



Which of the following outcomes are you willing to trust into God's hands?

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| Your Salvation | Eternal Life |
| World Peace | Personal Happiness |
| Healthy Relationships | Personal Health |
| Health of Loved Ones | Financial Security |
| Inner Joy | A Sense of Purpose |
| Your Future | Friendships |

Your answers probably depend on at least two things: (1) the degree to which you think the particular outcome is within your power to manage, and (2) the degree to which you consider God trustworthy. For instance, if you consider that God truly has your best interest in mind, you might not feel the need to manage your own happiness. At the same time, if you have greater trust in your own abilities and strategies to secure your financial future, you might be tempted to compromise God's teaching on how to use your resources.

King David had moments of great success and great failure in trusting important outcomes to God. Twice he had the opportunity to kill King Saul and open the way to the throne for himself, but both times he chose to honor God's value system and trust him with the outcomes. There was that time, however, when David took Bathsheba for himself and then killed her husband Uriah. David attempted to manage his own happiness only to realize later the injustice of his actions.

What is the condition of your trust in God? Choose today to celebrate how that trust has grown. Commit today to grow in your relationship with God so that you might trust him even more. Seek God's forgiveness today for the times you've opted to trust in your own abilities more than his promises. Share with someone else today just how trustworthy God is.

Personal Reflection and Application

Keep a journal to address the following questions and topics.

AC Read the story of David found in 1 Samuel 16-31 and 2 Samuel 1-24.

AC Identify the various feelings and messages David communicates to God in Psalm 22. Talk with God about some similar feelings and thoughts you have in your life.

AC Identify the various feelings and messages David communicates to God in Psalm 51. Talk with God about some similar feelings and thoughts you have in your life.

AC Identify the various feelings and messages David communicates to God in Psalm 103. Talk with God about some similar feelings and thoughts you have in your life.

Q What is consistently the hardest thing for you to trust into God's hands? What do you fear? Share your reflections with a wise Christian friend.

P *Almighty God, forgive me for my lack of trust in you. Enable me to trust you more.*



Small Groups

Opening Question:

Throughout your life, who have been a couple of people who have truly earned your trust?

AC Read the story of David and Goliath (1 Sam. 17). Identify the roles played by Saul, David, and God. Speculate on why David’s trust in God was greater than that of the rest of the Israelites. It seems that some people thought David’s trust was in reality nothing but foolishness. How do you discern between what amounts to being foolish and what it looks like to trust God’s wisdom in your life?

AC Read the story of when David spared Saul’s life (1 Sam. 24). Compare and contrast the behavior of David and Saul. David seems to understand that for God the ends do not justify the means. To what degree do you use “end” arguments to justify not so godly means in a) your thought life, b) your finances, c) the way you use your time, and d) the way you treat people around you.

AC Read the story of David and Bathsheba (1 Sam. 11:1-12:25 and Psalm 51). How can your group help guard against sexual sin? How can your group provide Nathan-esque accountability?

P *Lord, nurture in us a marvelous trust in you.*

One-on-One Relationships

Trust is something that is earned, so your patience, honesty, and integrity are important in encouraging trust in your disciple.

Trust can be a big issue for a lot of people. Most of us seem to have a *trust ceiling*, a limit to our willingness to take God at his word. This ceiling can be different for various segments of our lives.

You might be able to help your disciple examine her or his own trust issues by first reflecting on your life and then sharing appropriately your journey of learning to trust God. It could be really helpful if you identified some notion of what part of your life God is asking you to trust more into his hands and how you are learning to give up control.

You can help your disciple to learn to trust God more simply by exposing him or her to more opportunities to see God at work. Show your disciple God at work in Scripture. Keep track of prayer concerns and note how God provides. Apply God’s teachings to your lives and reflect on the trustworthiness of God’s ways.

It’s awfully hard to argue a person into trusting more, so remember to listen more than you talk and to join your disciple in watching for how God will choose to be faithful to both of you.

Families

Pick and tweak items below to fit your own family’s context.

AC Have a David and Goliath night. Cook up some Cornish game hens and eat the entire meal with your hands. After dinner, establish the Philistine Camp across the living room from the Israelite Camp. Let each family member take turns being David and Goliath. Reinforce the idea that trusting God is what made the difference for David.

AC At dinner one night place one of the following questions under each plate. Each person takes a turn asking his or her question. ▪ *If David went to high school in the USA today, would he be more tempted or less tempted to commit adultery with Bathsheba?* ▪ *Who bears the responsibility of adultery more, David or Bathsheba? Why?* ▪ *Does one sin always lead to more sins? Why or why not?* ▪ *Do all sins come with consequences? Give examples.* ▪ *What breaks the cycle of sin?*

AC Parents, give your children the gift of having reasons to be trusting. This week be conscious of what you promise and then choose to follow through—including following through on consequences for unacceptable behavior and celebrating good behavior.

P *God, may my trust in you be a positive example to my kids.*