

Vignette 1 – Innocence of Trust—Laying at His feet

- It happened so quickly and with such impulses of inquisitiveness and trust
- You can see the little girl on our bulletin cover exchanging what I will call a nose-ling with her pet cat
- Our pet, Joey had a nose-ling with one of our neighbor's children as they met us on a walk the other day
- Joey raised his nose and the little girl seated in her stroller lowered her head towards Joey, eyes closed, until they were nose-to-nose
- Such a nose-ling—is a picture of the innocence of trust
- Prayer – Lord, bless us as we catch glimpses of the innocence of trust today—all because we want to have this experience above all things with You going deeper and deeper. AMEN
- I remember the phone call—answering the phone in my dorm room in college that evening
- It was Laura Cox—she had called me and invited me to the Spring Banquet
- The ladies that year were inviting the guys
- But you have to know, I had taken Laura Cox out on a date and then everything went quiet
- Truth is, I was ending one relationship and God was starting another one for me—which I hope will last a lifetime
- But Laura Becker, as she is known as now—says, that was a hard thing to do—taking the initiative and calling and asking
- Girls, as she had been raised back then, just didn't do that
- So it is that we read of a woman in our Bibles who took such initiative

- Her closest friend and former mother-in-law, Naomi, had been coaching her
- For days, which now had turned into weeks, Ruth had been laboring in Boaz's fields
- Boaz was part of Naomi descendants—however he was about twice Ruth's age
- Even so, Ruth was attracted to him
- So we read the story from the book of Ruth
- TEXT: Ruth 3:7-9 NLT (PAUSE)

“After Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he lay down at the far end of the pile of grain and went to sleep. Then Ruth came quietly, uncovered his feet, and lay down.

- The innocence of trust is where you place yourself in a vulnerable position with trust when you do so
- Here, Ruth, uncovers Boaz's feet and lays down at his feet
- God is looking for you and me to enter more deeply into a relationship with Him
- And lay ourselves down at His feet
- Why? Well, let's keep reading...

Around midnight Boaz suddenly woke up and turned over. He was surprised to find a woman lying at his feet! “Who are you?” he asked. I am your servant Ruth,” she replied.

- Ok, this is awkward, unless you're filled with the innocence of trust
- Now listen closely, cause what Ruth says next is very full of meaning

“Spread the corner of your covering over me, for you are my family redeemer.”

- Ruth didn't have many options

- However, many suiters in this life come calling and seeking our hand
- Only One will bring us the lasting happiness
- Happiness in this life, but above all, happiness in the next
- God is calling us to experience the innocence of trust
- Whether it is a nose-ling or a toes-ling
- Boaz would act on Ruth's proposal and make her his wife
- Jesus is looking to see if we will claim Him as our kinsman Redeemer

Vignette 2 – Innocence of Trust—Safe in my Angel's arms

- Innocence of trust appears to come naturally for our pets and for our young children
- But not so easily for us grown ups
- In fact the older we get, it seems the less innocence and the less trust we exude
- So journey back with me to a man—Daniel, the prophet of God
- Daniel is approaching 80 and he is actually *gaining* more and more innocence of trust
- How does he do it?
- Well, he has a method, a practice that he has made a life-long habit
- He prays daily—with three scheduled times to pray, so as not to miss His daily conversations with God

- Read Daniel’s story and you will find that Daniel practiced this methodology
 - a. Facing a problem?
 - b. Immediately present the problem to God
 - c. No fuss, no fretting, only faith in God
 - d. Believing God will answer
- Sounds like a formula for developing the innocence of trust in our own lives
- Well Daniel would be seriously tested in his later years—when he was serving his second monarch of his second kingdom to hold him captive in a strange land
- King Darius liked Daniel and intended to appoint him over all his vice-regents
- There was only one problem—the vice-regents had no desire for the king’s wishes to become a reality
- New Project: Eliminate Daniel
- Their simple plan—enact a new law of a 30-day festival of emperor worship—whereby you could pray to no other entity but the king for 30 days
- Then draw Daniel out as a violator of the king’s edict
- Certain death to any violator—Daniel would be fed to the lions and the vice-regents would be rid of him
- It all appeared to be going according to plan
- When King Darius was presented with Daniel’s violation
- And we turn to the text to read the outcome
- TEXT: Daniel 6:16-18, 20, 22 READ (PAUSE)

“So at last the king gave orders for Daniel to be arrested and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to him, “May your God, whom you serve so faithfully, rescue you.”

