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APRIL 2017
TRUST IS A MUST

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus! Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God our Father and of Jesus Christ our Lord!

Let me begin this month's Living Logos by sharing with you a testimony of provision Shannon and I experienced back in 2007 because it will lead into the message I believe God has for us this month...

Immediately after Shannon and I were married in July of 2006, we moved to Colorado for me to attend Bible College, and it was there that we learned a very important lesson in trusting the Lord...

You see, we found out just a couple of months after we moved to Colorado Springs that Shannon was pregnant with our son Levi. Now we had it on our heart from the beginning that Shannon was going to stay at home with our children, but from a natural perspective, this did not seem possible at this juncture. We knew what our budget was as we were starting our life together and we knew that I could not bring in that amount of income even if I worked a full-time job. So, in the natural, it seemed completely impossible for Shannon to be a stay at home mom at this point. But, how many of you know, we serve a God who specializes in doing the impossible!?!

Well, we decided that we were going to just trust the Lord to give us this desire of our heart, but can you imagine how the enemy plagued our minds with thoughts of fear and anxiety? He would tell us, "You are fools! There is no way you will survive financially if Shannon doesn't work!" But we all know he is a liar, amen?

Well, now that you are aware of the background of this situation, let me share with you what God spoke to us concerning it...

A PAIR OF 46:10'S

One morning, the Lord gave Shannon Isaiah 46:10 which says, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure.'" As we meditated on what the Lord was saying about Himself in this verse we were certainly encouraged.

The first portion of this verse is saying that God has a plan! He has already declared what shall take place and has already orchestrated His plan for our lives. What we can glean from this is- nothing that has come into our lives has taken God by surprise! For instance, it is not like, when we got pregnant unexpectedly and at a seemingly inconvenient time, Jesus turned to Gabriel and said, "Uh-oh Gabe! I didn't see that one coming!" No! God knows the end from the beginning and He has a purpose.

So, in our situation, we knew God had a plan for us, and it was all going to work out for the benefit of His kingdom and, subsequently, for our benefit as well! Glory to God! And even if something occurs in our life because of a stupid decision we make, He is still well able to provide a way of escape and work all things together for our good if we seek Him for His wisdom! Amen? God alone is wise and is able to keep us from stumbling! Praise be to His name!

Then notice what God says in the second half of Isaiah 46:10... He says, "My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure." The word "counsel" describes what God has planned to happen from the beginning. He is saying, "What I have determined and purposed will stand!" In other words, God's ultimate plan and purpose will come to pass! You can bet the bank on it! And God went on to say, "I will do all My pleasure!" What is God's pleasure? The end of Psalm 35:27 says, "Let the Lord be magnified, who has pleasure in..." In what? "... in the prosperity of His servant!" So when God told us that He will do all His pleasure, we knew He was going to prosper us because we were His servants. In other words, we knew that we were not going under; we were going over! Hallelujah!

Well, as Shannon and I were discussing Isaiah 46:10 a few nights later, we were led in our Bible study over to a very familiar Psalm that says, "Be still and know that I am God." Most of us are familiar with this portion of Scripture and have probably heard taught from this verse how important it is for us to be quiet in our prayer times instead of just doing all the talking. And, although that is absolutely a true lesson that we all need to learn, that is not what that verse is saying. If you read the whole Psalm in context you will find that the Psalmist was making the same admonition that we see throughout the Old Testament: to "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." In other words, we are to quit trying to fight the battle ourselves and watch God fight it for us!

This common exhortation in the Bible is very precious to me because there was a point in my life when God made this word "rhema" (Lit. a specifically spoken and alive word) to me...

There was a time when I made a bad decision before I was born again that could have very easily had fruit that I would have had to eat the rest of my life. And there was a particular day where this situation came to a head (after I was born again, by the way). When it did, I was enveloped in so much fear that I was riddled with anxiety. I started trying to figure out what to do and even called a legal advisor to see what my options were. Well, to make a long story short, God led me to look up Exodus 14:13 later that afternoon.

Now Exodus chapter 14 is the account of the crossing of the Red Sea. In verses 9-12 we see how Pharaoh's heart was hardened and he proceeded to pursue and overtake Israel at the Red Sea. Of course, we know that the children of Israel got into fear when they saw their enemy pursuing them. You see, in my particular situation, the world (i.e. Egypt) that I just came out of, was trying to overtake me as well. But God spoke to me the same thing that He did to the children of Israel who were in the same situation- "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord...!" Hallelujah! Let me tell you, my friends: when I got that word from God, faith was quickened in my heart! I knew God had spoken and I knew I was going to see His deliverance, and- glory be to His name- I saw the salvation of the Lord in that situation!

