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**By Brother Parrish Lee**  
**Sunday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

Amen. You may be seated, Saints. What a beautiful day to come to worship, to serve, to love, to intermingle, to interact, to listen, to present ourselves to the Lord, amen? What a beautiful time we've been having in God. It's just tremendous. It just amazes me, over and over. You know, you try to wrap your mind around the goodness of God, and, you think you've got a handle on some of it, occasionally, I might have a handle on it, I might have a handle on that, and then God just comes along, and just, “Bssssh! Ah-ah-ah!” blows your mind wide open, and lets you know you haven't even scratched the surface. “I've got things for you you can't even *think* about!” But God takes care of us. Amen.

This month is the month that we are talking about the Book of Proverbs, chapter three, verses five and six:

***Proverbs 3:5-6*** *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

Giving honor to that same God who inspired His servants to write His Word. Giving honor to Him who is the lover of our souls, and who never fails. He who lifts His hands, and says, “I live forever.” He who has no shadow of turning, who's never afraid of anything, and too whom all things are small. And Him who continues to pour out His blessings over and over and over. Giving honor to that God. Giving honor to those who have gone before us: Our founding pastor, here in this ministry, he and his family, our pastor, who was here last week, he and his family, and all those who have come and stood in the gap to make up the hedge, giving honor to all of them. And, giving honor to all of y'all, who present yourselves before such a wonderful God. May God answer according to your needs, according to your needs. Amen.

And, as we said, that we are talking about trusting the Lord with all thine heart, this month. I'm going to ask—we're going to read a little bit in the Book of Daniel, today. Our pastor, pastor Paine, talked about this, some, last week, and we're going to talk a little more about it.

***Daniel 3:1-11*** *Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews. They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever. Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that*

*shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image: And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, that he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.*

If we could just bow our heads for just a moment. Almighty God, we come before You, who is the giver of everything that we have, and before You nothing exists that can boast or exalt itself. We turn to You, God, first to say thank You for all the things that You have poured out on us, for there truly is none like You. And, God, we ask, as You have poured out Your blessings all this day, all our lives, we ask that You add a blessing on the reading of Your Word, as we go through it, today, that it would do, as You had commanded it to do, not to return unto You void, but, truly, accomplish that to which You sent it. And, God, we present ourselves to You, that You might fill us with Your Spirit. We ask, and claim all this, in Jesus' name, and everyone said, amen. Amen.

So, we're talking from the Book of Daniel, today, and we went from verse one through verse eleven, where it talks about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, as King Nebuchadnezzar, he set up an image, he set up an image. And this image was quite tall, and the commandment went out, that, whenever you hear the instruments play, it's time for you to come, bow down, and worship the image. Last week, Pastor Paine alluded to this; he didn't go in depth, and, truly, it would really take weeks to really go in and really just pull more and more from it, because, how many knows that the Word of God never ends. He always continues to show us more and more and more. Well, when he was going over this, honest-to-goodness, I wrote it down in my notes, and, as I was praying about the message, this is what the Lord brought up, so, you have to obey the Word of the Lord.

And, so, first of all, first of all, I'd like to say that trusting in the Lord with all your heart and not to lean unto your own understanding, is not an easy thing to do. In fact, this was the first Scripture shared with me—right after God spoke to me and told me I was praying to a God that couldn't save—this was the first Scripture that somebody shared with me, and I thought, “Hey, that's kind of a neat idea. 'Trust in the Lord with all your heart,' that sounds kind of nice.” I wasn't a Christian, didn't know much about the Lord Jesus Christ, at all, just thought to seek Him. “Why don't I seek Christ and see what He has to offer?” And, when you think you're trusting God, my trust might have been the sizer of a thimble, maybe, and, I thought I was really doing a big deal. But, you know, and anybody who's been a Christian knows, that, the longer you live in Christ, the more of an investment there is for us to give. As John the Baptist said, “I must decrease, and He must increase.” (John 3:30) Well, trusting in God—and Pastor Paine said it well—none of us trust God like we should. None of us trust God like we should. All over the world, down through the ages, nobody can say, “I go this one. I'm done, I'm good; no problem.” And that's what is so convicting about something like this. Thank you, Sister Alma, talking about the basics. I actually stay away from that word, because I consider everything in God, everything in God that's big, and powerful, and needed—I have to have it daily—prayer is not a basic thing, prayer is a principle thing. Study is not a basic thing, study is a principle thing. Fellowship is not something to take lightly, fellowship puts meat on your bones and can reprove you, if it's real fellowship. Worship is not a basic or elementary thing, worship is something that God looks for all the time. And, the Bible talks about foundations, but, people, society can get caught up in themselves, and say that that's something that's basic. So, I try to stay away from that term. No offense to anybody, if you have basics, great, wonderful, awesome, I hope that you can continue to keep the basics that go well for you, but, for me, everything is pertinent, everything is important, everything is vital, I need to have that continuing, and I'm not going to put any labels that's going to harm myself.

