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John Gill's

A BODY OF PRACTICAL DIVINITY

Book 1—Chapter 7

**OF TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN
GOD**

Trust and confidence signify the same thing, whether with respect to God or men: to trust in men, is to confide or put confidence in them; and so to trust in God is to place confidence in him; and generally in all places where to trust in God is mentioned, the Latin versions are to confide in him; and this being so near akin to faith, if not a part, yet at least a fruit of it, deserves next to be considered. And,

1. What confidence signifies, and the sense in which it is sometimes taken, and to be treated of here.

1a. First, it is sometimes used for a profession of religion, taken up in the name and strength of Christ, and with an holy resolution to continue it, and an holding it fast with courage and intrepidity; which, if supported and maintained, will issue well; hence it is advised not to "cast it away" (Heb. 3:6,14; 10:35), a profession of religion is not to be taken up hastily, without due consideration of the nature and importance of it, and of the difficulties that attend it, and of the expense a man must be at to support it; to which reference may be had (Luke 14:27-33), and it is to be taken up, not in a man's own strength, but in the strength of Christ, on whom there ought to be a constant trust and dependence for supplies of grace to maintain it; and it should be made openly before many witnesses, without shame and fear; without being ashamed of Christ and his gospel; and without fear of men: and when it is taken up, should be held fast with an holy courage and confidence; to which many things induce; as the consideration of Christ, the great high Priest of our profession; and the faithfulness of God in his promises (Heb. 4:14 10:23).

1b. Secondly, it sometimes signifies that alacrity in which men engage in any branch of religious service, and continue in it with boldness and intrepidity, exercising faith and hope in God, that he will be with them in it, and carry them through it; as particularly in preaching the gospel of Christ boldly, as it ought to be spoken; thus says the apostle, "Many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by rest bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear" (Phil. 1:14); boldness in the ministry of the word is a necessary qualification for a preacher of it; this the apostle Paul was so sensible of, that he desires the Ephesians to pray for him that he might have "utterance given", and that he might "open his mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel"; and this he did wherever he went, at Thessalonica, and other places (Eph. 6:19; 1 Thess. 2:2). Peter and John, though unlearned men, were taken notice of for their boldness and courage; who, notwithstanding the threats of the rulers, spoke the words of life to the people; declaring, that they ought to obey God rather than men (Acts 4:13,18-20; 5:20,28,29), and so private Christians, in every branch of religious service, should exercise an humble boldness, and an holy confidence, and a stedfastness in all the duties of religion, knowing that though they can do nothing of themselves, yet, through Christ strengthening them they can do all things; trusting and placing their confidence in the Lord Jehovah, in whom is everlasting strength, and not fearing a lion in the way or in the streets; nor solicitous what will be the issue and consequence of their persisting in the way of their duty; of which trust and confidence Daniel and his companions were examples.

1c. Thirdly, sometimes confidence with respect to God in prayer is designed. "In whom", that is, in Christ, "we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him" (Eph. 3:12), through Christ the Mediator, and faith in him, souls may come to God with great freedom and liberty, teal him all their mind, pour out their souls before him; especially they can do that when they are under the influences, and have the assistance of his Spirit; for "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty"; otherwise there is a straitness of soul, and saints are shut up that they cannot come forth in the lively exercise of grace; but they may come with boldness and intrepidity to the throne of grace, and ask such things of God they stand in need of, may look up and lift up their face, and show their countenance, as they are allowed, and indeed desired to do; nay, they may have "this confidence" in God, that "if they ask anything according to his will he heareth them" (1 John 5:14), all which arise from faith in the person, blood, and righteousness of Christ: it is through the blood of Christ saints have boldness to enter into the holiest of all, and in his righteousness to stand before God with acceptance, and wait in faith for success; and which holy boldness and confidence is consistent with reverence of God and submission to his will.

