

Trust - Honest Trust

Glen - July 22

1

Series Big Idea: Trust is the only way to please God. To say to God, “I trust you” and really mean it, is a great gift to God. There is no better way to worship him. There is no better way to say, “I love you.” Trust is the only way we can learn to become selfless and move beyond self-pity. Trust is the only way to eliminate fear and anxiety. In this series we’ll explore what it means to selflessly trust God. We’ll explore what trust means, the benefits of trust and how we can actually stay on this journey of trust through all the things that attempt to crush trust.

Message Big Idea: What makes it hard to trust God? It’s hard to trust when we are struggling and suffering. It is hard to trust when those we love are hurting. It’s hard to trust when expect God to fix something or get us out of trouble and it doesn’t happen or at least it doesn’t happen the way we think it should. So will we only trust God to give us what we want or is trust seeking God to help us through the challenge? We have to think of trust in a whole new way. It isn’t just getting what we want. It is seeking and depending on God right in the middle of the mess we can’t understand. That’s exactly what Jesus did the night he was arrested. This is what he did. Jesus told God what he wanted, but in the end he trusted God’s way.

Main Idea: Tell God how you feel but trust him with your life.

Main Text: Mark 14:32-36

Supporting texts: 2 Corinthians 5:7

Reflection/Discussion Questions:

1. Right now, what specific situation, event or relationship makes it hard for you to trust God? What would trusting God look like in that situation?
2. What makes it hard for you to trust God in general?
3. In Mark 14:32-36 Jesus asks God if there is another way. He doesn’t want to have to suffer the terrifying torture he will face. Do you think in that request alone that Jesus has faith and trusts God? How is that honest request a sign of trust?
4. Jesus ends his request in Mark 14:36 by saying “*Yet not what I will, but what you will.*” How does this show his deep trust?
5. The lesson of trust we learn from Jesus in the garden before his death is this - Tell God how you feel but trust him with your life. Why are both parts (being honest with what we want and being obedient to God) an important part of trust?
6. As we finish this series on trust, in what specific way will you choose to trust God and respond appropriately?

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2

Main Idea: Tell God how you feel but trust him with your life.

Message:

We are finishing this series today on *Trust*. Trust is foundational to faith, but we all struggle to really trust God. I do. You do too. Why is it so hard to trust God? It's hard to trust when you expect God to fix something or get you out of trouble and it doesn't happen or at least it doesn't happen the way you think it should. It's hard to trust God because what we often want is different than how God wants us to respond. And it's hard to trust God because we can't see him and don't hear his audible voice to assure us.

There's a verse that highlights what trust is and why it is hard. It is found in **2 Corinthians 5:7 - *For we live by faith, not by sight.*** Remember that the words faith and trust have the exact same meaning. Trust is based not on what we can see, but in trusting a God we can't see. That is so hard! Someone has hurt us over and over and is likely to keep doing so. That's real - we see it, hear it, feel it. But God, who we can't see, asks us to forgive them for our own good. But forgiveness can feel like I'm letting someone off the hook. It's hard to trust God for that. But God asks me to forgive to heal and protect me from bitterness that robs me of life. It's hard to trust God who asks me to put him first in ALL things. But my needs, my kids needs, my financial issues, my being accepted by others - these are the things that stare me in the face and are so powerful. They far too often dictate a response that is different from the way God wants us to respond.

And then there are times when horrible things happen to us or to those we love. Let me be clear and upfront. I don't believe for a second that God wants us to get cancer or face financial set back just to teach us to trust. God is not the author of evil...ever. God is not the one who tries to ruin or destroy - that is the work of the Evil One whom we call the Devil. But unfortunately, we live in a broken and sinful world where all kinds of ugly things happen and we do things that get us into trouble - things that God never wanted to happen. Let me say that again: we live in a broken and sinful world where all kinds of ugly things happen and we do things that get us into trouble - things that God never wanted to happen.

But we get confused sometimes and think that faith or trust in God means that he'll fix whatever needs to be fixed - **IF** we have enough faith. He should bring me a miracle and cure my disease. He should drop a wad of cash in my lap to solve my financial problems. He should stop someone from being abusive or unkind. If that were how God always worked, then God would be seen as a genie we could control. Or God could be seen as a God who tries to buy our loyalty. And in some cases, that would mean God would have to make humans act a certain way and then we would no longer be humans but mere robots.

Trust - Honest Trust

Glen - July 22

3

So let's keep going deeper into what trust is about. We choose to trust in our struggles. We choose to trust that God is good and that God will never forsake us and he will guide us through the daily challenges and the huge mountains we face. He won't remove all the problems, but his ways are trustworthy to move us through the problems. Using Nick's image of a mountain from last week - he won't remove the mountain, but he'll show me how to navigate it. This kind of trust is way harder. It takes effort on our part. Honestly, we just would rather God fix it all, take it all away and it all be done and over.

I think about the true story of a woman who delivered a stillborn baby. There was no warning. The doctors had no idea. She didn't have any sense or intuition that something was wrong. There was nothing that prepared her in advance. The pain, loss, numbness was off the chart.

Then came the empty, unempathetic words of condolence. "*Well, we just can't understand God's will.*" Wait a minute. Did God want this or make it happen? I don't think so. Or, "*God needed another angel in heaven.*" Really? Of the tens of thousands of angels already there, he needed this baby? One person read a poem to this grieving mother about how God looked around heaven and decided it needed to be brighter so he picked a beautiful flower which happened to be her baby to cheer the place up. Folks, can I just pause here and as your Pastor speak to this. Those common phrases, especially when someone is hurting, sound like God took her baby. This grieving mother needed to draw near to God and not be told things that end up sounding like God was the one who did wrong. When someone is in a really bad place, sometimes words just won't fix anything. Sometimes the best things we can say is "I'm so sorry. I have no words. I love you so much." Sometimes the best thing we can do is say little but be present.

