

Rat Trap (Trust) (Obey)

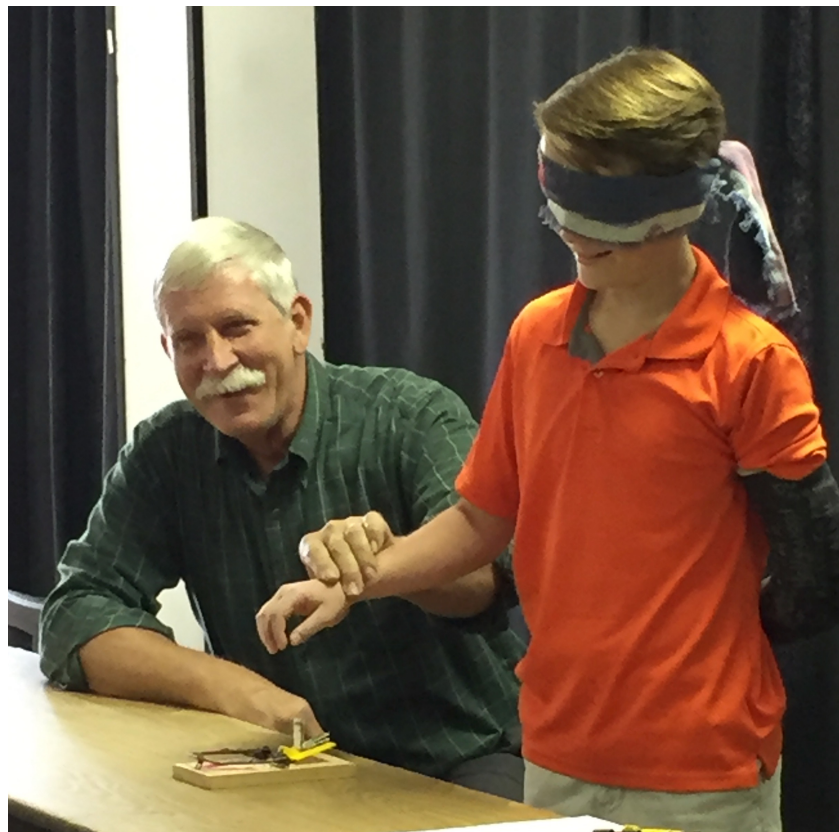
Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. Proverbs 3:5

The Basic Bible Truth

Trusting God completely with every aspect of our lives can be a daunting idea. It goes against our human nature to place our lives in someone else's control. This verse is actually written in poetic form. Hebrew poetry does not rhyme as we might often expect in our culture. Here we see an example of a thought expressed, followed by a second phrase that is very similar, but with subtle differences. I choose to break this verse into its two parts and address them separately. First, *Trust in the lord with all your heart*. When life is going lickety-split and our troubles seem far away, it is often quite easy to trust God. But when life gets tough, the second half of that verse kicks into high gear. *And lean not on your own understanding*. I personally struggle with this part of the verse. I am someone who is wired with the desire to understand everything going on around me. I want to figure things out before I step out and follow Him. But there are times in life when God asks us to just trust and blindly follow Him—in spite of any circumstances that might be telling us to hold back.

The Object

2 Victor 4-Way Rat Traps
Blindfold
Candy Bar
Pencil



Find a volunteer who you think will be brave enough to do this. I have had high school football players walk away too shaken to go through with it all. It is presented as a test of trust. The first test is the simple one. I bring out the first trap. It has been set and carefully laid aside out of the way and is ready. It is genuinely dangerous! I have the volunteer hold a pencil between their thumb and forefinger and trigger the trap. It is a great visual to see the trap explode and fly up into the air, shattering the end of the pencil in the process. That covers the first part of the verse. On to the second half.

I then tell the volunteer that I have a second trap and that I will teach them how to grab a candy bar off of the trap without getting hurt. They just have to obey me completely. I bring it out and set it out in front. It looks identical to the first, but this one has actually been disassembled and put together backwards and is completely harmless. To make it all a little more interesting, the volunteer is told that they will accomplish this amazing feat blindfolded.

