

Trusting in God

1. Introduction

Read 1 Peter 2:6

Today's message is about trusting in God.

When we learn about trusting in God, it often seems all about an encouragement like "let's trust in God," or learning about importance of trusting in God. But today we will look into David's life and how he trusted in God.

Who's the most trustworthy person in your life? Why is that person trustworthy? There should be a reason that you trust him/her. That reason may not be clear to others, but to you it is. Just like there is a reason to trust a person, there should be a reason to trust in God for all of you. And for David, too, there also should have been a reason, motivation, experience, background or/and occasion to trust in the Lord.

2. David's confession

Now let's look into David, who is one of the main people in Old Testament. David first appears in 1 Samuel 16:13 and then 1 King 2:12 and until 1 Chronicles 29:29, his life and achievements are mentioned in 4 books. Moreover, there are many poems he wrote in Psalm. Among 150 poems, 73 of them are said to have been written by David, and there might be more done by him. Not only did he establish Israel, David's existence had symbolic meaning in Old Testament because of his faith.

David confesses his trust in God in Psalm 143:8

Read Psalm 143:8-10

He confessed "I have put my trust in you." This doesn't mean his trust in God was perfect, but rather David did his confession based on his faith which was that God accepted him completely although he was imperfect and he could do nothing but trusting God. Psalm 103 tells it to us.

Read Psalm 103:1-14

After reading 4 books which describe David's life and achievements, this Psalm 103 shows and moves us how deep God's love and mercy is to forgive and accept our imperfectness and bless us.

You may know very well about David, but in order to learn Psalm 103 more deeply, let us look through some key events in his life.

3. David's calling

When Israelites sought a king who would reign over them, God chose Saul as the first king. However, Saul failed to fulfill what God ordered him to do and in results God regretted His decision to have made Saul the king. (1 Samuel 13:8-15, 1 Samuel 15)

Then God appointed a new king according to Samuel the Prophet. Samuel goes to Bethlehem to meet Jesse by God's order because God revealed that He had found a king among Jesse's eight sons. (1 Samuel 16:1) When Samuel saw Eliab and thought "Surely the LORD's anointed stands here before the LORD," (1 Samuel

16:6), the LORD teaches Samuel something important.

Read 1 Samuel 16:7

The Bible doesn't tell us if Eliab or other sons' hearts were not good, but the LORD's standard to choose a new king to replace Saul wasn't the outward appearance. Therefore the only reason God chose David as a king is obvious. God looked at David's heart, and it was fit to reign Israel as a king. This was the reason that David was chosen.

However, David didn't expect to be appointed as a king nor was he prepared. He didn't seek to be a king, either. He was the youngest son of Jesse and served his family as a shepherd. In fact, when Samuel told Jesse to prepare offerings, David was left in the field to take care of their sheep. David wasn't included in a meeting with the great prophet, Samuel. There is no mention of how David and Jesse felt when David was anointed as a king, but as it's described in 1 Samuel 16:13, the day David was chosen as a king left a huge mark in everybody's life in Bethlehem, although nobody knew what would happen to David's life as a king.

Now let's look at what David went through until he became a king and also after he did.

4. David's life was threatened by Saul

David was appointed to play the lyre for Saul who was tormented by an evil spirit. Then he served Saul as a warrior, too, and accomplished a lot.

Upon returning from a battle field, Saul and David were greeted by Israeli women dancing and singing. When Saul heard them singing, "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands," (1 Samuel 18:7) Saul got very angry. Since Israel's victory seems owed to David, Saul was just unreasonable and jealous to be angry, but from this moment on Saul got very suspicious of him and started contemplating on killing him. He first used a spear and hurled it to David who eluded it twice. Then it got worse.

Read 1 Samuel 24:1-2

Saul took three thousand able young men from all Israel! This is not just spying on one person but almost declaring a war against one. Saul hated David that much! Did David do something to deserve this kind of treatment? He served Saul as a good warrior and brought him lots of victories. He did nothing harmful to Saul or Israel. He always served Saul and kept his loyalty to Saul even after Saul started threatening his life.

Read 1 Samuel 24:3-6

David got a chance to kill Saul and solve all the problems caused by Saul, but he didn't and reprimanded his servants to even hint it, by saying "the LORD forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the LORD's anointed,..." Here we can see how David trusted in the LORD.

