

Trust - Where is Your Trust?

Glen - July 8

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: Jesus and his disciples are in a boat, and as a furious storm hits, fear overwhelms the disciples. The disciples, some of them experienced fishermen, trusted themselves to navigate the boat. But when the storm hits, the disciples go from self-confidence to fear – and Jesus is asleep in the back of the boat. That contrast is a picture of Jesus’ complete trust in God while his disciples are living in fear. So the disciples wake Jesus and he calms the storm. Jesus then asked them and he asks us: *“Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?”* This was recorded because you and I are in a proverbial boat navigating the waters of life. Unexpected storms will hit and swamp our confidence and overwhelm our skills, knowledge and experience. We can be swamped by fear or we can choose faith. The only way through our fear is by a faith that trusts God.

Main Idea: Trusting God is the only way through our fear.

Main Text: Mark 4:35-41

Reflection/Discussion Questions:

- What storm are you facing that is causing you fear? If not currently, share a recent storm you went through. Identify what you were afraid of. What were the effects or results of the fear?
- Share an experience when you felt like you were drowning. Not necessarily in water, but in life. What was happening? How did you feel? What did you do to get help? How did you experience God in that season?
- Glen suggests that fear itself is not bad, we just can’t stay in fear. The purpose of fear is to move us to trust God. Fear reminds us we need to trust God. Describe your trust in God right now. What do you and what don’t you trust about God? Is your trust growing or shrinking? Why?
- Glen said: “Fear keeps us from really living.” What do you think this means for you? How has fear kept you from experiencing life the way God wants you to?
- How will you learn to trust or grow your trust? Glen suggests that we won’t grow our trust if we don’t trust! Do you agree or disagree and why?

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Message:

We are in our second week of a series called *Trust*. Last week we looked at one key verse - Hebrews 11:6 that says trust is essential to have a authentic living relationship with God. That verse says that without faith or trust, it is impossible to please God. And any and every good relationship, with people and with God, requires trust. We'll never really experience a real, deep and dynamic relationship with God until we trust him. Let me repeat that - We'll never really experience a real, deep and dynamic relationship with God until we trust him.

So, if having a relationship with the God who made us and who is wildly in love with us matters, then trust is critical. That's why we are doing this series. This is so important. The only way to the best life possible in this broken world is through trust. The more we trust, the better this life will be. I didn't say this life would be without huge challenges. But with trust, we can learn to live without fear and anxiety through a relationship with the living God. And trust is our only hope of moving past this world to live forever with God. Trust is THAT important.

Jesus spent 3 years with twelve disciples. They were together literally day and night. Why did Jesus do that? Jesus had 3 years to help them learn to trust him before he would die and resurrect and give them the work he started. One of the key moments of learning to trust happened on a boat, in a storm. I want to read that story today. You'll find it in **Mark 4:35-41 (pg. 685 - NIV)**. ***35 That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side." 36 Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. 37 A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. 38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" 39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.***

40 He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

41 They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

Jesus asks two critical questions- **Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?** We'll unpack these shortly. But first, I hope you realize we only have recorded in the Bible a fraction of what actually happened during the 3 years Jesus had with his disciples. We don't know for sure the conversations that were not recorded. But in every story, you have to put yourself as much as you can back into the situation. So as we read this story, we also have to remember the fuller context. Several of the disciples were experienced fishermen. This was not their first time on the sea or in a storm. Several of them had fished most of their lives. They had both experience and ability. So when they got into the boat, they would have assumed that Jesus knew almost nothing

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about boating. He grew up using his hands, maybe a carpenter. And was now just a teacher, more like a Rabbi, and they assumed he would have nothing to add to their ability to navigate this trip across this sea. So Jesus was exhausted and slept and let them navigate the boat. I'm pretty sure the disciples either said out loud or to themselves - "We got this!" Don't miss their self-confidence or that they trusted who? Themselves!

By the way, the "sea" is more like a big lake - 13 miles long, 8 miles wide. This trip would have been no problem except a fast moving storm hit them and it almost swamped the boat. Storms were common on this lake. This was not the first storm they faced. But this one was exceptionally furious. Sort of like what we call 100 year storms. The waves were so strong they feared being capsized. And Jesus was in the back of the boat asleep!