But, trusting in God. Trusting in God. I have to say that this is one of those that I don't have licked. I don't have—I can't say, “I've got that one, and I fully trust God.” And, even looking at the theme for the month, I knew, I knew personally, on a personal level it's going to be tough, but, it's supposed to be tough. Because your flesh is supposed to wrestle with you and try to pull you and—it's

supposed to do that. It's supposed—all your wants, all your desires, your heart and your mind is supposed to scream, “Noooo!” That goes with the territory. It goes with the territory. But, your soul cries out, “Yes! Thank You!” When I trust God, my soul gets replenished. And, then, I get a new heart, and I get a new mind, and that outward man perishes, and that inward man gets renewed day by day.

There's two things: Trust and faith, and, so often, they get used interchangeably, but there is a difference between trust and faith. Faith is used in the sense of belief or devotion. “I have faith in that.” Trust is more used in the sense of confidence and reliance. I trust that. And, in fact, trust is used as both a noun and a verb. The Bible says, here:

***Psalms 56:11*** *In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.*

So, he has put his trust, a thing, in something else. He put his trust—that's used as a noun, meaning something that you give.

***Psalms 61:4*** *I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.*

I will trust, and, in this Scripture, it is something that you do. Trust is something that you do. It is a verb that is specifically ongoing. It's not that I trusted God thirty years ago, forty years ago, five years ago, two weeks ago, and now I'm good. It's that I trusted Him then, I made up my mind to trust Him then, and, now, I do the same over. I might have drunk a cup of water two weeks ago, but, today, I need to drink a cup of water again. I might have trusted God back in the past, but, today is a new day, and God is looking for me to trust Him again. Trusting in God is a neat little phrase, but, more accurately, it is trusting God. Trusting God is not believing that God will give you everything that you ask for. That is not trusting in God. And, trusting God does not mean that we will not have an issue, or any issues. Trusting God does not mean we won't be challenged; it does not mean we won't be questioned, but, trusting God is asking God, asking God, and believing that He knows what's best for us. Believing that He knows—whatever you ask—but, when you trust Him, believing that he knows what's best for us. Now, we have an ultimate goal, we have an ultimate goal as people, as humans all over the world, and our ultimate goal is somehow, someway, we want to be happy. We want to be content. We want to be (clears throat) satisfied, and even elated. “But I just want to be not in a bad position.” Ultimately that's our goal. Now, our definition of happiness might change, as we get older. When I was younger, my idea of happiness might have been a whole cake. Now that I'm older, maybe it's a quarter of a cake. Happiness has changed, you know. As I change, so does my definition of happiness and contentment change. But, whatever that definition is, that is what we seek for. God, also has a will for our lives, God also has a will, and His will is that we would trust Him in everything. That we would trust Him, and that we would share with other people to trust Him, also, to have a loving relationship for our lives.

Now, back to our passage. If we were to read chapter two of Daniel, we would see that Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, and, when Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, he called all the—he couldn't remember the dream, and it really bothered him, and he called all the wise men of the land, he called them, and said, “I want somebody to give me the interpretation,” and they said they couldn't, “It's departed, and who can do this thing.” And, so, he sent out this decree, “Wipe them out; just kill them all, kill them all.” And, Daniel heard about it, and he said, “Well, you know, let me go speak to the king,” and he said, “Look, give me some time, and I will bring you the dream and the interpretation of the dream, because I trust in God. And, so, Daniel went away, and he prayed, and he went and he got with his three constituents, the the Hebrew children, they call them, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They talked, they prayed, they came to a resolution, and then, the thing was, God gave Daniel the interpretation. So, he went back to Nebuchadnezzar, he told him the dream, he told him the interpretation. Nebuchadnezzar got real happy. Nebuchadnezzar got real happy. When

Nebuchadnezzar got real happy, the Bible says, he started to worship him, he gave him some praise, he gave him some oblations, things for him, and then he went about his business. He let everybody know, "Hey, Daniel did a good thing; we don't have to kill all of y'all." So, they were at that place where they didn't have to be killed. But, in the next chapter, in the next chapter, we see that he set up a golden statue for everybody to worship. Now, in the Old Testament—this was pre-New Testament—in the Old Testament, when you were king of a land, your rule was absolute. So, when you gave a decree, it's not—it was you who was doing it, and nobody could really fight against that. And, if you set up a god, and every little kingdom had their gods, when you set up a god, you set up the tone of what you had to do for that god, also. And the only way to change that god is for the king to say so, or, for another land to come in, wipe you out, and take over, and then you worship their gods. They took you over; now their gods are more powerful than your gods. And, so, this was not an unusual thing, for God to do something for the king, and then for the king to still have other gods that he worshiped. It might be a little confusing, but there was no great—after all, this is the Book of Daniel—so there was no great long Bible history, and a lot of digging in; he didn't have to do that. He was the king of Babylon, the first empire. So, this was a big thing for him. But, if we could go on down to verse number sixteen, we see here that it says—this was after the king had put out the decree, and after the Chaldeans came up and said, "Hey, those guys, they don't listen to you, o king."

