

Holy War?

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[0 : 00] Father, there are whole parts of your word that we are almost completely and utterly afraid to read and afraid to touch. We don't want to think about these parts of your word, and we don't like to think about the fact that we don't like to think about them.

So, Father, we ask that you grant us courage to really trust you. We give you thanks and praise that when you call us to trust in you and obey you, you are calling us to a life of courage to trust your word and trust your promises, to trust your presence, to trust your final word about us.

So, Father, we ask that you grant us that faith-based courage in all of our lives and as we look into your word. And this we ask in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen.

Please be seated. So, we're going to talk about genocide and holy war. That's what we're going to talk about, because that's what Judges talks about.

As many of you know, in fact, many of you feel probably a little bit stressed just by the fact that I said that's what we're going to talk about. For many people in our culture, what they think is the fact, the idea that the Bible promotes genocide and holy war is what's called a defeater.

[1 : 18] It's one of the reasons why you just automatically know that reasonable people don't believe the Bible and reasonable people aren't Christians. Why? Well, because, amongst other things, the Bible promotes holy war and genocide.

So, there. And we all know that those are wrong. And we agree that those are wrong, by the way. So, the book of Judges is going to deal with this topic, especially the beginning. So, if you turn in your Bibles to chapter 1, verse 1 of Judges.

Chapter 1, verse 1 of Judges. This is the first. And if you're a guest here and you're wondering why on earth is George talking about holy war and genocide, it's because we preach through books of the Bible. And in the course of the year, I like to preach at least once from the Old Testament and at least once from the New Testament.

And so, in 2020, we're going to begin with Judges. It might be that we're in the New Testament for the rest of the year. We're going to spend 13 weeks, God willing, on the book of Judges. And we're going to begin.

So, we always begin at verse 1 and chapter 1, verse 1. And at the end of the 13 weeks, we'll have gone to the end of the book. And we just deal with the topics as they arise. So, just a bit of a background before I start to read.

[2 : 30] In terms of the flow of the Bible, there's the first five books of the Bible. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Those are called the books of Moses or the law.

And they cover, well, of course, they cover right at the very beginning of all things. And then they talk about Abraham. And then, of course, the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. And they end with Moses.

They end with Moses, who's not able to enter into the promised land. But he sees the promised land, and then he dies. And Joshua is the book about how the people of Israel enter into the promised land.

Judges takes place approximately from the year 1350 B.C. to 1050 B.C., some 300 years, looking at a couple of key incidents during these 300 years.

And it basically spans the death of Joshua to the rising of Saul and then David. And that's the timeline that we're looking at. And this is the beginning. And it begins like this.

[3 : 31] After the death of Joshua, the people of Israel inquired of the Lord, who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites to fight against them?

So, the Lord said, Judah shall go up. Behold, I have given the land into his hand. Now, Canaanites describes everybody in the region, many different ethnic groups and linguistic groups, many

different nations.

In fact, the whole area would have been a large number of small city states and rural chieftains, so to speak. And that's the area. But they're all called Canaanites.

And the people of Israel had entered the land. If you go back and you read the book of Deuteronomy, especially chapter 7, we see that God says that they're going to just take, or maybe it's 20, that they're going to take the land slowly because he doesn't want there to be other types of problems that arise when the land is completely empty and desolate.

And so, Joshua has brought them into the land. And we see here, verse 1 again, that Joshua dies. So now, Israel, they don't have another Joshua.

[4 : 38] They say, who shall go up first against us? And here we see the problem of holy war. And we'll see the problem of a genocide in a moment. In verse 2, Judah shall go up. Behold, I have given the land into his hand.

The problem of holy war and with it the implication of genocide. Now, I told you just beforehand that there's 37 verses.

We're not going to look at all of the verses. But what I want to do here in this particular case is, if you go back later on on your own and you read the rest of chapter 1, and we'll look at a couple of little verses in a bit, but what you see is you see a basic recording of how nine tribes fare, how Judah does, who they kill, who they capture, who they destroy, how Benjamin does, how Manasseh does.