1d. Fourthly, trust or confidence in God may be considered, as it has a connection with the grace of faith; faith is sometimes expressed by it; "Such trust" or confidence "have we through Christ to Godward" (2 Cor. 3:4), it is at least a fruit and effect of it, what follows upon it; for when the grace of faith is wrought in the soul, it shows itself in trust and confidence in God, even when it has not a full persuasion of interest in him; "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him": some

make it to be the form of faith, and of the essence of it; and that faith in Christ consists of these three parts, knowledge of him as a Saviour, assent unto him as such, and trust in him, or a fiducial application and appropriation of him as a man's own Saviour; hence it is commonly said by some, "fides est fiducia"; faith is confidence; it seems to be faith greatly strengthened; a strong exercise of it; such as in (2 Tim. 1:12). "I know whom I have believed" or "trusted"; if not a plerophory, and full assurance of it; and such a trust or confidence, which is so near akin to faith, and as it should seem a strong act of it, is what is to be treated of; and since it is so much spoken of in scripture, and so much recommended, and such instances of it, and so many happy consequences and effects of it, it deserves a distinct consideration. Particularly,

2. The objects of it.

2a. First, negatively; what are not the objects of it, and are dehorted from in scripture.

2a1. Idols; trust in which, and in things belonging to them, may be called idolatrous and superstitious confidence; to have other gods besides the Lord, as idols, to worship them, and yield religious service to them is contrary to the first and second commands; and to trust in them is the height of folly and vanity (Ps. 115:4-8; Isa. 42:17). Such pray unto, serve and worship, and trust in what can neither see them, nor hear them, nor help, nor save them. And as vain and superstitious is the trust and confidence of such, who place it in religious buildings, in temples made with hands; as the Jews, in the temple at Jerusalem; who, because it was called by the name of the Lord, trusted in it, it being the place where they met and worshipped, and in which they confided for present safety and future happiness (Jer 7:4,14). So the Gentiles gloried in their temples; as in the temple of Diana, at Ephesus; and of other idols in other places. Likewise all superstitious rites and ceremonies, which, though they have been in use, now abrogated; yet, if exercised, and especially trusted in, are condemned, as trusting in the flesh; as circumcision, &c. among the Jews; as well as a multitude of carnal and worldly ordinances among the Gentiles, which had a show of wisdom in will worship.

2a2. Men; trust in whom may be called human confidence; and which is not to be placed, no, not in the greatest of men (Ps. 118:8,9), even not in whole nations, strong and mighty. This was the sin of the Israelites, that they "trusted in the shadow of Egypt" to shelter and screen them from their enemies, and which was vain and unprofitable unto them; therefore, says the Lord, "Trust in the shadow of Egypt shall be your confusion" (Isa. 30:2,3), all outward means for safety in times of trouble and danger are of no avail, and are false things to be trusted in; "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God"; that is a strong tower, where is safety and security; horses and armies, castles and fortresses, are vain things for safety; nor are they to be trusted in (Ps. 20:7; 33:16,17; Prov. 21:31), and in some cases the most intimate friends are not to be confided in for secrecy; "Trust ye not in a friend; put ye not confidence in a guide"

(Micah 7:5). Neither are men to be trusted in for the health of the body, any more than for the protection of lives and properties; physicians may be made use of, but not to be confided in; Asa's sin was, "that he sought not to the Lord" for the cure of his bodily disease, "but to the physicians"; only, in them he put his confidence, to the neglect of the great Physician of soul and body (2 Chron 16:12).

2a3. Self is another object not to be trusted in, on more accounts than one; and trust in which may be called self-confidence; as when men trust in their wealth, and make gold their hope, and say to the fine gold, Thou art my confidence; trust in uncertain riches, and not in the living God; have no regard to divine providence, and a dependence on that; but foolishly fancy they have goods laid up for many years, and promise themselves great ease and pleasure; when that very night their souls may be required of them; and so very true is that of the wise man; "He that trusteth in his riches shall fall" (Prov. 11:18; see Jer 9:23). Nor should a man trust in his wisdom; since the way of man is not in himself; not even in civil, as well as not in religious things: nor is it in man that walketh to direct his steps; good is the advice of Solomon, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding" (Prov. 3:5). Nor should a man trust in his strength; not in his natural strength, as Samson; nor in his moral strength, to perform that which is morally good, to do which he wants both knowledge and strength of himself; nor even the good man should not trust in his spiritual strength; since without Christ he can do nothing: nor should a man trust in his own heart; since he that trusts in it "is a fool" (Prov. 28:26), that being so deceitful and desperately wicked, and out of which so much wickedness comes. Nor should men, trust in their own works of righteousness done in obedience to the law of Moses; this is trusting in Moses, and resting in the law, as the Jews did; by the deeds of which there is no justification and salvation; such trust in themselves that they are righteous; but such a man's trust is no other "than a spider's web" (Job 8:14,15).