You see, what God wanted to get across to His people by saying "be still" in Exodus 14:13 was not to just stop physically moving. He was saying, "Stop trying to fight the battle yourself! Just rest in Me because the battle is not yours, it's Mine! Trust Me!" You see, whenever trouble arises in our lives our initial reaction is usually- "We have to do something!" But, as the Psalmist says, God wants us to just "Be still and let Him be God!" He wants us to know that He is God and He wants us to rest in Him as we watch Him fight our battles for us. Now this takes faith because our flesh is not going to want to cooperate. It will want to go into a frenzy and do something to help God out a little bit. But we must give our battles to God and trust Him to bring about our deliverance!

Now an awesome confirmation that Shannon and I received when God led us over to the Psalm that says, "Be still and know that I am God" is that this portion of Scripture had the exact same address as the Scripture that He gave us in Isaiah- which was 46:10 (i.e. Isaiah 46:10 & Psalm 46:10)! Glory be to God! He just knows how to put the cherry on top, doesn't He?

TAKING THE LIMITS OFF!

But here is an important lesson for all of us: even though we were given these rhema words from Isaiah 46:10 & Psalm 46:10, there were still extremely anxious moments as Shannon progressed through her pregnancy. So this drove me into my prayer closet. And on one particular occasion, I was spending a considerable amount of time praying in other tongues and the Lord gave me the interpretation. He said to me, "Is there anything too difficult for Me? You need to begin to believe bigger and see further, and stop limiting Me!" Immediately, I knew that the Lord had spoken. I knew that He was letting me know that I did not need to limit Him in this situation- because He could provide in extraordinary ways.

So needless to say, I came out of that prayer closet like a house on fire! I told Shannon what "thus saith the

Lord” and we immediately joined hands sitting on our couch in our humble apartment and asked the Lord to provide a way for Shannon to be able to stay at home with Levi. Again, it was impossible according to the natural. But we had heard from God and our faith was at its “Pike’s Peak” (pun certainly intended)!

Well, we were still in the first trimester of Shannon’s pregnancy when we took the limits off God. So we made it through trimester number one full of faith & hope! Then, through her second trimester, we were still believing strong! But then, as we entered trimester number three, that question began to creep into our minds- “How is God going to provide?”

You see, this was exactly what happened with Abraham & Sarah. Even though they were fully persuaded that God would do what He had promised, that same question came- “How was God going to give Abraham descendants?” This led Sarah to wonder whether perhaps it would be through her servant Hagar. Well, of course we know what came because of that work of the flesh, and we are still suffering from that decision today.

But that leads me to our lesson for this month (and we will get back to this testimony shortly) ...

What Abraham & Sarah obviously should have done was not have been so quick to try to help God out and been more patient to let God fulfill His good word in His own way and timing. But this is where “trust is a must” in our lives, saints!

FAITH VERSUS TRUST

Let me begin our teaching this month by saying that when I was first born again, the Lord began to establish me in the subject of faith. He led me to read books from authors such as Kenneth Hagin, Charles Capps, etc. Faith was the foundation of my Christian walk and I am so thankful today for the things God taught me at the beginning. But when Shannon and I had begun this new phase of our life in Colorado back in 2006 & 2007, the Lord began to establish us in a branch of faith called “trust.”

You see, it is important to understand that faith and trust are not the same thing. Some people use these terms synonymously, but there is a slight difference between them. The best way I can explain the difference between faith & trust is that **faith is to believe when you do know and trust is to believe when you do not know**. Let me explain what I mean by this... Faith is needed when you know what the answer to your situation is and you believe God to bring that specific promise to pass in your life. Trust, however, is when you do not know the specific answer to your problem (i.e. you do not completely understand) and you believe God to provide His best in your life anyways.

You see, we have heard so much about trusting God that it has become just a Christian cliché that has no meaning to us. But true trust in the Lord is a definite must in the Christian life. You see, there will be circumstances that will occur in our life that will require simple trust in the Lord. We will not always be able to figure out the “why’s, how’s, where’s, what’s, etc.” of life. It is during those times that we must simply trust the Lord and, most importantly, stay on His side!

One of the greatest Scriptural examples of this is found in the life of Job. You have probably even heard sermons on why these horrible things happened to Job and that seems to be the question everyone wants to see answered. But I do not believe that was God’s purpose in putting this book in the Bible. Although we can certainly make wrong decisions to open the door to the devil in our lives, I personally do not believe that Job ever did anything to bring his sufferings on himself. God testified Himself that the things that happened to Job were “without cause” (see Job 2:4). So that makes it pretty clear to me that he did not do anything to cause these calamities to come upon himself. As a matter of fact, Job’s three friends that came to “support” him did nothing but try and figure out what sin Job committed to have such a hard time, and God rebuked them for

that. So for us to try and figure out the “why’s” in Job’s sufferings is obviously not a good place to go. Job stood by his integrity and righteousness and ended up becoming self-righteous and arrogant. And God corrected him as well! So do you know what the lesson is that God wanted us to learn through this book? I believe it was not to answer the question- “Why did this happen to Job?” I believe **the primary lesson to learn in the Book of Job was to show us the correct way to respond when we do not know “why.”**