- And with this, Daniel was pitched into the den of lions
- Friend, the innocence of trust is something we must see growing in our lives
- It had in Daniel’s life and had influenced the king as well!—

“A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den. The king sealed the stone with his own royal seal and the seals of his nobles, so that no one could rescue Daniel.

- As if the den were a tomb for Daniel, they sealed it
- No hanging by your fingers and waiting for a miraculous rescue
- Daniel plummeted right down among the lions

“Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night fasting. He refused his usual entertainment and couldn’t sleep at all that night.”

- Could it be that Daniel’s innocence of trust actually poured over into the life of Darius the king?
- Innocence of trust is contagious—I’ve seen it, perhaps you have too
- Well, early the next morning, Darius hurried to the den of lions

“When he got there, he called out in anguish, “Daniel, servant of the living God! Was your God, whom you serve so faithfully, able to rescue you from the lions?”

- Those words my friend, from King Darius, drip with the makings of innocence of trust
- Has your God done it! Has he saved you, Daniel?
- Let’s hear what happens next... as Darius listens himself

“My God sent his angel to shut the lion’s mouths so that they would not hurt me, for I have been found innocent in his sight. And I have not wronged you, Your Majesty.”

- Innocence of trust—I am safe in my angel’s arms AMEN!

Vignette 3 – Innocence of Trust-Resting in my Savior

- What amazed me that day when our pet, Joey did a nose-ling with the little girl
- Was the little girl closing her eyes as she bent down to touch noses with Joey
- Our final story from God’s Word is Peter’s story
- The Apostle Peter—the upstart disciple of Jesus’
- Who reminds in so many ways of ourselves and own brash temperament
- Remarkable are the insights brought by Ellen White in her commentary
- You’ll find her words, written in *Desire of Ages*, as they make up the quote in our bulletin today—

“Hitherto (until now) Peter had been inclined to act independently. He had tried to plan for the work of God, instead of waiting to follow out God’s plan.

- Innocence of trust is inherently anticipating the next moment God will act and being prepared to experience it
- Let’s read further in Ellen White’s comment—

“But he (Peter) could gain nothing by rushing on before the Lord. Jesus bids him, “Follow Me.” Don’t run ahead of Me.

- I am reminded of being on Sabbath afternoon hikes with my Dad as a boy
- My brother and I loved to run ahead—but there were times when we were on unfamiliar trails and my father would ask, “Don’t run ahead! Stay right here with me.”
- We would fuss for a little bit, but my father knew better
- So does our heavenly Father
- Why? Why does our heavenly Father know better?
- Let’s read the rest of the quote from *Desire of Ages*—

“Don’t run ahead of Me. Then you will not have the hosts of Satan to meet alone. Let Me go before you, and you will not be overcome by the enemy.”

- Oh what the innocence of trust can teach us
- When the little girl lowered her head to meet Joey’s head with eyes closed, I pictured Peter and Jesus meeting on the beach in Galilee
- John had said to Peter in that the boat, “It is the Lord!” Standing there on the beach.
- Peter immediately jumped in the water and swam to shore—he had to see Jesus, be with Jesus
- What ensued was Jesus extending grace and mercy to Peter
- Three times he asked Peter—“Do you love me?”
- And we pick up the third ask by Jesus in John 21
- TEXT: John 21:17-19 NLT

“A third time he asked him, “Simon, son of John, do you love me? Peter was hurt that Jesus asked the question a third time.

- Developing the innocence of trust means we must go where the pain is to replace it with properly placed trust
- Cause it is there, where your pain is, that walls of distrust must come down
- Watch Peter’s response—I envision him just like that little girl
- Head down, eyes closed and moving towards Jesus

“He (Peter) said, “Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you.”

- Reaching the point of admission is the point where innocence of trust is born
- Jesus then describes to Peter how he would die—just like Jesus had died, being crucified
- Peter turned and asked about John, and Jesus brought him up short

- Saying, “What’s it to you—if I want him to remain alive till I come.”
- Innocence of trust means you have come to rest upon your Savior
- When I rest on my Savior
 - a. Worry is a stranger to me
 - b. Trust becomes my daily companion

Prayer: Jesus, laying at Your feet, find ourselves safe in Your angel’s arms, resting in You my Savior—teach us, teach me the beauty of the innocence of trust. In Your name we pray.
AMEN