2b. Secondly, positively, the true and proper objects of trust and confidence are Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, the true God, the God of our salvation; who is, or ought to be, the "confidence", that is, the object of the confidence of "all the ends of the earth" (Ps. 65:5).

2b1. First, Jehovah the Father; both as the God of nature and providence, and as the God of all grace: as the former, men are to trust in him to uphold them in their beings, to give them all the necessaries of life, to preserve them in life, and to protect them from all enemies and dangers, and to enable them to do the work of their generation according to his will. And as the latter, to supply them with his grace, to give them more grace to help them in every time of need, to be their God and guide in life even unto death, and through it, and bring them safe to his everlasting kingdom and glory; and being satisfied of their interest in him as their covenant God and Father in Christ, they may be confident;

2b1a. Of his love to them, and of the continuance of it; as God has graciously appeared to them, and told them that he has loved them with an everlasting love,

and assured them that his "lovingkindness shall not depart from them"; they may trust in a promising God, and be confident "that he will rest in his love towards them"; and be "persuaded", as the apostle Paul was, or have a strong confidence, as he had, that nothing shall be able to "separate them from the love of God"; since he has given his word and oath for it, that though he afflicts and chastises them for their transgressions, "nevertheless his lovingkindness he will not utterly take from them" (Isa. 54:10; Zeph. 3:17; Rom. 8:38,39; Ps. 89:33).

2b1b. Of the faithfulness of God in the fulfillment of his promises; he is faithful that has promised, and will never suffer his faithfulness to fail; nor any of the good things to fail of performance which he has promised; and this they may be confident of, since they flow from his love and grace, are made in a covenant ordered in all things and sure, and which he will never break; and since they are all yea and amen in Christ, most certainly performed in and by him, and for his sake; and since the performance of them does not depend on the faith of men, but on the faithfulness of God; the unbelief of men does not make the faith, that is, the faithfulness of God, of none effect; for though they believe not, he abides faithful

2b1c. Of the grace of God to supply all their wants; of which they may be confident; since he is the God of all grace, the author and giver of it, the fountain and source of it, and of every supply of it; and since he is able to cause all grace to abound towards them, and his grace is sufficient for them; and since he has promised more grace unto them as they need; and has set up a throne of grace to come unto for it; and since it has pleased him the Father of Christ, and our Father in him, that all fulness of grace should dwell in him, that from thence grace for grace might be received; and who is a sun and shield, and gives both grace and glory.

2b1d. Of his power to keep and preserve them to eternal glory and happiness: and of this they may be confident, since he is able to keep them from falling; and his hand is not shortened that he cannot save; his strength is everlasting, and never is any decay of it; and since it is certain that regenerated persons are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation"; to which salvation, glory, and happiness, they are called, and therefore may be assured that they shall enjoy it; "faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Pet. 1:5; 1 Thess. 5:23,24).

