

As One At 10
28th March 2021
John 6 vs 27-40: JESUS TRUSTED GOD

As we come to the end of our sermon series on Trust, and at the same time begin to emerge from an extremely painful and challenging year I wonder how your relationship with God is fairing. Have you found the series challenging? Has it inspired you and given you a renewed energy and desire to lean on God and trust Him as we come out of lockdown? Have you learnt from those Biblical godly saints of the past who have demonstrated faith in difficult and frightening times and who despite disaster, chaos and danger have trusted God and sought to follow Him in obedience?

Today we come to our greatest example of one who trusted God, and that is Jesus himself – Throughout the Gospels Jesus demonstrates his dependency on his Father as he battles with Satan in the wilderness, retreats from the crowds to spend time in prayer, weeps as he wrestles with the call on his life and makes his ultimate choice to submit to His Father's will.

Jesus is fully God and fully human! (That of course is a sermon or 2 in itself though not for today!) - And as the only perfect human being, he demonstrates what it means to perfectly trust God.

Yes, I know that's pretty mind-blowing, but as we draw this series to a close and look at how Jesus demonstrated that He trusted His Father completely, we, as broken, flawed and often frightened people can look to Him and find inspiration, hope and peace as we seek to trust God for ourselves!

Let's pray and then I'm going to read our passage for this morning.

Father God, we pray that as we look to Jesus we might grow to be men and women who choose to Trust you above all other. Teach us as we open your Word, and change us this day to be more like your son. Amen

READ John 6 vs 27-40

This passage in John comes as a consequence of Jesus feeding the 5000 and the crowds being so overwhelmed by what he has done that in verse 15 they want to force him to be their King. Jesus retreats and when they finally track him down, it is clear they haven't really understood who he is, and what type of King he has come to be, so he takes the opportunity to use God's provision of bread at the giant picnic to explain that He himself is the true bread that they need, the Bread of Life (vs 38) and the one who provides all they need for all eternity!

How does Jesus demonstrate in this passage his total trust in God? I think we can see two main things...

Firstly, He is Confident of His Identity

Verse 27 tells us that Jesus has received God's seal of approval, just as he was when he was baptised at the beginning of his ministry. He is God's man for the job God has given. No one else will do.

He is the Son of Man (verse 27), a title that He gives himself, drawing on the vision in Daniel 7 of "one like a son of man." He is both the heavenly King, and Messianic King called to deliver his people - the sovereign Word who became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

Not only that, he is the true King - not a King as the crowd would have him be – a King to overthrow Roman rule and oppression but instead the promised humble King who as Zechariah prophesied centuries before would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey, whilst the crowds cheered and praised him and yet, who only a few days later would die the humiliating death of a criminal.

And He describes himself as the Bread of Life – (vs 35). The one who provides spiritual satisfaction to all those who are hungry and in desperate need. While the crowds are still desperate for a miracle, and comparing him with Moses Jesus reminds them that he is the true bread from heaven – a bread that will never spoil, or run out but one that will give eternal life to all people who believe in him.

Letitia Wright is an actress best known by Marvel fans for her role in Black Panther as Shuri. When she won her Bafta Rising star award in 2019 she explained a little of her struggle to make her way in the acting world, first declaring that before all else what gave her confidence was that she was a child of God. Her identity was in Him and as she trusted Him, it seemed clear that she felt more equipped to face her troubles.

The longing for each human being to find their true identity is at the heart of our culture today – we experience it in small talk when we are asked 'what do you do?' and feel the internal pressure to give a worthy answer; we recognise it in the struggles of those who wrestle with their sexuality or ask questions about their gender; we see it in our young people as they feel the pressure of expectation and study and try to work out what they are meant to do with their lives – and so often our longing to find out who we are can lead to depression, anxiety, stress and discontent.

Jesus was confident of his identity and he trusted His father completely. We find our true identity when we come to Jesus and trust Him, confident that as verse 37 tells us He will never drive us away because we belong in His Kingdom, are part of his family, and loved unconditionally and eternally by His heavenly Father.

Secondly, Jesus is **Confident of God's Will for His Life**. Vs 38 says this *"For, I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day."*

God's call on Jesus' life is to do His will, the work of the perfect great rescuer who through his death and resurrection would save people from their sin, bringing them

into right relationship with God as his forgiven people. It is such a huge call that there is no way Jesus would obey it if he wasn't confident in the one who had called him. Verse 39 shows us that Jesus understands this calling, as he holds fast to those of us who follow him, confident even though may struggle, he will one day bring us to be with Him forever.

There is no doubt that Jesus understands and experiences the weight of this call – as we journey through Holy week next week, we will be reminded of the agony of Gethsemane, as Jesus prays that His Father might take from him the cup of suffering he is about to face and find another way! But we will see again the extent of his trust too, in those final few words of his prayer, "Yet not as I will, but as you will," as Jesus leans on His Father, and places himself in his hands willingly submitting his life to him. Never does Jesus take matters into his own hands and as he cries, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" and "It is Finished," he dies having been fully obedient to God's will for his life. Through the emotional anguish, rejection, physical suffering and torture he does not take his eyes off his heavenly Father, trusting that his death is the only way humanity can receive salvation and eternal life.

In two weeks' time the Youings family will gain a new member – Alfie the Border Poo puppy will arrive! Whilst we all know and love the cuteness of a puppy, I confess to feeling the apprehension of trying to train this dog to become obedient to the call of His master. Adrian is the key dog trainer in our house – he worked hard with our previous dog with some success...but we could never describe Barney as a dog who was 'fully obedient' – He never did learn to retrieve a ball, and although he wasn't allowed on the furniture, there were plenty of times when we would come home and find him curled up on the sofa looking like butter wouldn't melt!

Obedience isn't just the challenge for a naughty puppy...it's a massive challenge for the Christian too – in fact we know that Jesus is the only one who has ever been fully obedient to the Father and that our efforts will never achieve our salvation – Like the crowds in vs 28 of our passage we often miss the point of the wonderful gift that is Jesus when we still ask the question 'what work do we need to please God?' We cannot please God by what we do...We can only take up our cross and follow the one who has done everything for us trusting that it is by Grace we have been saved....by Faith in Jesus and in him alone and praying that as we grow confidence of God's will for our lives we will become increasingly obedient to it.

So, as we finish let me go back to the beginning and ask again – how is your relationship with God fairing in these difficult times? Do you know to whom you belong? Can you rejoice this Easter, confident that you are a saved, child of God so deeply loved and precious to him that King Jesus died in your place, providing you with life in all its fullness?

And are you confident about his will for your life, even through the most difficult times? Can you say with integrity, not my will Lord, trusting that Jesus will equip you for all you face or sacrifice as you follow him.

Jesus perfectly trusted His Father in that last journey to Jerusalem, as the crowds cheered him on the streets and he entered the city on a donkey. He knew that in less than a week's time he would be ridiculed, mocked, beaten and killed.

As we journey through life, taking up our cross daily to follow Him, we can trust our heavenly Father that wherever the journey takes us, and whatever suffering we face or anguish we feel our humble King has gone before us. Because Jesus was confident of God's call on his life and obedient to it, we can be confident that our sin has been dealt with once and for all, and that we have a true and eternal hope that we can celebrate now and look forward to for all time.