **Romans** says the headache and heartache we experience have meaning

Xition: We are to trust in God instead of ourselves . . .

v7a ~ “Be not wise in your own eyes;”

- ❖ “Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.” (Prov 16.18)
- ❖ “God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.” (Jam 4.6)
- ❖ “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.” (Jam 4.10)

v7b ~ “Fear the Lord and depart from evil.”

- ❖ Admonitions to fear God and refrain from evil occur throughout Scripture
 - ✧ These admonitions are as common as salt is in our food
 - ✧ But like salt, their value and effect are too easily overlooked
- ❖ **2 Tim 3.1-5** “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!”
 - ✧ As a young believer I considered myself a premillennialist ~ last days
 - ✧ I saw the truth of this in our day ~ but this has been the case in many days
 - ✧ But what saddens me is when I see this in myself ~ in those I love ~ in us . . .

v8a ~ “It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones.”

- ❖ This is metaphorical . . . Yes - body may be blessed . . .

Reread Proverbs 3.5-8 ~ “Trust in the Lord . . . strength to your bones”

I want to close with a verse that emphasizes how much God values humility . . .

Isaiah 57.15 ~ “For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,

And to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,

To God our Savior, who alone is wise,

Be Glory and Majesty, Dominion and Power, both now and forever.

Amen.