

A Trusting Heart like Jesus in the book of Mark *Southern CT Church of Christ*

Spiritual Training class 9/23/2009
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QUIZ:

#1 & 2) write the memory scriptures for the last class
#3) are you getting with a brother consistently to learn from them (or teach them)? who and how often? how many times in the last 4 weeks have you gotten with that person or group? if you plan to or want to and haven't made it happen yet, say that and who.

This is all about you and God! Part of learning to trust God is making God the point of what you do. We make it all about people - we get mad at people, try to please people, worry what people think - but this quiz (and your life) is between you and God.

CHALLENGE #1: if you don't like the answers you wrote before God on the quiz, change them in the next 2 weeks: memorize the scriptures (or at least the new ones...) and set up a time to get with a brother or brothers consistently.

1) A Heart That Knows God Trusts God - Mark 4:35-41

Look at the contrast between Jesus' heart and the disciples hearts in this scripture.

When I read this scripture one morning during my bible study time, I thought - how would I react if I'm rowing this boat, and a storm blows in, BIG waves start rolling in over the boat, and the boat is mostly filled with water? I would freak out! I think their reaction is completely normal!!! Why did they freak out? But why did Jesus rebuke them for having no faith? Because they should have known better! Because they had forgotten who God was in the face of the storm. Isn't that what we do? **You can't trust someone you don't know or have forgotten about in the face of our emotions!** How well do you know God? Jesus was calm and unafraid because of one reason: he knew his Father and his Father's plan.

So do you know God? There is NO WAY that you can trust him if you don't know him. Here's what I know about God:

- God is love (1 John 4)
- gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, rich in love, faithful to all his promises, loving towards all he has made (Ps 145)
- God is a fortress, a rescuer, a deliverer, a rock in the storms of life, a protector (Ps 18)
- God has plans to benefit you and his people beyond your lifetime (Ex 14-16, Jer 29)
- God is powerful, infinite, and beyond limitations, he knows every star by name (Ps 147)

Since Jesus is "the exact representation of his being" (Heb 1), we can look at Jesus to know God as well:

- God heals (Mark 1, 5)
- God is compassionate, at an individual level (Mark 1, 5, 7), meeting our needs
- God forgives (Eph 1)
- God loves EVERYBODY (John 3:16)
- God loves ME! (Eph 3)

WHO IS GOD TO YOU? What do YOU believe? What do YOU **KNOW**? If you can't answer these questions, then you need to know God better! Has it been hard for you to trust him? No wonder!

Brothers, if you are "struggling" in your faith, fearful, insecure, not joyful, stressed out - is it because you don't know and trust the redeemer? the protector? the author and perfecter of your faith? It is on YOU to learn about who God is from the Word, from other brothers, and from the example of Jesus.

CHALLENGE #2 - have a quiet time this week about who God is from the book of Mark and write down 3 characteristics of God you see from Jesus.

2) A Trusting Heart Forgives : Matt 18:21-35

Forgiveness is one of the most important things to learn in life. Without it, you cannot be close to anyone, you cannot have a good marriage, you cannot be at peace, and on top of that, you cannot be saved - you cannot follow Jesus!! You will be spiritually lost; alone,

sad and angry, if you can't forgive from the bottom of your heart and over and over again, if necessary. I bet you know personally some brothers who didn't forgive and aren't here anymore. You can trust me on this - been there, done that, got the t-shirt. (confronted on not forgiving Dad story) Sometimes you have to forgive them over and over in your heart. (Syracuse story) Its hard!!! Sometimes the people we need to forgive are DEAD!! How can we ever resolve with them? You can with Jesus.

You're blessed if you know Jesus. Without him, I don't know what to tell you about how to forgive.

Ok so here's how Jesus tells us in Matthew how to forgive. It requires prayer, fasting, really understanding this scripture and hard decisions before God (wash, rinse, repeat!!)