2b2. Secondly, Jehovah the Son is the object of the saints trust and confidence: it is said, "Kiss the Son", the Son of God, the begotten Son of God; to whom it is said in the context, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee"; to whom worship, honour, and homage are to be given by the kings and judges of the earth; and it is added, "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him", the Son of God, the object of the worship and adoration of angels and men; he gives "grace and glory to his people, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly"; and then it follows, as before, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in thee" (Ps. 2:12; 84:11,12), the Targums or Chaldee paraphrases of which places are, "Who trust in his Word, or in the Word of the Lord", his essential Word; so of (Ps. 34:8,22; Jer 17:7; see Eph. 1:12). Now trust and confidence are to be exercised on Christ, not

merely as the second and instrumental cause of happiness, as says Socinus, but as the first and sole cause of it, which he denies: being the Author, Cause, and Captain of eternal salvation; trust is to be put,

2b2a. In the salvation of Christ, or in him for salvation: it is said of the Israelites, that "they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation" (Ps. 78:22), but true believers in Christ trust in him as a Saviour, and in his salvation, he being an able and willing Saviour, and his salvation suitable, complete, and perfect; nor is there salvation in any other; and therefore they say, as Job did, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: —he also shall be my salvation" (Job 13:15,16).

2b2b. In his righteousness: a strong act of trust and confidence in Christ and his righteousness is exercised by the church in these words; "Surely shall one say", verily, or only, "in the Lord have I righteousness and strength" (Isa. 45:24,25). Christ is with great confidence and strength of faith called, "The Lord our righteousness" (Jer 23:6), and the apostle Paul, disclaiming all confidence in the flesh, and trust in his own righteousness, desired to be "found in" Christ and in his righteousness; the "righteousness which is of God by faith; that is, the righteousness which Christ has wrought out, and which God imputes without works, and reveals from faith to faith" (Phil. 3:4-9).

2b2c. In the grace of Christ, and the fulness of it in him, for the supply of all wants; all grace, and the fulness of it, dwell in him; out of which saints in all ages have received an abundance of grace; and yet there is an overflowing fulness of it in him; and they may be confident that their God will supply all their need from thence; and to exercise such confidence is to "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 2:1).

2b2d. In the power, might, and strength of Christ. Believers in Christ are ready to acknowledge their own weakness; yea, even to glory in it, "That the power Christ may rest upon them", overshadow and protect them; for when they are "weak", as they are in themselves, and are sensible of it, then are they strong, that is, "in the Lord, and in the power of his might"; and trust in him that he will enable them to stand their ground, and to get the victory over all their enemies; they are encouraged, as they are directed, "to trust in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength"; to help them in the exercise of every grace, and in the performance of every duty; to bear the cross of Christ, to fight his "battles, and to persevere" in faith and holiness to the end (2 Cor. 12:8,10; Eph. 6:10; Isa. 26:4).

2b3. Thirdly, Jehovah the Spirit is also the object of the trust and confidence of believers; as he is the Spirit of grace and of supplication: as the Spirit of grace, they trust in him to communicate more grace to them, to increase what is in them, and to draw it forth into lively exercise: and as the Spirit of supplication, in whom they confide for his help and assistance in prayer, and for his prevalent intercession for them, according to the will of God: and as the Spirit of counsel and might, to direct and guide them, and to strengthen them with all might in the inward man: and faith

and trust in the Spirit of God, for the carrying on and finishing his own work of grace in the hearts of his people, is expressed by confidence of it (Philemon 1:6).

3. The encouragement there is to trust in the Lord, and that for all things and at all times.

3a. First, there is encouragement to trust in God for all things.

3a1. All things are of him; that is, all good things in nature, providence, and grace: all good things in nature; "He gives to all life, and breath, and all things" (Acts 17:25), and all things in providence are at his dispose; "for of him, and through him, and to him are all things" (Rom. 11:36). And all things in grace; all the blessings of grace; as reconciliation, peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation; "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 5:18), and all the gifts of grace, even "every good gift, and every perfect gift, is above, and cometh down from the Father of lights"; as regeneration, which is instanced in, with all the graces of the Spirit included in it, and come with it; as faith, hope, love, &c. (Jam. 1:17,18).

3a2. All good things are promised by God to his people; the covenant of grace is "ordered in all things", and is full of exceeding great and precious promises, suited to the cases and circumstances of good men; godliness and godly men have the "promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come"; and not one of the good things which God has promised ever fail; they are always fulfilled; the promises are yea and amen in Christ; they, and the blessings in them, are the sure mercies of David.