You see, in the Christian life we are not promised an absence of problems. In fact, if you are a Christian and are doing anything for the Lord, you can expect more opposition than your average person. It has been well said by my father in the faith, Andrew Wommack, “If you are not ever running into the devil then you are probably running in the same direction!” Nope, my friends, being a child of God does not guarantee you an absence of tribulations, but it does guarantee you victory over every tribulation if you don’t quit and you keep believing God. And even though Job made some mistakes during his trials, he never quit and He ended up getting twice as much as he had before. Likewise, when you face difficult circumstances, if you don’t quit and you keep your trust in the Lord, you will always come out better off in the end! Amen!

DEFINING TRUST

Let’s take a moment to define the word “trust” so that it can make a deeper impact on us...

The word “trust” can best be defined as “to place confidence in.” It also means- “to commit to the care of.” One of the best ways I found to receive the full impact of what “trust” really is has been to study the meaning of a “trustee.” In our modern society, a trustee is “a person to whom anything or any business is committed, in confidence that he will discharge his duty” (Webster’s 1828 Dictionary). To put it in layman’s terms, a trustee is someone that you are confident is able to faithfully manage a particular thing that you own and will govern it as you would yourself. You see, this is how we should see God. He is totally worthy of our trust! We can place all of our confidence in Him because He is able and willing to care for us.

I believe the Bible gives us its own definition of “trust” in a very familiar portion of Scripture- Proverbs 3:5. In this verse Solomon said, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding.” I believe Solomon was using the terms “trust” and “lean” synonymously. In other words, you could translate Proverbs 3:5, **“Lean on the Lord with all your heart and trust not in your own understanding.”** You see, when you lean on someone, you are trusting them to hold you up or else you would not cast all your weight on them, right? So if you are trusting the Lord- confident that He will uphold you- then you will lean on His everlasting arms. Amen!

One of the verses that I believe defines trusting God perfectly is 1 Peter 5:7. In this verse Peter says, “casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.” Let’s take a deeper look at it...

The word “casting” is a key word in this verse. It means “to throw on.” It was used in ancient Greek texts to describe the throwing of a blanket on a mule for the purpose of riding that mule. It was used this way in Luke chapter 19 when Jesus sent two of His disciples into a village to fetch Him a colt to ride into Jerusalem. In verse 35 the disciples brought Jesus the colt and it says, “And they threw their clothes on the colt...” The word for “threw” is the same used for “casting” in 1 Peter 5:7. And notice what Luke 19:35 says that the disciples did next: they sat Jesus on their clothes! You see, **not only are we to cast our cares, but we are also to sit Jesus on top of them!** That is, placing all of our trust in Jesus to ride our cares in a triumphant victory procession! Glory to God!

Notice that Peter said, “casting all your care upon Him...” Not just some of your care, or the big ones; no, cast *all* of your care! Philippians 4:6 commands us to be anxious for nothing. No, not one thing! Of course, this is a process, but we need to understand that letting God be totally in control of our lives is the best decision we can ever make. He can do a lot better job with our lives than we ever dreamed of doing ourselves!

And why does Peter say we should cast all of our care upon Him? "...for (or, because) He cares for us!" You see, the reason we can put our total trust in God to handle the details of our life is because He cares for us. God cares about what we care about, my friends! He is interested in even the minutest details of our life and He desires to be involved. So let's let Him! Let's include Him in every decision we make! He longs to help you and me because He is concerned with everything that concerns us!

Therefore, an invaluable lesson that we can learn from 1 Peter 5:7 is that we must be convinced that He cares for us before we can truly cast all of our care upon Him. In other words, for us to truly place our trust in the Lord like this we must be established in the truth that God is a good God! So a very important truth that you must be established in is that God truly loves you and that the thoughts He thinks towards you are good thoughts! My friend, if you do not understand that God is good all the time, you will have a hard time trusting the Lord to provide you with good things.

STAYING ON GOD'S SIDE

A good teaching concerning this is found in James chapter one... In verses 2-4 James begins by encouraging these Jewish believers to keep a proper perspective in the midst of their trials. Then in verse 5, He tells them that if they need wisdom concerning the trials that they found themselves in, to just simply ask for it.

You know, it is not necessarily wrong to ask questions when you face trying circumstances. What becomes wrong is when we do not ask in faith, which is what James goes on to say in the following verse...