You see a list of nine different short summaries of how these tribes go in to take the land and how they wage war and who they kill. But what I'm going to do is I'm going to jump to the end of the literary unit because scholars agree that there's a literary unit of chapter 1, verse 1 to chapter 2, verse 5, and that's the introduction of the book.

And what we see in chapter 2, verse 1 to 5 is a commentary by God about what happened in chapter 1. So I'm going to, in a sense, give you the end because I don't have time to go through it all and then go, surprise, I'm going to give you the end so that if you go back later on and read, and then when I have us look at a few passages, we have to understand, okay, all these things happen.

[6 : 17] People get killed. People have their thumbs and toes cut off. People are enslaved. Some Christians in the past foolishly would look at books like this and say that the Bible justifies slavery, but it's not true because what they've done is they haven't looked at how God comments on what happens.

And isn't that a good idea? It's his command. They go and do something. And what does God say? Well, let's look. Chapter 2, verses 1 to 5.

And here's how it goes. Now, the angel of the Lord went up from Gilgal to Ba'kin. By the way, I don't know how to pronounce these words. I tried to listen to how to pronounce all of them.

I don't know if I've ever... There's so many words after I went through all of chapter 1, so I don't know if I'm actually pronouncing these words correctly, but I'm giving it my best shot, okay? And now the angel of the Lord went up from Gilgal to Ba'kin, and he said, I brought you up from Egypt and brought you into the land that I swore to your fathers to give...

sort of that I swore to give to your fathers. I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And just sort of pause here for a second. The angel of the Lord is a very interesting entity in the Old Testament.

[7 : 34] Some of the early church fathers and some Christians think that it's actually a reference to Jesus before he became incarnate. But whether it is, in fact, God, the Son of God, or whether it's just an angel, it's a special angel, that when the angel shows up in the action, so to speak, to hear the angel speak is really hearing God speak.

That's the significance of it. So God speaks. And notice again what he says, verse 1, and he said, I brought you up from Egypt and brought you into the land that I swore to give to your fathers.

I said, I will never break my covenant with you. Now, just before I go any further, just another aside, this is one of the reasons why Christians believe that God is not finished with Israel.

Replacement theology is incorrect. The idea that the church now can take all of the promises to Israel and they all apply to the church and not to the Jewish people. We see here very clearly that God says, I will never break my covenant with Israel.

That doesn't mean Israel keeps it and it's a mystery as to how he's going to finish, but he's not finished with them. But we'll just continue on. We'll say that again. I brought you up from Egypt and brought you into the land that I swore to give to your fathers.

[8 : 53] I said, I will never break my covenant with you and you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land. You shall break down their altars, but you have not obeyed my voice.

What is this you have done? I'm going to say that again. Remember, he's commenting on what just happened in chapter one, right? So anybody who uses chapter one to justify doing things is not reading the Bible correctly because a lot of the things that went on in chapter one, God's commentary on it is, again, but you have not obeyed my voice.

What is this you have done? What is this you've done? We're going to unpack this in a moment. So now I say, I will not drive them out before you.

This is the Canaanites. But they shall become thorns in your sides and their God shall be a snare to you. Now, how did the people respond?

As soon as the angel of the Lord spoke these words to all the people of Israel, the people lifted up their voices and wept. And they called the name of that place Bochim and they sacrificed there to the Lord.

[10 : 07] So why is it that this, the book of Judges, does not justify holy war and genocide? Why is it that the book of Judges does not justify holy war?

I have eight reasons and I'll go through them fairly quickly. First of all, in holy war, the end justifies the means.

That's what it always means. It means, you know, you're to call out, you're to destroy all of this people, you're to take all of this land. You know, you can kill all the infidels, you can kill all the proletariat and the working class, or not the proletariat, working class.

