**Trusting God: Part VIII**

 How are you growing as a God-truster? The question assumes several things:

* that you are a serious believer;
* that you are eager to grow in that area of your life;
* that you agree that God deserves your trust;
* that you are blessed in the doing.

What follows are practical ways to promote growth as a God-pleaser.

 First, recognize that there is a need for your faith and trust to be pruned and for you to grow in faithfulness (Rom. 5:1-5; James 1:2-4,12; 1 Peter 1:6-7). Unless you adopt this perspective you will be tempted to resist God's providence (which people too often call "life") as His tool for you to use. Growth in Christlikeness is one activity of the believer and should take center stage. You will be tempted to ask for a sign, like Peter or like Gideon who asked for two signs (Matthew 14:22-33; Judges 6:36-40). Moreover, you will be tempted to grumble and complain (Phil. 2:14-17).

 Second, exercise your faith thereby proving yourself genuine - faithful and trustworthy. You do this by applying biblical principles as a whole person (thoughts, desires, and actions) 24/7. The "calling to mind" is to be regular and daily but especially at those times it is easy to doubt God's goodness. In terms of thoughts and desires, read, recite, and meditate upon God's truths that are most appropriate for you in your situation (Ps. 119:18). Follow by memorizing, verbalizing, and actualizing truth daily. Apply - act upon - the non-negotiable truths regarding who God is and His promises and who you are as His child (Ps 119:9-11).

 To help you, remember that you are whole person - thoughts, desires, and actions. Growth in Christ means that each of these aspects must be brought in line with God's truth that is most relevant for you at the moment. In every unpleasant or potential unpleasant situation (really God's providence) you bring thoughts, desires, and actions to it. Consider this example. Your best friend may have abandoned you for whatever reason. You are aware that the situation is the context and not the cause of your whole-person response. Awareness of this simple truth is very important as you respond (and you will respond).

 Third, determine how God wants you to think and desire in your situation. How are you to relate to the other person, yourself, and God? Compare your thoughts with the appropriate biblical truth. Are you in line with the truth that God is trustworthy and works all things for His glory and the good of His people (Rom. 8:28-29)? How are you responding in and to the situation and ultimately to God? How are you functioning as a Christian oyster (2 Cor. 5:9)? How are you using irritations to make the pearl of Christlikeness?

 Fourth, get busy. Apply the above suggestions daily and rejoice in God and His grace.

**Application**:

1. Keep track of how you proved faithful and trustworthy in big and little things and record your motivation and how you did.

2. Answer the questions: what made it easy and what made it hard to trust God?

3. What truth about God has been most beneficial in growing as a God-truster?