3a3. God keeps back no good thing he has promised, and which his people need, and which he knows is for their welfare; "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly"; therefore it follows, "O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee!" that is, for all good things (Ps. 84:11,12), they are bid to ask, and it is promised it shall be given; God is "nigh" to all that "call" upon him, and will "fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he will hear their cry, and save them" (Ps. 145:16,18,19).

3a4. God gives all things freely to his people; they cannot merit anything of him; "Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again?" No man can be beforehand with God: he has nothing but what he has received from him; nor are any "worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth shown" unto them; whatever they have, God gives them liberally, without any regard to any merit or desert of theirs; whether temporal or spiritual and especially the latter; since with Christ he "freely gives all things" (Rom. 8:32).

3a5. God gives all things plenteously, even with a profusion of goodness; so that the saint, with Jacob, can say, "I have enough", or I have all things; for God, the; living God, "gives richly all things to enjoy"; that is, in a large and liberal manner; for he

is "rich" or plenteous in his goodness, "unto all that call upon him" (1 Tim. 6:17; Rom. 10:12). So that there is abundant encouragement to trust in the Lord for all things.

3a5a. First, for things temporal, the outward mercies of life.

3a5a1. For food: the promise is, "Trust in the Lord, and do good--and verily thou shalt be fed" (Ps. 37:3), with food convenient, and sufficient; though not with delicacies, yet with necessaries; "Take no thought therefore", says our Lord, no anxious and perplexing thoughts, "for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink--is not the life more than meat?" And he that has given life, the greater favour, will give meat to support that life, to them who trust in him, and wait for it in a dependence on him (Matthew 6:25; Ps. 37:25).

3a5a2. For raiment: and this and food are both from the Lord; and necessary for the support and comfort of life; Jacob vowed a vow and promised, that if God would "give him bread to eat, and raiment to put on--then", says he, "shall the Lord be my God" (Gen. 28:20,21), and, indeed, having these, a saint has enough, and should be therewith content (1 Tim. 6:8), and for this God should be confided in; for if he so "clothe the grass of the field", in the manner he does, "shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Matthew 6:30).

3a5a3. For the preservation of life; from every accident, as usually so called; from every danger; and from every enemy: and because God not only gives life, but preserves it, he is peculiarly the Saviour and Preserver of them that believe, and put their trust in him; he is their keeper night and day; with the utmost confidence they may commit themselves to God, and trust in his protection from every evil (Ps. 122:5,8; 3:5; 4:8).

3a5a4. For these things may believers pray to God with an holy confidence, believing they shall have the petitions they ask of him; who has raised, "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them", their cries and prayers, and supply their wants; yea, if need be, will rather go out of the common course of nature and providence than that they shall want (Isa. 41:17,18; 43:19,20), and if earthly parents, "who are evil", know how to "give good gifts" to their children, who ask them of them, our Lord has taught believers in him to reason after this manner, "how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" And if he will give to them the Spirit, and spiritual things, then much more may they expect earthly and temporal things from him they stand in need of (Luke 11:13).

3a5a5. To trust and confidence in God with respect to those things, they may be encouraged by the experience of themselves and others. Good old Jacob in his dying moments expressed, in very strong language, his experience of the divine goodness throughout the whole of his life; "The God which fed me all my life long unto this day--the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads" (Gen. 48:15,16).

David frequently takes notice of the goodness of God to him, in providence, to encourage his own faith in him, and that of others; "Thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth!" and from what he had experienced in time past, even from the very dawn of life, he strongly thus concluded; "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life" (Ps. 71:5,6; 23:6), and every believer may look back on the past goodness of God unto him, and encourage himself in the Lord his God, in expectation and confidence of future favors; for their heavenly Father knows they have need of these things, and therefore will bestow them on them (Matthew 6:32,33).