You can kill all the rich, all the owners. You can go and you can, you just, the goal is this classless society, it's this perfect earth all under the rule of God and you can do, that's the end, you do whatever you want and God says, no, the end doesn't justify the means.

If you go back in chapter one and those people you enslaved, you shouldn't have done it. The end doesn't justify the means. This is not holy war.

[11 : 14] That's what he says here. What have you done? You haven't obeyed my voice. What is this you have done? Second, the idea of holy war is usually used in such a way that if it's not perpetual, if it's not ongoing forever, it's something that the powerful and the rulers can take out whenever it needs to be relaunched, reloaded, rebooted.

They just reboot it and they can do the holy war again. But we see here, what do we see that God says? Verse three, so now I say, I will not drive them up before you. It comes to an end.

It completely and utterly comes to an end. In fact, what we're going to see is that this command for the people of Israel to go up and take the land had a very particular goal.

It was a command that God gave to Israel once for a certain period of time and it's once and once only. And the goal that God had was that there would be a land for the Lord's people.

And as the Lord's people, they would trust him. They would have an intimate relationship with him. They would be obedient. They would worship. They would be blessed so that all the world would look and marvel at the Lord and his people and want to come to know and worship him.

[12 : 31] That was his purpose. And he told them to go and take this land and it was once with a period, not a holy war. Third, connected with it, it's not something that they could keep going and doing.

It wasn't as if, well, first we take Manhattan and then we take Berlin. I know, I'm quoting a song. It's not that, you know, first you take Saudi Arabia and then you take Jerusalem, you know, and then you take Rome.

It's not something that keeps going. In verse 3, he brings it to an end. God says, it's no longer happening. I'm not going to help you drive out the nations. It was only for one little piece of property. It wasn't something that was to continue and keep going.

Fourth, it's not something that he's calling the nation to go and kill everybody. Look at verse 3 again. So now I say, I will not drive them out before you.

Drive them out before you, but they shall become thorns in your sides and their God shall be a snare to you. The purpose, of this, was to make the people who were there who worshipped idols, they worshipped Moloch, they worshipped Baal, they worshipped Asherah, to have them all move.

[13 : 50] Some of you know that I was in Israel this past October. The other times I've been to Israel, I've just been in Jerusalem and this time I had a tour, not of the whole country.

I didn't have enough time for the whole country, but for a big part of the country. And modern day Israel is roughly the size of New Jersey, smaller than New Brunswick, and it has 8.8 million people. And let me tell you, one of the things which is so surprising if you actually go there, the land is so empty. The land is so empty with 8.8 million people in it.

Long stretches of road. Nobody. You see, absolutely nobody. And the population back then was vastly smaller.

And one of the great privileges I had when I went there this last time, we went there with a person from, a retired major from the Northern Israeli Defense Force and we were on the Golan Heights and we went within 500 meters of Syria and 2 kilometers of Lebanon.

[15:00] And we could look out over the plain into Syria and we could look over into Lebanon. You want to know something? It's empty. Like it's empty.

We read it and we sort of think as if God wants to take all of Ottawa and relocate Ottawa and we have to move all into what is now Hull.

Now that would be very problematic. Kick everybody out of Ottawa, all million of us, and we all have to go and live in Hull. That's going to be complicated. Now, we're going to talk a little minute about the whole mission of driving them out.

But the point is, and that's one of the reasons why when you read the text, there's all these confusing things that happen in the text. It sounds as if they killed everybody and slaughtered everybody in Jerusalem and yet if you read then a few verses after in the same chapter, you'll see that later on they have to go and take Jerusalem again because there were people living in it.

They go, what? And as I've said before in other sermons, when we hear, sorry, I don't want to raise up wounds and all that, but you come to church for grace.

[16:08] But you know, when Russia annihilated the Canadians in the juniors, world juniors, we know that they didn't kill all of the Canadian players. We just know they lost six nothing and were completely and utterly humiliated.

