

## TRUSTING GOD

All too often, especially when I'm dealing with my mental health issues, I find myself thinking: "Why can't I trust myself better? How can I possibly live this life when I can't rely on myself?"

I forget that I don't have to rely on myself. I forget that I can fully rest in the assurance that I can trust God to help me. Anything is possible with Him. But we have to first let go of self-reliance and lean on Him.

I often think to myself: Where would Living Room be if God weren't in it? Those times I forgot to lean on God and tried to do the work all on my own, I would become very anxious about it – even immobilized. Again and again I've had to turn back to remembering that it's God who's doing the work – not me. I always need to trust that He will be there to help me and give it over to Him..

We mustn't forget the comforting words Jesus spoke in Matthew 7:7-8:

*"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."*

- How do those words make you feel?
- Can you believe them?
- If we ask God to help us be well, will He help us? Will He give us what we need? What has your experience been?

When Jesus prayed at Gethsemane, he was granted, not release from the pain ahead, but the power of God strengthening him. (*"An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him"* – Luke 22:43) We can pray for strength too and God will grant us that if we trust him.

- What helps you trust God?

Trust comes from knowing God – knowing his character – knowing that he loves you – knowing that his Word is true.

- How has trust in God helped you withstand the symptoms of your mood disorder?

Read Jesus's words in Matthew 6:25-34:

*"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?"*

*"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."*

From Roger Shinn, Reinhold Niebuhr Professor Emeritus of Social Ethics at Union Theological Seminary in New York City:

"[Jesus] is not saying we should ignore food. He has bidden us pray for daily bread and he has never criticized honest work. He is not saying that the lilies and the grass will live happily ever after. As he spoke those words, he probably thought of one of his favourite Old Testament books, which said: *'The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.'* (Isaiah 40:8)

"Now we can see what Jesus does say. He tells us that our destinies are controlled by the God who stands forever. That we, who determine neither our births nor our deaths, are helpless; but that if we trust God, we tie our feebleness to an eternal power and purpose. That if the goal of life is to keep the heart beating and the stomach expanding, we all fail before long. But if we seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness, we'll be given all else that we need – not immunity to hunger, pain and death, but confidence in spite of them.

"...When we are detached from God, trying to be self-sufficient, everything threatens our existence. We are finite, mortal. War or an invisible virus can wipe us out. In our nakedness and peril there is nothing to hold on to. But, says Jesus, trust your Father. Your life gets its power, its vitality, its meaning from him ...You are secure because your security is in him.

"Jesus' word is positive. Trust overcomes anxiety....Empty men have been overwhelmed with anxiety, trusting men have been confident."