3a5b. Secondly, there is great encouragement to trust in the Lord for spiritual things; that is, for after supplies of grace; for faith respects present blessings of grace enjoyed, but trust and confidence future ones; and which may be depended on; since God is the God of all grace, whose grace is sufficient for his people now and hereafter; who has promised to give more grace as they want it; and has set up a throne of grace, to which they are encouraged to come with boldness, that they may find grace and mercy to help them in time of need. The covenant of grace is filled with all spiritual blessings, and promises of them, which are sure to all the spiritual seed of Christ; Christ has them all in his hands for his people, and will give them things pertaining to life and godliness.

3a5c. Thirdly, there is encouragement to trust in the Lord for eternal things; for,

3a5c1. God has chosen his in Christ to the enjoyment of them; they are ordained unto eternal life; appointed unto salvation; chosen through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth unto it; and the purpose of God, according to election, stands sure, not upon the ground of works, but upon the will of him that calls; his purposes can never be frustrated and disappointed; and therefore the chosen ones may be confident of eternal glory and happiness.

3a5c2. God has made promises of eternal things to his people; to whom the promise of the life that is to come is made, as well as of that which now is; God, that cannot lie, has promised eternal life before the world began, which promise can never be made void by anything that comes to pass in time; wherefore the heirs of promise have reason to trust in God for the performance of the eternal good he has promised.

3a5c3. God has prepared and provided everlasting happiness for his people; it is inconceivable what God has prepared for them that love him; it cannot be said how great is the goodness which he has laid up in covenant for them that fear him; a crown of glory, life, and immortality is laid up safe and secure in the hands of Christ, with whom their life is hid; an inheritance, eternal, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away, is reserved in heaven for them, and therefore confidently to be depended on.

3a5c4. God has called them to his kingdom and glory, even to eternal glory by Jesus Christ; and his calling is without repentance, whom he calls he glorifies; them he preserves safe to the coming of Christ; for "faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Thess. 5:24).

3a5c5. Eternal things are freely given of God; as grace is freely given, so is glory; eternal life is the free gift of God through Christ; and therefore there is encouragement to trust in him for it; since it is not owing to the merit of the saints, but it is their Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom. Christ, as Mediator, has power to give eternal life, and he gives it to all his sheep; "This is the record, that God has given unto us eternal life; and this life is in his Son", safe and secure, and may be depended on (1 John 5:11).

3b. Secondly, there is encouragement to trust in the Lord always; "Trust in him at all times, ye people" (Ps. 62:8).

3b1. In times of darkness and desertion; it is said to a saint walking in darkness, and has no light, "Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God" (Isa. 50:10), and wait upon the Lord, who hides his face from the house of Jacob; since light is sown for the righteous, in the purposes and decrees, counsel and covenant of God, and gladness for the upright in heart, in the gospel, and doctrines of it; and sooner or later it will arise; hence the trust and confidence of the church; "When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me" (Micah 7:8,9).

3b2. In times of temptation, saints may trust in the Lord, and be confident that his grace will be sufficient for them; and that his strength will be made perfect in their weakness; that he will bear them up, and not suffer them to sink under the weight of them; but will in due time make a way for their escape out of them, and deliver them from them; and as Christ has suffered, being tempted, he is able to help them that are tempted; and whereas he has a sympathy with them, being in all things tempted as they, so he prays for them that their faith fail not; and therefore they have great reason to trust in him.

3b3. In times of adversity and affliction, God leaves in the midst of his church "an afflicted and poor people"; and it is said of them, "And they shall trust in the name of the Lord" (Zeph. 3:12), believing, that when they pass through the waters of adversity, and fiery trials, the Lord will be with them and preserve them, and carry them through them, and not suffer them to be overwhelmed by them; will make all things work together for their good, and deliver them out of all their afflictions.

3b4. In the hour of death, they are encouraged to trust in the Lord, and believe, that when strength and heart fail, the Lord will be the strength of their heart and their portion for ever; that he will be, not only their God and Guide unto death, but through it; and that even when they walk through the valley of the shadow of death, they shall fear no ill; God will be with them, and his rod and staff shall comfort them (Ps. 73:26; 48:14; 23:4).