Right? We just know that. We just make adjustments for it. And so it is, when you look at the Old Testament, you look at stories like this, you have to just look at all of it. And what you really see is that in fact, really most walled places were forts made out of bricks or stone or something like that. And so within them, there would have been like the garrison, so to speak, and things made out of brick and stone that don't burn. But there would have been, you know, some places with some wood and some straw over it where you could come and, you know, sit under it and be out of the rain.

And they burn that, but everything else is intact and they kill the king, they kill the military commanders and they're supposed to drive everybody out and they don't drive them out. That's the complaint. They don't drive them out.

But the people aren't killed. That's why they move back in. They take the garrison in Jerusalem. They burn the wooden things.

[17:19] They leave, but they don't actually drive the people out and the people come back in and live in it and they have to come and take it again. That's what's actually going on in the text. That's why it's not a holy war. That's why it's not genocide.

God doesn't go and say, kill every man, woman, and child, but to drive them out. Why is he driving them out? Because at this time in the Lord's dealing with his people, his goal is for there to be a land, a small piece of land for the Lord's people to dwell, to worship him, to be obedient and trust and intimate with him.

And the purpose is always so that all of the surrounding nations will look at Israel and see what it's like to live in covenant faithfulness with the real and living God without idols, without having to kill your children in worship, without having to say to Louise, Louise, I want to go to worship at the temple and that means I go and sleep with a prostitute and then I go home to my wife.

And all of the, all, you can imagine the sexually transmitted diseases and all those other things that would have just been rampant amongst all the other things which were problematic in those lands. And he says, there's going to be a land where the integrity of the family is maintained and the integrity of sexuality is maintained and the integrity, so there's not sexualizing the family and it's not sexualizing the world and that there's a proper relationship then of trust and safety between men and women and husbands and wives and children and everything isn't sexualized and the whole world will see what it's like to live under the Lord and to know his ways and the result of that will be

that they will say, I would like to know and worship that Lord and be in covenant with him too.
[19 : 01] You see, even the people who go and are moved out of the land, they're going to be the first to see. Look what it's like to go. Like wives will look and say, dear, why don't we worship in a way that doesn't involve you sleeping with prostitutes all the time?

Like maybe that's a good idea. Maybe we should worship a God that doesn't ask us to take our one-year-old or our four-year-old and have him burn to death. Like maybe that would be a better way to live.

Maybe it would be a better way to live where every seventh day you rest. Maybe it would be a better way to live if the way that you harvest your crops feeds the poor.

Maybe it would be a better way to live to understand that if you have to be sold into slavery for debts at the end of seven years it's all completely and utterly finished and you are a free man and woman again.

Maybe it would be a better way to live to understand that yes, it's my property to care for and I sometimes have to sell it for debt but at the end of 50 years it goes back to everybody because the land is the Lord's.

[20 : 19] Maybe that would be a better way to live and I would like to know that Lord and worship Him. I would like Him to care for me. That's the purpose and that's why He says what are you doing?

You're enslaving people? You're cutting off thumbs and toes? Like you're letting them live among you? Like what's going on? That's not what I asked you to do.

It's not a holy war. It's not genocide. You have to it's just beyond that but this is my fifth reasons why it's not holy war.

If you go back and you read the book of Joshua you'll see that not only then they were not to enrich themselves of the people. I mean the idols and all they would have been things of value.

You're to completely and utterly destroy them. Just get rid of them. Destroy them. Things of value. Things which were precious. Any article of gold that's given or that it's just precious. We don't want you to steal their stuff. We're not doing this.

[21 : 21] Holy war is usually all about enrichment and power but they say you don't take anything from them. You don't we don't want the nations of the world to think that we moved in so that you could become rich.

No. Why? Because we're going to trust the Lord for our provision. Being under Him will be what will enrich me. Not stealing other people's stuff. Number six that it's not it's not a holy war because it's not all about success and glory.