Many have interpreted James 1:6 to mean that whenever we ask the Lord for anything that we need to make sure we are "in faith." And, although that is true in the context they are teaching it from, I do not believe it is true from this context. Let me explain...

You see, James was specifically talking about asking for direction and understanding when we are enveloped in trials. **The asking in faith that James was talking about is asking in full assurance that God is not the source of your problem, but that He is the answer to your problem.** This is clarified further down in verse 13 when James gets more specific by telling them not to attribute their problems to God by saying that He is using those tribulations to "perfect" them. When you ask for answers to the "why's, how's, and what for's" in your life, you need to make sure that you are asking in faith- that is, in total confidence that God is the author of all good and perfect gifts in your life and, therefore, is not the source of your pains and problems. If you ask outside of faith, then you can rest assured that you will be tossed to and fro by the circumstances of life and you will not receive your victory in those times. On the other hand, when you learn to roll over onto the Lord all of your cares and place your full trust in Him, He will bring about the victory that you desire every single time (see Psalm 37:5&6)! Hallelujah! Therefore, after you become persuaded that God is good and that He loves you, then you are in the position to discern between what is from God and what is from the devil.

So am I saying that we need to just sit back saying- "Well, whatever comes into my life I am just trusting the Lord"? Yes and no! Yes, we should always place our confidence in Him no matter what occurs in our lives but, no, in that we should not say, "Que sera sera" and think that we do not have a part to play in resisting the devil. We have to exercise our authority and take dominion, but we need to understand that the battle ultimately belongs to the Lord. "It is not by might nor by power but by My Spirit says the Lord" (Zechariah 4:6). So, although there is a part we have to play in walking in God's will for our life, there will be some circumstances that we will have no control over and that we must use simple child-like trust in the Lord. Amen?

Let me give you a few examples of these types of circumstances: Suppose you were laid off from a job when you did nothing to deserve it. It is during that time, instead of letting anxiety flood your heart, that you must trust God that He has a plan and He will provide you with a better job. Another example is, suppose you lost a

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loved one who went on to be with the Lord unexpectedly. It is during that time that you must stay on God's side and trust Him to work all things together for good. And, finally, suppose you have children that are not walking with God. It is during this time that you must pray for them and trust God that He will direct their hearts back to Him through whatever means that He sees best. There are many examples that I could use but these should give you an idea of when "trust" is to be exercised.

So, in conclusion, do not try and figure out all the questions of life. There are just some things that we will not know until we are in heaven. Just stay on God's side, know that He loves you and cares for you, and put your trust in Him!

You know, heaven is what it is all about anyway, and if you have tragedies and disappointments in this life, know that one day you are going to walk on streets of pure gold, you will live in a mansion beautifully hand-tailored to your heart's desires, you will bask in the glory of God, and you will be reunited with loved ones that went ahead of you! Just that promise alone is far better than any good that you can receive in this life! But, Praise God, we do not have to wait for the sweet by and by to experience God's best; we can experience His best in the temporal here and now too! Amen!

THE REST OF THE STORY

So with that said, let me get back to the testimony I began this newsletter with...

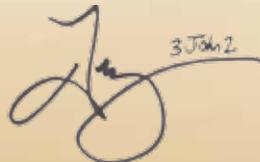
After Shannon and I started wondering how God was going to provide, I suggested to Shannon to go talk to her boss and see if there was a possibility of her working from home once Levi was born. This seemed like the best option that we had for Shannon to stay at home with Levi and for us to have the income and the health insurance that we needed.

So on Thursday March 15th, 2007, Shannon knocked on his office door to ask if there was anything that she could do for them from home. His response was quite disturbing, however. He said, "Shannon, before you say anything else, let me tell you that God has already told me that, after Levi is born, you are not coming back to work for me..." Of course, Shannon's heart sank at these words because we could not see any other way of God providing. But what her boss said next probably caused Shannon to have the biggest swing of emotions that she had ever experienced! He continued to say, "...But the Lord also spoke to me and told me that from the time Levi is born to the time Trey graduates from Bible College (which is approximately 12 months, by the way) I am to give you \$1,000 a month! And for all you math majors out there, that is \$12,000! Glory to God! And, to put the cherry on top, he said that he would work it out to keep her on the insurance! Hallelujah! Is there anything too hard for the Lord? I think not!

Saints, God is faithful and is worthy of our total trust! He is well aware of the issues that we are facing. All He needs is a remnant that will put their complete confidence in Him to do what He said He would do. When we learn to fully trust Him like this, we will see His promises of provision manifested in our lives!

So take the limits off Him today! Begin to do what He told me close to 10 years ago- begin to believe bigger and see further! He is a good Father and, oh, so worthy to be trusted with all of our heart! Selah!

Victoriously,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Trey', with the date '3/15/07' written in smaller text to the right.