3c. Thirdly, what that is in the Lord which gives encouragement to trust in him; and that is everything in God, and belonging to him; his nature, and the excellencies of it; all his perfections and attributes; the various names by which he has made himself known; his covenant and promises; his word and oath; his gospel, and the doctrines of it; the methods of his grace; and the dispensations of his providence: in particular.

3c1. He is El-Shaddai, God all sufficient; and therefore to be trusted in for everything that is wanted for soul and body, for time and eternity. Creatures are insufficient, and therefore not to be depended on; friends oftentimes would help, assist, and supply, but cannot; but God is an help in every time of need, and is a never failing supply, an inexhaustible fountain of all goodness; he has a sufficiency in himself and for himself, and for all his creatures, who all wait on him, and whom he satisfies with his good things; and his grace is sufficient for his people at all times, in all places, and in all ages; and therefore they have always encouragement to trust in him.

3c2. He is Jehovah, the rock of ages, the everlasting strength of those that put their trust in him; "Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah" (in Jah-Jehovah) "is everlasting strength" (Isa. 26:4), to support his people under all their trials and exercises; to carry them through all their difficulties and distresses; to bear them up under all their temptations and afflictions; to enable them to do and suffer what is his will and pleasure; to bring them on in their journey through the wilderness of this world, and out of it: he has promised, that as their day is, their strength shall be; and which is continually experienced by them; and therefore they have reason to trust in him.

3c3. The lovingkindness, grace, mercy, and pity of God, give great encouragement to trust in him; "How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings" (Ps. 36:7), the proclamation the Lord has made of himself, as gracious and merciful, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth (Ex 34:6), is sufficient to engage trust and confidence in him; says David, "I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever" (Ps. 52:8).

3c4. His truth and faithfulness in his covenant and promises, strongly induce to trust in him; he will "not suffer his faithfulness to fail, nor break his covenant, nor alter the thing that is gone out of his lips"; to which he has added his oath for the confirmation thereof (Ps. 89:33-35).

3c5. The experience of the saints in all ages, and a man's own, animate him to put his trust in God; "our fathers trusted in thee, they trusted, and thou didst deliver them; they cried unto thee, and were delivered; they trusted in thee, and were not confounded!" (Ps. 22:4,5), and having such a cloud of witnesses before them; and such gracious experiences of their own in times past of the goodness of God unto them, they encourage themselves in the Lord their God.

4. The happiness of those that trust in the Lord: it is often said, "Blessed are they that trust in the Lord!" (Ps. 2:12; 34:8; 84:12; Jer 17:7).

4a. They are in great peace, and will be in greater still; "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee" (Isa. 26:3), they have peace with God through Christ; they peace in him, when in the world they have tribulation; a peace which the world cannot take away; great peace have they which love the Lord and trust in him; even perfect peace, at least hereafter; for the end of such a man is "peace", everlasting peace.

4b. They are in great safety; "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever"; they are like mount Zion, well fortified with the towers, walls, and bulwarks of salvation; and are as immovable as that, fixed in the love of God, settled in the covenant of grace and peace, and secured in the hands of Christ, and can never be removed from either; but will abide in the state of grace until they come into the unalterable state of glory; the Lord is round about them, as the mountains about Jerusalem; a wall of fire about them, and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

4c. They need be in no fear of any enemy whatever: "Behold, God is my salvation", says the church, "I will trust and not be afraid" (Isa. 12:2), not of men, the greatest, most powerful and numerous; nor of devils, Satan, and all other enemies, are conquered ones by Christ; he has destroyed him that had the power of death, the devil, and spoiled his principalities and powers; he has abolished death, and made an end of sin; he has ransomed his people from death and hell, so that they shall not be hurt of the second death, and has saved them from wrath to come; and therefore they have nothing to fear now nor hereafter; happy men that trust in the Lord.

4d. They want no good thing, nor ever shall; "O taste, and see that the Lord is good", says the Psalmist; "Blessed is the man that trusteth in him! they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing" (Ps. 34:8-10), no good thing is withheld now from them that trust in the Lord; and great goodness, inconceivable and unspeakable, is laid up for them to be enjoyed hereafter (Ps. 84:11,12; 31:19).