

~Other Speakers S-Z: Basilea Schlink:

Mistrust is the opposite of trust. It is the root of disbelief towards God. We do not trust that His will, the motives behind His actions are always love. Such an attitude must provoke the wrath of God, who only has plans of love for His children. We can see this when we look at the Israelites in the desert. They mistrusted God and asserted that they would die because He was leading them through the desert. This behaviour provoked the anger of God so much that He said, "How long will this people despise me? And how long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs which I have wrought among them?" (Num. 14: 11).

Mistrust means that we have a false picture of God in our hearts. We attribute evil intentions to God, because they are in our own hearts. When we mistrust God like this, we will find that He will treat us the same way that He treated the people of Israel in the desert. "As I live, says the Lord, what you have said in my hearing I will do to you: your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness" (Num. 14: 28). God will let us experience what we have thought or said in mistrust, for instance, that God would forsake us, that the way He is leading us is difficult and no help will come. We will find that He deals with us just as we think He will. Whoever thinks that God's intentions are evil, will experience evil things. That is God's judgment upon our mistrust here on earth-and how great then will this judgment be in eternity!

Behind every mistrustful thought, even towards other people, there is something serious, namely an unspoken accusation. We think the other person does not have our best interests in mind; he does not want us to have anything good. This poison of mistrust spoils the relationship of trust to our heavenly Father and also to our neighbour. For if we mistrust the love and wisdom of God, we will unintentionally come into the same mistrustful, prejudiced attitude towards our fellow men and will become guilty towards them. This guilt, however, will accuse us before the judgment seat of God, if it is not brought into the light, repented of and forgiven through the blood of Jesus.

But if we are mistrustful towards our fellow men, we will be judged now in our everyday life. Because the relationship of trust is destroyed, we will no longer receive the love and the good things that they would otherwise have brought us. We become unhappy. This is the consequence of sin.

Mistrust separates us from God and man and poisons our whole life. For this reason we have to get rid of the sin of mistrust. But that is not the only reason. Our short lives on earth are a preparation for eternity. If we are mistrustful, how can we stand before God? We know that mistrust was one of the reasons why Adam and Eve were driven out of the Garden of Eden. They thought God wanted to withhold something good from them. This mistrust was fanned by Satan, the serpent. So man gave in to temptation and came under the dominion of the prince of this world. Mistrust brings us under the power of the old serpent, the enemy. The mistrustful place their trust in Satan instead of in God; they listen to his seductive voice.

This requires radical repentance. We cannot listen to this voice any more. It is the voice of the accuser, who wants to sow the poison of mistrust in our hearts or already has sown it. He suggests that God is withholding from us the best things. We have to hate our mistrust like the devil himself and begin to fight a battle to the point of shedding blood if we do not want to become the enemy's possession.

In the fight against mistrust we first have to be shown what the root of our mistrust against God and our neighbour is. It is ever-present concern for our ego. Will we get what we deserve? Will we be loved and respected enough? That is why we mistrust the leadings of God. That is why we suspect our neighbours. We think we are constantly in danger of getting a bad deal, or having others say negative things about us, or not receiving the love and respect we think we deserve. For this reason the mistrustful person imagines that while others appear to be friendly to him, they are in reality against him. He always supposes that others have ulterior motives. He even attributes evil to those who only want to do him good. And whenever there are misunderstandings, he immediately supposes that there is something bad. So he cannot be happy. Mistrust prevents bonds of love from being tied, for love believes all and does not think evil of his neighbours, even taking the risk of being disappointed.

Because egoism nourishes mistrust, it is very important, if we want to be freed from this, to make a serious sober commitment such as, "I do not want to be respected by certain people, I do not want to be popular. Lord, accept my commitment today. I do not want to worry about whether I get a bad deal; I do not want to be involved in myself. I want to trust that You will not let anything happen to me that would not be for my good. I always want to think the best of my neighbour and not give way to any mistrustful thoughts again. . ." Then we should go and seek ways to bring love and trust to those whom we have mistrusted. That will help us; for if we

give others love, we will no longer centre around ourselves.

But we will still experience some defeats in our life of faith, because this poison of mistrust is so strong in our blood. It will not be easy to get rid of our mistrusting thoughts. Here there is only one medicine that will help: the blood of Jesus. We must claim it and count on the fact that His trusting love will flow into us. Jesus was constantly disappointed in His disciples, yet He continued to trust them until the very end. They had forsaken Him so disgracefully during His Passion, yet He trusted them again after His resurrection. He let them remain His disciples and even gave them new commissions. And for us He has gained the victory of this trusting love, although it cost Him so much. He wants to grant us this love which enables us to trust God and man.

Picture our heavenly Father. His love for His children was so unimaginably great that He not only gave away His beloved Son, but He even delivered His Son up to sinners, who mistreated Him cruelly, ridiculed Him and crucified Him like a criminal. All this to save us and make us happy. We must tell ourselves, "That is what my Father in heaven is like. He only has thoughts of love and peace for me, for He has proved His love." Therefore, we should be ashamed and ask for a deeper and deeper spirit of repentance, because we have wounded the loving heart of God so deeply through our mistrust. Renounce your mistrust, Satan and his evil works, because he only wants to bring you into misfortune both here and in eternity. Every time we begin to think mistrusting thoughts, we must say, "In the name of Jesus and through His redeeming blood depart from me, Satan, I will have nothing further to do with you and your seductive thoughts. I belong to Jesus, who has won for me a childlike trust in the Father's love."

If we go this way, we will be freed from the sin of mistrust, as surely as Jesus has redeemed us from all sin at Calvary.

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