The Lesson

Today ladies and gentlemen we are going to look at Proverbs 3:5. It is actually a part of a poem in Hebrew. It is two phrases that are quite similar, and yet, just enough different that I would like to talk about each one separately. The first part of that verse is quite simple. *Trust in the Lord with all your heart.* It seems so simple, especially when things are going along well and life is understandable. It's easy to trust God during the good times. Let me demonstrate this idea. Correction, my volunteer will demonstrate this idea for you.

This is a Victor 4-Way Rat Trap. I prefer the Victor 4-Way because of its rugged durability and strength. It is the most powerful rat trap of its kind on the market today. The spring is strong enough to crush the backbone of a full size rat, killing them instantly. That means that it will crush human fingers with the same awesome power. We would like to demonstrate for you today the destructive power that is released when this rat trap is triggered. My volunteer will now take this ordinary pencil, place it between their thumb and forefinger, holding it tightly. They will then gently press down on the yellow bait pad and the rat trap will explode in fury, killing this poor unsuspecting pencil. Let's watch. You do trust me right? Good. Do as I say and you will still be able to count to ten later today. Trust me.

POW

That was very impressive. You showed your trust admirably. Followed directions well, and everything worked as it should have. That was the first part of this verse in action. When everything makes sense, and things are falling into place well, it's easy to trust God. But it's the second part of that verse that gets me. *And lean not on your own understanding.* There are times in life when things do not make sense, when life does not look like it is going well. That is when this idea of trusting God gets difficult.

I am a person that is wired to try to figure things out. I don't just take anybody's word for anything, I need to see and comprehend before I am comfortable. But life does not always afford us that option. Sometimes God just wants us to trust—regardless of what it looks like. Jesus told Peter to step out of the boat onto the stormy sea and walk over to Him. That made absolutely no sense, but Jesus asked him to do it, and Peter started, but failed in the end to trust completely.

Let's see what the second half of that verse looks like in relation to a rat trap, shall we? I happen to have a second rat trap with me today and this one is baited with a fun sized candy bar, wrapped in a dollar bill. I will tell you right up front that the candy bar and dollar bill belong to my volunteer. I have given both to them and all they have to do is follow my leading and directions and the candy and money will be theirs. Are you ready? I am going to teach you to do something that very few people actually know how to do. If

you will follow my directions, I will teach you how to reach down, incredibly fast, and grab the candy bar and not get hurt by the rat trap, OK? You look a bit unsure. You do know that you can trust me right? Because you can. I will not allow you to get hurt, I promise.

I will guide you through the process and teach you to reach down and grab the candy bar and not get hurt at all in the process. Are you ready? Do you still trust me, because, I assure you, you can. Now just to make this a bit more interesting, you are going to be blindfolded! You see, ladies and gentlemen, right about now, none of this is making any sense. And yet I am asking them to trust me. Life is like this. It can be genuinely scary and look impossible. And yet God asks us to trust Him completely.

Are you ready to do this? Remember, you can trust me completely. I will not allow you to be hurt. Blindfold on. Now, listen carefully to my instructions. You must do exactly as I say. I am going to guide your hand down to the rat trap, but just before we do, raise your hand up and wiggle your fingers so everyone can see them. Ladies and gentlemen, in case things go terrible wrong here in a bit, this is what their hand USED to look like. Ok, here we go. Begin lowering...lower...to the left a bit...and then down some more...(As the hand gets closer to the rat trap, the audience will become quite vocal. It adds to the difficulty and trust factor for the volunteer. Often I have to help guide their hand down as they are shaking in fear so much. I once brought a 7th grade girl to tears doing this and vowed never again would I make a little girl cry. Tough guys though?, in a heart beat!) Stop right there. Your fingers are about ½ inch from the top of the candy bar. Now, do you remember how fast that rat trap triggered before? All you have to do is drop your hand incredibly quick, grab the candy bar and pull your hand back before the rat trap crushes your fingers. Trust me, you can do this and you will not get hurt.

(When they finally get up enough nerve to do it, nothing happens and they are genuinely relieved.)

Let's give a big hand for our volunteer who put their life on the line so that you could learn the truth of this verse. Yes the second rat trap is rigged. I wasn't going to allow them to genuinely get hurt. Here is the take away today from this lesson. Trusting in God during the easy times can be pretty simple. Trusting Him when it looks impossible, well, that it a bit tougher, just ask our volunteer.