

Proverbs 3:5-6 - Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight.

I had a wooden plaque with this scripture sitting on my desk throughout my teen years, a gift from my Sunday School confirmation class leader, Mrs. Whitacre. While I memorized it then, the power that it represents didn't fully manifest itself until it was put to the test, over and over and over again.

Christian inspirational author Jerry Bridges writes, "It is not easy to trust God in times of adversity. It often seems more difficult to trust God than to obey Him." He elaborates further by explaining that our obedience to God is worked out within well-defined boundaries of what God reveals to us. God has given us His Word, the Bible, to guide us in what is morally right and wrong. It is both rational and reasonable to those of us who follow Him.

But trusting God requires us to work this out in a context that is without boundaries. When we are in the midst of a trial, we have no idea of its duration, complexity or potential severity. In other words, we are dealing with the unknown. When we encounter a difficult medical diagnosis, when there is a tragic accident, when our family members go astray, when our sense of security is uprooted, we are forced to examine and put into practice what we really believe about God.

About 15 years ago, Philippe and I sat with dear friends, the parents of a 17-year-old boy who was having brain surgery at MD Anderson. It was through this experience that the Holy Spirit revealed the strength of 2 Chronicles 20:12 to me and to all of us. "Lord, we do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you." Zack defied the medical prognosis for glioblastoma and lived four more years as we walked it out together, trusting God day by day.

One step of obedience that helped us all to trust in God and not lean on our own understanding was to send Zack a list of scriptures every week as he went through radiation treatments, one for each day. He would digest them as bread from heaven, growing in godliness and sharing God's goodness and faithfulness with everyone he met. He even realized his lifelong dream when the U.S. Navy designated him an honorary SEAL. Zack finished triumphantly, trusting God every step of the way, keeping his eyes on Jesus.

To me, that is the only way to trust in God. Hebrews 12:1-2 admonishes us to throw off everything that hinders us and to run with perseverance the

race that is set before us, keeping our eyes on Jesus as the Author and Perfecter of our faith. When we look at Him rather than at our circumstances, we see that He who endured the scorning and shame of the cross on our behalf is the same One who walks through every trial with us, seeing us victoriously through to the end.

Today, let's remember the words of an old hymn, *Trust and Obey*.

*When we walk with the Lord in the light of His word,  
What a glory He sheds on our way!  
While we do His good will, He abides with us still,  
And with all who will trust and obey  
Trust and obey, for there's no other way  
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.*

*Not a burden we bear, not a sorrow we share,  
But our toil He doth richly repay;  
Not a grief of a loss, not a frown or a cross,  
But is blest if we trust and obey.*

*But we never can prove the delights of His love,  
Until all on the altar we lay;  
For the favor He shows, for the joy He bestows,  
Are for them who will trust and obey.*

*Then in fellowship sweet we will sit at His feet,  
Or we'll walk by His side in the way;  
What He says we will do, where He sends we will go;  
Never fear - only trust and obey.*