If you could go back to verse three actually go to verses one to three look again at how this begins and this is a very very subtle way that it begins and I'm going to try to tie this to the end in a few minutes but look at this verse one of chapter one chapter one verse one two and three after the death of Joshua the people of Israel inquired of the Lord who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites to fight against them.

The Lord said Judah shall go up behold I have given the land into his hand and verse three what does Judah do? And Judah said to Simeon his brother come up with me into the territory allotted to me that we may fight against the Canaanites and I likewise will go with you into the territory allotted to you.

So Simeon went with them. Now you just see what happened? The very very first step they disobeyed the Lord. The very first step they said I'm not going to trust and obey the Lord.

[22 : 45] There's this wonderful Bible verse it was the second Bible verse I memorized when I became a Christian. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding in all your ways acknowledge him and he shall make your path straight or he shall direct your paths.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart lean not on your own understanding. And God says to Joshua God says to Judah you go up and Judah says there's more of them than there is of me and they're technologically more advanced than I am.

So I'm not going to trust the Lord with all my heart I'm going to lean on my own understanding and get Simeon. You see the thing about the book of Judges is it could also be renamed the book of failure.

The book of failure. The sermon series is called Messy People Faithful God. It could have also been called Sinful People Faithful God.

Half-hearted Discipleship Faithful God. Screwed Up People Faithful God. Could have been called all of those titles it would be a very long title. But you see right from square one they don't obey him. [24 : 02] They don't do what he said that they're supposed to do. They don't trust him. And every single one of the stories shows how they don't trust the Lord and do what he says. Every one of the stories.

That's why in chapter 2 verse 3 says what have you done? You didn't obey me. And you see that's another reason then in this as to why this is not holy war.

Why? Because if it was a holy war the end justifies the means and what it's all about is success and glory. And if that comes about by negotiating a covenant with somebody to become your ally and doing this person and making them your vassal and enslaving this person and doing this and doing that and at the end we all win and we pump our fists that's how holy war works but this isn't what God has asked them to do.

He said trust in me. Don't lean on your understanding and I'll make your path straight. The seventh thing is that it's not holy war is because conversion is desired.

If you look up at verse 16 of chapter 1 there's a little bit of an interesting thing when you're reading it there's a few verses there in the middle where it moves into a sort of a sudden flashback as to what's going on before and as part of that flashback it's what happened in the book of Joshua and it continued to that day and the descendant of the Kenite Moses' father-in-law went up with the people of Judah from the city of Palms that's Jericho into the wilderness of Judah which lies in the Negev near Arad and they went and settled with the people.

[25 : 42] Now here's the thing Kenites aren't Jews. They're not Jews. But they go to settle with the people to be under the Lord to worship the Lord to be his people.

If you go back and read the book of Joshua Rahab is one of the Canaanites and her and her family are allowed to stay. They're not allowed to stay to be Canaanites and pagans to worship Moloch and to worship Baal and the Asherah poles.

They're allowed to stay and be part of the people. You see the Old Testament talks about conversion. The whole point of God privileging the nation is that the whole world would know him.

That in a sense God was going to use the Jewish people and you know what he does ultimately.

Why does he ultimately do this? Why does God actually keep this covenant that the people of Israel continue to fail and fail and fail although God's covenant with them has not come to an end?

Jesus! I'm not swearing. I'm talking about the person. And the disciples are all Jewish. The gospel begins in Jerusalem and then it goes to Judea and then to Samaria and then to the ends of the earth and here we are 2,000 years a whole pile of pagan descendants worshiping the Jewish Messiah.

[27 : 04] That's us for many tribes and nations. And then finally verse 28 Holy war if it was holy war they would be allowed to enslave but it's not holy war because you're not allowed to enslave.

Look at verse 28 When Israel grew strong they put the Canaanites to forced labor but did not drive them out completely. Now remember I'm just saying that because they show that they do this but God says in chapter 2 verse 3 what are you doing?

You didn't obey me. I didn't ask you to do those things. Stop it. You think you've enslaved them but they're going to end up enslaving you with their gods. Now after having said all of that but still there's some issues.