Like seen in this episode, David trusted in the LORD and faithful to the LORD, but he makes a big mistake after he becomes a king.

5. A mistake with a wife of Uriah the Hittite

Read 2 Samuel 11:1-5

This is the most known article of David's failure, and he even sent Uriah to a battlefield on purpose and let him die.

Read 2 Samuel 11:15-17

This is a sin only a powerful person could commit. It is also a very cunning way which he himself didn't have to do it directly. Even when Saul was threatening him, his faith and his trust in God was never swayed. He didn't kill Saul even when he had a chance to do so. But now with power in his hand, David committed two very big sins in one occasion.

After this God scolds David through the prophet named Nathan. David's confession is in Psalm 51.

Read Psalm 51:4, 6, 10-13, 16-17

In verse 4 David admits his own sins. He also confesses that not only his deeds but his within are important. In verse 6 and 10 he mentions that in four different ways; "...you desired faithfulness even in the womb; you taught me wisdom in that secret place." "Create in me a pure heart...and renew a steadfast spirit within me." David was chosen by God, not because of his appearance, ability, or intelligence, but because of what God saw within David. The LORD told Samuel that "the LORD looks at the heart." When David committed those sins against Uriah and his wife, his heart was no longer the one the LORD looked at and chose. Faithfulness and wisdom were gone and instead filth and pride occupied his heart. Through the sins David committed, God revealed the heart David had lost and should have.

David went through so many experiences besides these two sins and was applauded and scolded by God before and after he became a king. His life was full of ups and downs.

Now we know what David's life was like, we see that Psalm 103 is all about his life.

Read Psalm 103:8-14

By singing verse 14 David tells what he learned as a servant to an Israeli king and also as an Israeli king is that God knows everything about us, and in verses 11 and 13 he confesses that "the LORD has compassion on those who fear for him."

David understood God not by learning through books or through people's stories but through his own experiences throughout his life in good times and bad times. He didn't fear God all the time nor did he have a perfect life, but he learned that God blessed him and was compassionate when he sought to fear God. Therefore, David trusted in the LORD as told in Psalm 143.

Read Psalm 143:8-10

When we look into David's life, we see that he struggled to hold onto God and walk with God although he was a king who received God's calling. David betrayed God, but God never betrayed him. Not even once. Moreover, God was always tolerant with David's failures. And this must have been the base of his trust in God.

Then what really is trusting in God?

6. Trusting in God

Read 1 Peter 2:1-6

As you all know Peter is one of the most known disciples of Jesus', who appears in books of Gospel and Acts and wrote 1 Peter and 2 Peter. He is also very symbolic, but compared to Paul, who is also a symbolic disciple, Peter had lots of failures and was a little carefree. One of Peter's failures is described in Luke 22:54-62.

Read Luke 22:33-34, 54-62

What Jesus predicted about Peter became true, and Peter cried afterwards. Peter showed his regrets in his crying. Although Peter had many failures, this was the only time he cried afterwards. He must have loved Jesus very much and trusted in him.

Peter with this kind of failure is teaching Christians in about 60 AD when the persecution against Christian was very severe as follows.

Read 1 Peter 2:6

"...the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame." We learn this but often fail to stay positive and move forward with hope, or sometimes something very silly makes our day. That's our worldly daily life, isn't it? If we are put to shame, is it because we are not faithful enough? The answer must be yes, unfortunately. Should we trust in God completely? Of course, but is it possible to do that? Our weakness prevents us from trusting in God 100 percent. Although he said no matter what happens, he would follow Jesus and his heart was prepared to do so, Peter failed to do so when his life was threatened. In the end he failed and cried over his failure. It sounds very familiar, doesn't it? As we try very hard to trust in God and live according to our faith, our weakness prevents us from doing so.

David and Peter lived in different times, but they both looked to and tried to trust in the same God. They are our role models who lived as symbolic people in their times and from whom we should learn much. Although they weren't perfect, they testified, taught, and encouraged to trust in God.

Read Psalm 103:14

God knows us and will never put us to shame when we trust in Him. We should trust in God. Even when we fail, it's not that bad since God knows everything about us.

Let's pray.