



Sermon Series: Real Faith for Real Life

Sermon Title: Trusting and Actions

Date: 10/18/2026

Big Idea: Choose God's way so it goes well for you.

Jesus had no correction for the church in Philadelphia. In **Revelation 3:8** he says they had little strength, yet kept his word. In **Revelation 3:11-12** he promises that those who hold on will be pillars in God's temple, in a place that never shakes. In our series Real Faith for Real Life, we ask what it looks like to trust God with our actions: what he says to do, and not do, is best for you.

Trust Means Choosing God's Way

Proverbs 16:3 says to commit whatever you do to the Lord. It doesn't mean praying about a plan you've already made and asking God to bless it. It means giving him permission to change what you do next.

Most of us trust God in general. The struggle is the specific instruction that doesn't line up with our reasoning. That goes back to **Genesis 3:6**, where Eve saw fruit that looked good. We pick what looks good to us, and that's what our reasoning does whenever it argues with God's instruction.

So why does God give instructions? One reason is in **Deuteronomy 10:13** - it's for our own good. **Proverbs 28:26** says those who trust themselves are fools, but those who walk in wisdom are kept safe. Think of the small lie that **Ephesians 4:25** and **Proverbs 10:9** address, or the sharp comeback that **James 1:19-20** and **Proverbs 15:1** address. Every time, God's instruction is clear and our reasoning has a good argument for why this time is different. Trusting God with your actions means letting what he says win that argument.

Commands like the sacrifices pointed to Jesus, who fulfilled them, but the principle that God's way is better remains, and **Colossians 3:17** says whatever you do, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus. Your actions don't earn salvation; Jesus settled that on the cross. But they matter. **2 Corinthians**

5:10 says believers will give an account for what they've done, which concerns rewards, not whether you're in. That's why Jesus told Philadelphia to hold on so no one takes their crown.

The Choice Gets Made In The Gap

James 1:22 says not to merely listen to the word, deceiving yourselves, but to do what it says. Agreeing with God without obeying fools only you. In **Luke 6:46**, Jesus asks why you call him Lord and don't do what he says. In **Luke 6:47-49**, the person who hears and does is like a house on rock, while the one who doesn't has no foundation when the flood comes.

The gap is the distance between hearing and doing. Fear, comfort, pride, or a reasonable-sounding excuse moves in, and the longer it sits unchallenged, the more obvious it feels.

Hard times aren't always the result of disobedience. Job and the disciples obeyed and still suffered. Sometimes, though, hardship is the cost of choosing our own way. Grace removes eternal condemnation but not always earthly consequences, so there may be relationships to repair and habits to unlearn. Yet you can choose differently. **2 Corinthians 5:17** says anyone in Christ is a new creation, and Romans 6:14 says sin is no longer your master.

The Choice Shows Up In What You Do

Colossians 3:17 says whatever you do - not most of it, all of it. This week, name one area where you already know God's instruction and have been negotiating with it. Maybe a relationship you keep putting off repairing or a sin you keep excusing. You don't need ten changes, just the one you already know about. To keep hearing his instructions, read a chapter of Proverbs a day. It has thirty-one, so you'll finish in a month.

Jesus didn't commend Philadelphia for one impressive moment, but for keeping his word day after day with little strength. Choose his way over yours, in the actual decisions in front of you this week. Choose God's way so it goes well for you.

Discussion Questions

1. Where do you see yourself negotiating with a clear instruction from God because your own reasoning sounds better?
2. What does it mean to commit your plans to the Lord, and how is that different from asking him to bless a decision you've already made?
3. What tends to fill the gap between hearing God's word and doing it for you - fear, comfort, pride, or an excuse?
4. How does knowing your actions don't earn salvation, but still matter, change the way you think about obedience?
5. What is the one change you already know about that you need to make this week, and how can those around you help?