And some even though we see that God didn't want to kill them they were to be moved out it still just somehow seems wrong this judgment on the Canaanites. I've never had the courage to say this to a non-Christian but I actually wish maybe I will now because I've thought about it a little bit more. For a non-Christian and there might be non-Christians here today hell should be the most popular Christian doctrine for non-Christians. Go what? Hell's like a defeater.

[28 : 29] It's one of the reasons I'm not a Christian but actually literally for my non-Christian friends if you understood what the doctrine of hell is you should say boy of all the religions in the world I like Christianity the best because what is at the heart?

What is part of the heart of the doctrine of hell? The part of the heart of the doctrine of hell is that God ultimately doesn't force you. He respects your integrity and autonomy to choose.

You see for Canadians who say you're all going to go to a better place when you die I might say I don't want to go to that place.

I don't want to go to a better place. Like when I die I like to hang out with all the bad people. I don't want to go to a better place. Like how dare you push me into a better place?

I want to go to my place not a better place. Woody Allen famously said that when he died he didn't want to live on in people's memories he'd rather live on in his apartment. But that's what the doctrine of hell says at the end of the day there's a final judgment and in that final judgment part of it is you've sung all your life Frank Sinatra's song I did it my way and you stand before me now and what do you want to sing?

[29 : 48] You want to sing I did it my way and I will allow that. But here's the other thing and this is also why Christians why Canadians should actually think the doctrine of hell is actually really really right on.

One of the things that everybody talks about today is the spirit of entitlement. Now usually when we talk about the spirit of entitlement it's all about how you have the spirit of entitlement and you and you and you and we never think that we have a spirit of entitlement.

I mean that's just a bit of an observation. But I know of a local coffee shop where there was a young woman who one day decided that she would rather be doing something else and because she wants her freedom she just decided that she wasn't only not going to show up for her shift and this was a coffee shop where she was like a manager but she was just going to quit.

So she did. And it screwed up some of you have been in those situations screw up all the other workers because they can't just say oh because I almost said her name because Sue wanted to quit well just close this door.

I mean that's what the owners would say sure just close this door go ahead and do what you want. And then later on the person came back Sue and she wanted her job back. I'm not making this up.

[31 : 05] She wanted her job back. And the other staff went duh you have freedom yes consequences yes how dare you think you can just quit screw up all of our lives and then come waltzing back later because you'd like a job that has a better pay than minimum wage because you'd like to come back as a manager and they didn't give her the job back period.

And you know what not a single one of my non-Christian friends said that there was anything wrong with that. But that's all the doctrine of hell is isn't it? You have your freedom your truths but there's consequences. there's consequences.

What we see in the book of Judges is a foreshadowing of the final judgment. It's a foreshadowing of the final judgment.

God pronounces judgment on those who think that they worship him by killing their baby. On those who think that they worship by having sex with a prostitute.

In those who think they worship by going and watching a priest having sex with an animal or an animal having sex with a priestess. And that is what you have chosen.

[32 : 23] That is how you understand the myths to govern your society, your family, the way you view the world. And at some point in time that comes under God's judgment.

They have the freedom to choose. But there are consequences. consequences. But the text also foreshadows our need for a great and true Savior.

You see, the idols, idols always want you, idols, and the idols of holy war, they love, and you see, all of the rhetoric of holy war, you always portray a God who likes seeing people die, who loves to see people die.

When we talk about idols, I just came across this spectacular quote from an articulate British atheist about idolatry. I can't wait to use it. I wanted to share it with you today, but it doesn't fit in the sermon, and I'm going to use it somewhere down the line.

Because you know those Ricky Gervais types, they can just be so, whoa, cutting. It's a spectacular thing of secular idolatry, and how it's worse than Christianity because at least for, anyway, I won't go with the quote.