***Daniel 3:16-17** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. 17 If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.*

### **Point 1: It Is Important Who You Fellowship With**

It is important who you fellowship with. The three of them, the three of them got together and said, "We are not careful to answer you." See, they were fellowshiping and praying; they knew each other, reading, they talked about these things, they lived these things together. That's why they could answer for each other. How would it have read if Meshach and Shadrach stood up, and Abednego said, "Hey, hold up just a minute! Don't speak for me; speak for yourselves." How would the story have read, then? But, because these read, and prayed, and studied, and they did things together, this fellowship would determine their answers. And the knew each other, and they held together in that whole episode situation.

***Daniel 3:18** But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.*

Another point in this, is that they had faith that God was able to deliver them, but they trusted that, whatever answer God gave was going to be the right answer. They didn't know that God was going to completely deliver them. They said, "He is able to do it, but, if He doesn't deliver us from the fire, we will still trust Him. Because it ain't about us; it's about Him, and He knows what's best for us. He knows what's best for us. I've heard it said, I've heard it said, that when God pushes you to the edge, we need to trust Him fully, because, at that point, God is either going to do one of two things. When He pushes you to the edge, you still trust Him, because, either He's going to catch you, or He's going to teach you to fly. If He pushes you there, there's a reason for you being there, and God will not leave you. So either He's going to catch you when you fall, or He's going to teach you to fly. I've heard that said; I thought that was a really great vision of trusting God.

And, the Hebrew children, they went to tell him, “Look, king, you trust in a god you can see; we trust in a God that we cannot. Because, a god that you can see has limitations, but a God that you can't, doe snod. That's the God that we trust in.” And the Bible says, in the Book of Romans, chapter eleven, verse thirty-three, “How unsearchable are His riches...”

**Romans 11:33** *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! [the depth of the riches!] how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*

This is what they knew! This was in the New Testament, but they lived this. How unsearchable are the great things of God, and His ways past—I can't figure God out! He has things that will just blow my mind. He'll blow it on the left, He'll blow it on the right, every time I turn around, God's doing something. So, He is a God that we can't figure out. He is a God that we can't wrap our minds around, but He is that God that we can come to and turn to, even as a person.

**Daniel 3:19-21** *Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated. And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.*

I love how they give the description of what happened. They rejected the king's decree. In verse twenty, it says, “And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind...” them. The most mighty, the strongest, the most capable warriors of them all. Speaking of warriors, ladies—quick sidebar: Y'all are warriors, you mighty warriors, and, so, next time we sing that song, you guys take the lead, the men in the middle sit down. I just want to make sure we don't have any problems after service, Brother Malcolm. So, he chose the most mighty men. He could have chosen a couple, but he chose the most mighty. He wanted to make sure that this happened. This is a great example of the battles that we have; what a great example. When you don't do what the world, society wants you to do, when you don't cave, when you don't turn, the strongest battles come up. And they bound them—yeah, the different addictions, and the different temptations, the different persecutions, the different estrangements come up, and they bind you, they get a hold of us, and they try to say, “You're going in the fire! You're going in the fire! Oh, you're not going to be delivered, now!” And, in verse twenty-one, these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the fire. Everything that they had. Their precious garments, their precious things. Would have made them the elite in the king's council. They were gathered, and they were sent to the fiery furnace, and this is just an example of the persecution we fight. Nothing is off-limits when the battle comes after us. Nothing is off limits. But, from the very beginning, the very beginning, they already knew that, “My God can deliver me from anything. He might not, and, if He doesn't, whatever He has is best for me.” I know somebody, they were telling me that, “I don't know why. I was doing everything right, and I still lost my job. The boss had it out for me. I just couldn't get right; I lost my job.” And I was like, “Wow. Well, we'll just have to pray about it. And, true to form, we prayed about it, and, the next thing, the communication was, “You know what? I can't believe it! God gave me a better job! He gave me a better job! That was the plan in the first place. I just had to go through that fire. I just had to be subject to all that persecution. I just had to be tempted to stop trusting that God knew what was best for me.

**Daniel 3:22-25** *Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.*

Being cast down into the fiery furnace, bound, it says they fell down, but, when he looked at them, when he looked at them, they were all standing up, and they were all loose, and this is what God does when we trust Him. In the midst of the fire, looses our bound, looses what holds us captive, and He picks us up, He gives us strength, He gives us direction, He gives us guidance, he gives us wisdom, He gives us knowledge, He gives us love, He gives us everything we need to trust in His deliverance. One person can say, "Well, I have the faith that God can, but do I have the trust that God will? I have faith that God can, but, do I trust that God will?" And, when we say that we trust that God will, what we really mean is that we trust God's will. We trust God's will. In other words, I don't trust in a situation that I want to happen, I trust in a God that I know, knows what's best for me.

And, in closing:

**Proverbs 3:5-8** *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.*