That's hard to imagine! When I was a kid, my dad bought a small 14 foot boat with a 40 hp motor. For those who don't know much about boating, that is a rather small boat with a very small motor. I was about 10 years old and we went to Lake Powell in N. Arizona and as we were crossing the big part of the lake to get back to our campground, a monsoon storm hit. Instantly the waves were taller than the boat at times. My dad was experienced and it took all his skill and every horsepower that little motor had to keep us heading into the waves; that's the only way not to capsize. The front of the boat would go all the way out of the water and then when the wave would pass, the boat would slam into the water. This would happen several times a minute. I thought the boat would break in half. I was sitting in the front passenger seat and totally scared. I think the situation the disciples were facing was even worse. There is no way I or any human could have even thought of sleeping in that kind of a storm. How and even why did Jesus sleep? Don't miss those details. So here's the picture. The disciples trust themselves to navigate the boat. A storm hits and the disciples go from self-confidence to fear. And Jesus is asleep. That is a picture of Jesus' complete trust in God. Jesus' deep trust allows him to sleep in a storm.

But fear showed up in the storm. The disciples were afraid of drowning. That is a deep seated fear we all have. This is where some of you are right now. And I'm not talking about just water. We fear being drowned by the stuff of life.

I don't know if you've thought much about the fear of drowning. There are two parts to feeling like you are drowning - notice I said "feeling like" we are drowning. We hate these two things and we avoid them however we can. **Drowning is when we feel helpless and hopeless.** We feel helpless when we don't have what it takes to fix whatever we are facing. And we are hopeless when we can't see or imagine anything good coming. We were not made to feel helpless or hopeless for any length of time.

It is in the times of drowning, feeling helpless and hopeless that we realize God is our only hope. That's why the disciples woke Jesus to ask for help. They were helpless and hopeless and needed him. And in our drowning and fear, when we need Jesus most, it

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seems like he's asleep, or on vacation, or has more important things to do than get us out of the mess we are in. That's where faith and trust are tested. Will we in fact go honestly to God and ask for help and hope? Will we genuinely look for and allow God to help us and give us hope?

So they wake Jesus and he calms the storm. Whew! What happened next? Did you catch Jesus' questions? He asked them; "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" This was recorded because you and I are in a proverbial boat navigating the waters of life. Unexpected storms will hit and swamp our confidence and overwhelm our skills, knowledge and experience. Jesus asks you and me. We can be swamped by the waters of fear or we can choose faith. It comes down to this: **Fear or Faith?** It's fear or trust. Last week I reminded us that faith and trust in English are translated from the exact same word in the original language used here. Where or in whom is your faith or trust? Jesus asks: Where is your faith? Why is Jesus' question important? **Trusting God is the only way through our fear.**

Our fears are many. Right now, identify your two biggest fears. We all have them! Most of our fears are about what might come or what might happen. Or not happen! Most of our fears are about the storms that might come. We fear losing a job. We fear losing the love or respect of a certain person. We fear rejection if we do or don't do this or that. We fear financial struggle. What if I don't have enough to live well in retirement? What if my car breaks down, how will I pay for the repair or a replacement? We fear for our kids. Will they be safe at school or anywhere for that matter? Will they grow up and be able to manage life? Will they grow up and know God and love Jesus? Some of us fear the final challenge of all of life - death. We need to be honest about that. There's a bunch of us that fear death and that's part of the reason why we keep playing it safe. In these examples and in everyone you face for real, the result is the same. **Fear keeps us from really living.**

But the question Jesus asks - "Have you still no faith?" is actually a question about in whom do we have faith? In whom do we trust? Some people just trust lady luck! They hope things will work out okay. And it is just like going to the casino - sometimes you win. Most of the time you lose. Lady luck by her nature is not reliable, yet that is how so many people live - they live by chance. And they end up living in fear.

Most people are not that casual. Most people trust themselves. On a daily basis I'm tempted to think that I can manage me better than anyone else, including God. I trust in my own gut, my own logic, my abilities to decide how I'll live and how I'll react and respond to life. I have my plans for me! I'm just being honest. Look, I know I'm a pastor. I do know and love God. I do trust him. But I'm also powerfully tempted moment by moment to trust myself! I don't sit down each day and rationally think "I can do this better than God" because I don't actually believe I can! But since I was a child I've had a belief inside that has had a powerful control over me - I think I know what's best for me! I trust me! And that belief will control me...until I hit a storm I can't manage. The belief

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that I know best and can manage me will be in control until...I intentionally decide to trust God! I'm pretty sure all this is true for you as well.