[33 : 35] You can come some other week, maybe it's next week, I get to use this quote for this articulate Ricky Gervais-like British atheist. Brilliant. Anyway, and I'll tell you the page it comes from and all that so you can use it for your friends.

Anyway, but the point is, that's what idols want. They don't care if anybody dies. They're just tough taskmasters. But this is all pointing us to that text in Isaiah.

Where the Lord is revealed. First of all, the Lord is the one who delivered them out of slavery in Egypt, not Israel. They didn't deliver them. The Lord is the one who brings them into the promised

land, not Israel. The Lord does that. The Lord is the one that brings them into a covenant with himself.

Israel doesn't do that. At the end of the day, all of us have to acknowledge that our own discipleship is much like the people of Israel. That in fact, we don't trust the Lord all the time.

We always lean on our own understanding. Our discipleship is not perfect and we need a savior. And the Lord continues to reveal himself through the book of Judges and then through David and then through Isaiah and then into the New Testament that unlike the idols that love to see people fail and die, God looks at us failing and dying and it breaks his heart.

[34 : 47] And gods that love to see people die, the God that we worship, the one that we believe is the true and living God, is the God who dies for people. He is completely different.

Let me say it from Islam. He is completely different than the gods of the nations. God will be revealed as the one who sees our need and he dies for people.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son to the end that all who believe in him will not perish but have everlasting life.

And finally, just in closing, the book of Judges calls us to really believe and trust in Proverbs 3, verses 5 and 6.

You see, the problem is like all the way through this, if you go back and read it later, Joshua could have trusted the Lord but they wouldn't. It was possible but they wouldn't.

[35 : 56] Benjamin could have trusted the Lord but they wouldn't. Manasseh could have trusted the Lord but they wouldn't. It wasn't that they couldn't but that they wouldn't.

And for you and me, obedience to the Lord is always possible. the problem in my life isn't that I can't trust him but that I won't trust him.

That's my problem. You see, we're in this story but we're not in this story as a hero.

We're in this story as Israel. And it describes us that it's not a matter of can't obey but won't obey. Not a matter of can't trust but won't trust.

In fact, just to be honest, many of us, maybe it's different after the sermon. Jesus thought everything in the Old Testament was inspired by God but do we trust him about Holy War?

[37 : 07] Yeah. Didn't really trust him. In fact, many Christians historically say, well, that's just the God of the Old Testament, the God of the New Testament is different.

Nah, wrong. Jesus believed all of the Old Testament. This text is an impetus for us to make Proverbs 3, 5, and 6 very real that as we're gripped by the gospel that we will trust in the Lord with all our heart and we will not lean on our own understanding.

In all our ways we will acknowledge him so that he will direct our steps. please stand. Just bow our heads in prayer.

Father, I've made comments about entitlement and we don't realize how we feel we are entitled.

Father, we confess, I confess on behalf of us all that that's one of those things where we point a finger at somebody else and we don't see the three fingers pointing back at ourselves that we see specks in other people's eyes and don't see the logs in our own eyes.

We ask, Father, that you'd help us to die to any sense of entitlement. We give you thanks and praise, Father, that we are saved, we are made your children by adoption and grace, not because we're so smart, we're so clever, we're so just us, but by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

[38 : 37] And, Father, you know the different ways where we don't trust you and we don't want to obey you and we have very, very clever reasons as to why we don't have to trust or obey.

Father, you know our hearts. We thank you so much that we're saved by grace, not by our ability to live Proverbs 3, 5, 6. We ask, Father, that you would so grip us with the gospel and understand that Jesus died for us out of love for us and that we are now made right with you in light of what he has done for us, not in light of what we can do for you, but in light of what he has done for us.

That as we are gripped by the gospel, that you would help us day by day to live Proverbs 3, 5, 6, 5, 5 through 6. That we would trust with you as individuals and as a congregation with all our heart.

That we will not lean on our own understanding and in all our ways we will acknowledge you. That we will trust that you will make our paths straight, that you will guide and direct us. And all God's people said, Amen.