- First of all, you have to recognize the debt you holding against the people who hurt you. You see, unforgiveness is holding onto an emotional debt that you think someone owes you. Maybe its your Dad that owes you actually being there, maybe he owes you a better childhood. Maybe its your minister who betrayed your trust. Maybe its your wife for hurting your feelings or cheating on you! The worst hurts are from those closest to us and those who fellow disciples we expect more from (Ps 55: 12) - the ones we're commanded to trust and love! (John 13:33-34) It doesn't matter - to you its a little (big?) piece of paper in your heart containing the offense(s). You walk around and want to grab their neck and shake it - REPAY ME WHAT YOU OWE ME!!! Just like in the scripture. Is that you in the story? You had better work on that one.
- Next you have to see your debt to God that you owe for killing Jesus on the cross with your sin - compare them. (Forgive Dad by the stream example - stick vs. tree)
- Last, you have to decide to tear up those debts and to never try to get back what you are owed. EVER. You have to commit to tearing them up again whenever they come back.

The beautiful thing about it is that it **DOESN'T DEPEND ON THE ANYTHING THE OTHER PERSON DOES**. But what if they do it again? Jesus covered that already....do it again 7 X 77 times. There's no way its all going to add up to ten thousand talents - EVER.

If you trust God, that he loves you and has torn up your debt, this all

becomes possible, because that debt that your brother owes you starts to look small before the debt you owe God. If you trust that God has torn up your debt, decide to take that debt that you are holding on to and tear it up before God. This takes much prayer and serious help from the Holy Spirit, but your other choice is really to give up your salvation.

Some people live their whole lives and never do this with people they care about. Not forgiving people ruins relationships, breaks up families, causes divorces; this is what sin does! Not forgiving is one of the worst ones, because it includes many other sins that we know will send us to hell: hatred, selfishness, and pride.

If you don't forgive someone, you can't trust them. You can't love them. You can't be at peace with them, and even kindness will be hard!! **THIS IS NOT CHRIST!!!** If you don't forgive, you are not following Jesus Christ, you are following Satan, the sinful nature. We've already been there and done that - it didn't end up well then either.

Last challenge:

- A) Study this scripture this week & meditate on it & pray**
- B) examine your heart - is there someone in your life or in the church that you have not forgiven - remember this is between you and God**
- C) forgive them, or at least begin the process - get as much help with it as you need from the brothers and a professional counselor if you need it!! This is a serious, life-changing matter.**

3) A Heart that Trusts in God Trusts his Brothers - Mark 14:16-20

Jesus knew all along that Judas would betray him. He knew before the earth was made, he knew when he prayed on the mountain, came down and said - you are one my special 12. As far as we know, he never treated him any different.

How does that relate to us? Its the one thing I can promise you tonight - someone in here will hurt your feelings. Someone in here will betray your trust. How do I know?

2 reasons:

- 1) Satan's hates this church, and his key weapons against it are shame, suspicion, deceit, division and distrust - sin. And sin hurts. Every time.

2) the only one without sin died 2000 years ago, rose from the dead and is sitting at the right hand of the Father! All the rest of us will sin and hurt each other.

But you know what? You can't trust the brothers you haven't forgiven. That's where its at - trusting brothers and leaders is easier if you know God and can forgive. And have you thought about this - I'm going to bet that there are brothers in here that don't trust you!! They haven't forgiven you!! You probably don't even know what you did to them. Don't you want them to forgive you? Trust you?

So what's a man to do in a fellowship of sinners? Be like Jesus.

1 Peter 2:19-25 - entrust yourself to God, do not retaliate when wronged - trust God and let him deal with it. Forgive as God forgave you.

Psalm 37:1-7 - Don't get upset when men do things that are wrong! Just do good and be grateful for what God has given you. Be at peace. **Let God stand up for you!** God will give you the desires of your heart when he is your delight. Getting angry and emotional when people hurt you doesn't lead anywhere good.

Matt 5:43 Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. Jesus calls us to love our enemies! How much more our brothers in Christ and our leaders? Jesus calls you to love them, even if they are really really really bad - and I happen to know they are actually working and sacrificing for your benefit, as it turns out. So decide to love your brothers. And love always.....TRUSTS. (1 Cor 13)

We'll get there brothers, keep up the good fight. (Gal 6:9)

Memory Scriptures

#1 Psalm 9:10

#2 Matt 18:32-33

#3 Psalm 37:3-4