

Intro:

In our series on *The Trustworthiness of God's Word* we are working on definitions.

I was reflecting on what we talked about last Sunday, and thought that we need to review a couple of concepts and do a little more work on them to deepen our understanding of what I'm trying to get across.

I. Review

A. We had a slide called, "understanding faith..." — renamed: "What makes up saving faith?"

1. Three components of Biblical faith

Components of Biblical Faith		
Knowledge	Assent	Trust
One can have knowledge without assent or trust.	One can have assent without correct knowledge or personal trust.	One can have trust without correct knowledge or complete assent.

2. In Dr. Talbert's book, he gives three Latin terms for these categories

- a. Notitia
- b. Assensus
- c. Fiducia

3. Suggested synonyms

- a. Understanding
- b. Agreement
- c. Reliance

4. This addresses three components of personality

- a. Mind
- b. Will
- c. Emotional consequences
 - 1) Confidence
 - 2) Behaviour

Our first application of this is to Saving Faith:

- A new believer understands the gospel message, comes to agree with it, and commits himself to it (depends on it) to save him from his sins. This produces confidence of salvation and changed behaviour in life.

The second application is in Sanctifying Faith:

- Any believer understands a new concept or passage of Scripture, comes to agree with it, and commits himself to applying it. This produces confidence in the Christian walk and (often) a changed behaviour pattern in some area of life.

B. We also contrasted two Hebrew words to understand different levels of faith: I'm now calling this "the state of faith in a Christian"

1. Believing • 'āman (אמן) [Note: "amen" comes from this root]
2. Trusting • bātach (בטח)

Salvation	
Belief → <i>Deliverance</i>	Trust → <i>Assurance</i>
Result: <i>Factual</i> security	Result: <i>Felt</i> Confidence

3. We are comparing these two words to initial salvation then to assurance of salvation

Lack of assurance comes from "a failure to *trust* in the truth of the Gospel despite *belief* in the facts of the Gospel."

II. What do we trust?

A. The foundation of trust

"Our only ground for trusting God is what He says He is like and what He says He will do."¹ [In other words, God's character]

¹ Layton Talbert, *The Trustworthiness of God's Words: Why the Reliability of Every Word from God Matters* (Geanies House, UK: Christian Focus, 2022), 25 [Note: most quotes will come from this book and will simply be indicated by a number in square brackets hereafter].

Trust/Confidence/Security in God



Belief in God



Revelation of God (His words)



Character of God (holy, true, pure)

“Trusting God is the fruit of believing God; and the only way to believe God is to believe His revelation — what he says about Himself and everything else. And the ultimate basis for believing and trusting God’s words is His character (ultimate trustworthiness).” [25-26]

B. Returning to the chart analyzing salvation

Salvation	
Belief → <i>Deliverance</i>	Trust → <i>Assurance</i>
Result: <i>Factual</i> security	Result: <i>Felt</i> Confidence

1. Salvation gives real security to those who believe
2. Some believers have few doubts about their salvation, but many have times of struggle with assurance
 - a. Some will say, “Any anxiety is proof of no salvation.” — but salvation doesn’t depend on how the believer *feels*
 - b. Talbert offers a helpful analogy:

“Saving faith *does* involve trust. Sometimes, however, such faith can develop a hairline fracture between trusting the propositions of the gospel (that God *can* save and this is how He does it) and trusting the personal effect of the gospel (that God really has saved *me*). Hairline fractures are slight, but they can still be intensely painful and debilitating.” [26]

- c. The struggle ultimately comes down to the all too human tendency to doubt God's words, even when you believe they are true

Salvation is God's work. He promises to save all those who call. We must learn to *trust* Him when He says that.

- 1) The ultimate object of trust is God himself
- 2) The immediate object of trust are the words God used to reveal himself

III. A lesson from Psalm 56

A. The setting of the Psalm – David's sojourn in Gath (1 Sa 21.10-15)

1. David fled from Saul and went to Gath (home of Goliath) as a refuge
2. The servants of the king of Gath raised suspicion against David
3. David resorted to feigned madness so the king would release him from the city

¹ Sa 21.15 "Do I lack madmen, that you have brought this one to act the madman in my presence? Shall this one come into my house?"

B. In Psalm 56, David describes the experience

1. Psalm superscription: "A Mikhtam of David, when the Philistines seized him in Gath."
2. The object of David's trust (Ps 56.3-4, 9-11)

Ps 56.3-4 When I am afraid, I will put my trust in You.⁴ In God, whose **word** I praise, In God I have put my **trust**; I shall not be afraid. What can *mere* man do to me?

Ps 56.9-11 Then my enemies will turn back in the day when I call; This I know, that God is for me.¹⁰ In God, *whose word* I praise, In the LORD, *whose word* I praise,¹¹ In God I have put my **trust**, I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me?

- a. David blends trust (Heb: *bātach* — trust) with God's word
- b. David knows God's word is trustworthy, so he trusts God

c. Notice the product of trust: “I shall not be afraid”

IV. The opposite of trusting God’s words

A. No one trusts nothing

1. You either trust God’s words
2. Or you trust something else

“The opposite of trusting God is trusting the wrong thing.” [29]

Note: the Christian with a “hairline fracture” in his faith trusts God’s words ... mostly. But there are doubts. The objective of this study is to reduce doubts and increase trust.

B. Potential objects of misplaced trust (many!)

1. Wealth (Ps 49.6, 52.7; Pr 11.28; Mk 10.23; 1 Tim 6.17)
2. Shady business practices (Ps 62.10; Isa 30.12)
3. Your own righteousness (Ezek 33.13)
4. Lies of false teachers (Jer 7.4, 8, 28.15, 29.31)
5. Influential people (Ps 118.9, 146.3)
6. Political/military power (Dt 28.52; Isa 30.2, 31.1, 36.9; Hos 10.13)
7. One’s own strength (Ps 44.6)
8. One’s own idols or ideas (Isa 42.17; Jer 13.25; Ps 115.8, 135.18; Hab 2.18)
9. Human wisdom (science) (Ps 146.3)
10. Etc.

“A few of these objects of trust are evil in themselves, but most are not. ... Any decision to trust anything other than God is a decision to mistrust God. Any decision to mistrust God’s words is only a decision to trust someone else’s words instead.” [32]

V. A picture of trusting God’s Words (Ps 37)

- ##### A. David’s counsel when confronted by the apparent success of evil men: “don’t fret” (1, 7, 8)
1. Remember the emotional aspect of trust

2. Trust is a stabilizing faith decision

B. David's method: "trust in the Lord" (3, 5)

1. By "delighting in the Lord" (4)
2. By "committing your way to the Lord" (5)
3. By "resting in the Lord" (7)
4. By "waiting on the Lord" (7)
5. By "ceasing from anger" and "forsaking wrath" (8)

These faith commitments (Dr. Fremont, "positive faith attitudes") create *inner peace*.

"The only way to trust God is by trusting His words." [33]