



GIFTS FROM GOD:

Feast of the Holy Family:

The Gift That God Can Be Totally Trusted

Merry Christmas everyone! Let us rejoice and be glad. Over the course of the eighteen days of Christmas I will be presenting to you a total of **four amazing gifts from God**. These gifts are designed especially with you in mind and are capable of affecting tremendous positive change in your life. If you would like to experience a greater satisfaction in life these four gifts could well be what you've been looking for.

On the first day of Christmas we opened the gift of God's care. Listen to this: God really cares about you and I mean really cares about you. Since caring is who God is at his deepest level he chooses to identify with you particularly in the poverty stricken areas of your life so that you can prosper. That's pretty amazing!

Although the commercial portion of Christmas is pretty much over except for the clearance racks, God's gifts to you continue to pour in. On this the fourth day of Christmas we receive our second gift from God to open. Let me present it to you. It's the gift that God can be totally trusted. Being able to trust God is critical to living a meaningful life. Notice I am speaking about being able to totally trust in God which is different from trusting in people. As one person put it, in God we trust and all others we virus scan. For the young of heart I like how Lawrence Welk expressed it: "Never trust anyone completely but God. Love people, but put your full trust only in God.

Why should you trust God so completely? I could provide you with a lot of sound philosophical and theological reasons as to why but I want to keep it at the level which has endured the test of thousands of years and that is to **simply trust God**. In Proverbs 3:5 we find these words: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding." I find it interesting that this scripture passage is one of the top ten passages 150 million people did a word search on this year at one website alone. Do you think people want to know if they can trust God? Here are a few more passages out of the Bible which clearly state that we can simply trust God. "Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you." "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." "For I am the Lord, I change not;" "You will keep in perfect peace, him whose mind is focused on you because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the Rock eternal." "Though there are no grapes on the vines, though the fields produce no food, though there are no cattle in the stalls, yet I will trust the Lord."

Let me also provide you with a few quotes from people. “Trusting God completely means having faith that God knows what’s best for your life.” “God has a bigger plan for you than you have for yourself.” “You can’t Google all the answers in life, so just live your life and trust in God.” “The Bible never once says, “Figure it out.” But over and over it says, “Trust God.” He’s already got it all figured out.” “Quit questioning God and start trusting him!” “I trust God with my life. After all, he gave it to me.” “If we can trust God with our eternal salvation, why can’t we trust him with everything?” The message is clear. Simply trusting God is simply wonderful! Make trusting God the point of reference in your life. Doing so will prevent you from coming up with all kinds of outrageous conclusions about God which will lead you to no telling where.

I would like to close with a few quick bullet points on how you can better receive God’s gift that he can be totally trusted by looking at the life of Simeon in today’s Gospel reading.

First, Simeon trusted in God’s promises. God revealed to Simeon that he would not experience death until he saw the coming of the Savior into the world. Simeon took God’s promise at face value. Did you know there are thousands of promises in the Bible given by God that you can claim by simply taking God at his word?

Second, Simeon patiently trusted God while at the same time lived for God in the power of the Holy Spirit. We don’t know how many years Simeon waited for God to deliver on his promise but he didn’t put his life on hold in the meantime. What if Simeon hadn’t gone to the temple that day as part of his daily devotion to God? What a missed opportunity that would have been! Don’t let grass grow under your feet while waiting for God. Instead move forward in living for God through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Third, Simeon saw God fulfill his promise. When the Holy Family entered the temple he immediately prophesied and praised God. “According to your promise”, Simeon said, “my eyes have seen your salvation.” These words apply equally to you as well. God will fulfill every promise he has ever made to you. Guaranteed!

I would like to leave you with two thoughts for reflection:

1. God is offering you the gift that he can be totally trusted today. Believe!
2. Make trusting God the reference point of your life. Have you allowed people or circumstances to lead you astray from a simple trust in God? Do a 180 and say to yourself that from this day forward that you will trust God more fully?