And sometimes we trust other people. Far too many times I've trusted people who gave every indication they were trustworthy. And I'm a trusting person and trusting people got me burned. I've got burn scars all over me and in me. Emotionally, I'm a burn victim. I'll bet you been burned too. I've had people take all my goodness and generosity and use it against me. I've had people I trusted use my confidential vulnerable information to hurt me. Let me just say here that even though I've trusted what ended up being untrustworthy people, I still choose to trust. Why would I risk being burned again? Isn't that stupid?! Because trust is the only way to ever hope for good healthy relationships. And so relationships are risky! But there's no great reward without some risk - that's life.

Now, Jesus' question is this: Who do I really trust? Have I trusted chance? Have I primarily trusted myself? Have I trusted people? Of course, where Jesus is leading us is this - have we really trusted Jesus? People come and go! Storms will hit and pass. I'll be up for some challenges and I don't have what it takes for other challenges. But Jesus never leaves us. Jesus never gives up on us. Jesus is God who made us and knows us better than we know ourselves. Jesus is God who created this world and can do miracles when in his wisdom he knows that is what is best. And Jesus can calm any and every storm of fear that rises up inside me. Jesus is the only way to overcome the fear of death - for he has promised that if I follow him he will lead me into eternity. So the question is this: **Will I trust him?!**

Trusting Jesus is our only hope for a great life now and for a life that never ends. Otherwise, just like the disciples, we'll be trapped in our fears. We'll let our fears diminish the life God planned for us. **Trusting God is the only way through our fear.**

Is Jesus worthy of my trust? Is he trustworthy? Am I convinced that he is for me, and loves me? Am I confident he is good and always wants the very best for me? Do I believe that he is who he says he is - the Son of God, who is God who lived in a human body? Do I trust that if I have or do decide to follow Jesus, that not only are all my sins forgiven, but that God will do what he says and come and live inside me to guide me through all of life. Trust is a choice! It often feels risky. And we don't go from 0 trust to 100% trust in a day or one event. We learn to trust a little at a time. This story was one of hundreds of events that helped the disciples trust. **We won't grow our trust if we don't trust!** We choose to trust & thus learn to trust.

But what if our answer is "no" or "not yet." What if our fear and doubt is greater than our faith and trust? Faith and trust are NOT easy. That's why Jesus had his disciples on a 24/7/265 three year crash course in trusting. It is hard to trust God in the storm. But my struggle, my storm, doesn't change who Jesus is. God is God and he is trustworthy. My doubt doesn't change who Jesus is.

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Dallas Willard reminds us that in our storm, when God seems absent or distant that we can find God. Here's what he says: **God's address is at the end of your rope!** We want him to be at the beginning, but in the beginning we still think we can handle the storm. It is often only in the storm and when we realize we can't handle it, that we might drown in helplessness and hopelessness that we then really look and turn to God. We often only find God in the fear at the end of the rope when there's no other options left. **The only way through our fear is by a faith that deeply trusts God.**

What is the fear that is robbing you of life? What is the storm you are in right now? Can you handle it by yourself? Or are you sensing you might be drowning? **The only way through our fear is by a faith that deeply trusts God.** Where is your faith? Will you trust Jesus?

What God wants is to have a relationship built on trust. We can only know and experience God by following Jesus. We trust that he will lead us to the God of the universe, God our Father. That all starts with a decision of trust that says I'll follow Jesus. May I ask you to be serious about that right now. Are you following Jesus? Are you ready to follow Jesus? Say "yes" to Jesus. Put your trust in him.

Once we decide to trust Jesus and follow him, we say yes by going into the water. We are not afraid of drowning. In baptism we are declaring that we trust Jesus. We go into the water in a symbolic way. For that second we go into the water and unite with Jesus and come out to start new. In baptism we make a promise and commitment to God to trust him and we'll follow Jesus to the best of our ability.

The most important decision we make is this - I will trust Jesus and follow him. That's a real transformation. That's life changing. Today I want to invite you to trust Jesus. I want to invite you to make the commitment to following him in baptism. In a moment, we'll sing the song *Be Still*. The idea of the song is that when we trust Jesus, we can be still and rest in God. That's why Jesus was asleep in the boat.

As we sing and stand, if you are ready to make that commitment, then come here into the auditorium, to the door down by the stage to your left as you come in. There will be people there to help you. We have everything you need, even if you didn't come prepared to be baptized. We have private changing rooms, clothes to be baptized in, towels and lots of help. So there's no reason not to come. If you are ready to trust, then put action to your trust. Come as we stand and sing...

Song: Be Still