That mother just needed to pour her heart out to God. When we are struggling, when we are frustrated and all we want is for God to fix things that is when we need to do two things simultaneously. And this is what we'll look at more. This is what I want you to remember as we finish this series on trust. **Tell God how you feel but trust him with your life.** Two parts! Both are essential to real trust. In raw honesty, we have to tell God how we feel. We honestly tell God what we want. We have to tell God the way we want things to go. It is critical we do this. In fact this honesty is a sign of trust. When we truly deeply trust someone, we can tell them anything - even if it is raw and unpleasant to say or hear. Besides, God already knows what we want and how we feel and if we are really wanting a true authentic relationship with him, then we have to be real. We trust that he truly loves us, is good and we trust that he won't abandon us even when our honesty is a bit ugly. God can handle it. He can handle us!

But we can't stop at just saying what we want, because what we want might not be how God wants us to respond. What we want might be shaped more by our own selfishness than on God's wisdom and character. God, in his goodness and grace, often knows that

Trust - Honest Trust

Glen - July 22

4

what we want is not what is best for us! Trust wants to know what God wants. Trust seeks God not to fix the circumstances alone, but to help us respond in a way that honors and pleases him. Trust knows that God's way, though it might be hard, is the best way.

There is no one better than Jesus who gets this. He, better than anyone, knew how unfair life is and what suffering is. He is the only one to walk on this earth and live a perfect life. And yet they misunderstood him, falsely accused him, lied about him and in the end, tortured and killed him. And he, being the Son of God who knows all things, knew in exact detail how painfully his life would end. He knew what was coming. He allowed it to happen. That is staggering to try to comprehend.

So let's go to the moment when Jesus knows his end is at hand. He takes his disciples to a garden on the Mount of Olives that overlooks the Temple in Jerusalem. Let's read - Mark 14:32-36 (pg. 695 - NIV) - **32 They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." 33 He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. 34 "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch."** Jesus' emotional state is "deeply distressed and troubled." The word translated "deeply distressed," in the original language, is the strongest word that can be used to mean being in absolute terror. Jesus' internal emotional feeling is described as a terror so powerful that it feels like it could kill him. He knew the agony that he would face in just a few hours. He knew every detail of the torture coming. He would be beaten. The skin would be ripped off his back. Nails would be pounded through his limbs. He would be suffocating on a cross. Terror.

35 Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. 36 "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." Jews usually prayed standing straight up. Jesus fell to the ground in agony. In the terror that gripped him, Jesus goes to the only one he can trust. He trusted his Dad. "Abba" is an Aramaic word that is best translated "Daddy" or "Papa." He says; "Dad, you can stop the terror I'm going to face." Here's where Jesus' faith and trust goes into the stratosphere spiritually. "Yet not what I will, but what you will." That's trust! **Tell God how you feel but trust him with your life.**

Jesus is saying: "Dad, in the end, I trust you so much, that what I want must surrender to what you want, because what you want is what's best." Now, in this case, God needed Jesus to offer himself in sacrifice for the sake of the entire world. Jesus is unique in this regard. Only he could die for the forgiveness of all the sins of humanity that would save all of us from the eternal consequences of sin. Jesus' death had to happen for God to raise him from the dead and forever defeat death.

Trust is about being honest with God. Jesus was totally honest - "God, I don't want to have to suffer the way they will torture me." Trust is also about our response. Will we

Trust - Honest Trust

Glen - July 22

5

choose to respond to life God's way, even when it is hard and difficult. Trust allows us to surrender our will to God's way of living. We choose to respond in ways that please God. Trust allows us to respond in ways that please and honor God and his character.

Tell God how you feel but trust him with your life.

As I finish this message and this series here's my challenge to you. Decide you are going to trust now in whatever situation you are in. How has life thrown a curveball at you? What are you facing where you can choose to trust God and submit or surrender to him and his way. What is his best way for you to respond when it comes to that challenging relationship? Maybe it is confronting someone with the truth. Maybe it is forgiving someone who deeply hurt you. Maybe it is deciding to trust him in how you handle your money and doing the hard work there. Maybe your next step is to join Financial Peace University that starts next month. You can sign up online now or go to Launching Point room #3. How will you trust him when you know God is asking you to do something outside your comfort zone where fear has been holding you back? Maybe it going on a short-term mission trip. There's a Rocky Point mission trip meeting right after service today in TH5. Maybe it is serving somewhere. Maybe God is asking you to have have a conversation about Jesus with someone. What is your challenge? Will you choose to trust God and put your trust into action? **Tell God how you feel but trust him with your life.**

Or, if you are not ready to trust, be honest with God about that! Tell God openly about your struggle to trust, that's how trust grows!

I'm so glad that you decided to join us today - here and online. You'll get to meet a father and daughter who are living out what we've been talking about this whole series. I want you to see how they are trusting God through a really hard time. Dale and Ashlyn Potter have been a part of Pantano for many years. Watch and listen. [Video - 6 min.]

Song: It is Well

Through it all - keep your eyes on him. Trust him. We surrender to his ways. In our trust we discover that it is well, no matter what comes. **Tell God how you feel but trust him with your life.**