

**Extreme Makeover**  
**Week 3: DEVELOPING TRUST**  
**Taught September 30, 2007**  
**Deut. 4:15-16 (GN)**

Who are you going to trust? In this series first we talked about developing your standards, choosing who's going to be your standard for life. Then we talked about accepting responsibility for your life. The next question that comes up is, Who are you going to trust? Let me ask you:

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**Who Do You Trust?**

I think we can look around and see that nobody really trusts anybody anymore. We are a cynical nation, a doubting nation. We tend to be wondering what is really the truth. We are skeptical of everything and everybody. Customers don't trust business anymore. Employees don't trust managers any more. Nobody trusts the government any more. The unions don't trust the companies anymore. They did a survey of the trust level in America and discovered that the least trusted professions in America are now: telemarketers, used car salesmen, and at the bottom of the barrel, politicians. Isn't that exciting given the presidential election in 14 months and the fact that tomorrow morning the State of Michigan government will be shut down unless they can come to so resolve.

What's behind this decline in trust in our society where we're skeptical of everything and everybody? The answer is what we talked about two weeks ago. Our society doesn't value truth any more. What they value is what works. It doesn't matter if it's true or not. Truth and trust go together. There is only one letter difference between truth and trust. You trust people who tell you the truth. You don't trust people if you don't think they're telling you the truth.

In a society where most of the people say, "There is no such thing as absolute truth" that means you can trust absolutely no one. You can't depend on anything or anybody to always tell you the truth if there are no absolute truths in life.

And so that causes stress in our lives because you were wired to be a person of trust. When God made you and God created you, when He designed you, He wired you in such a way that you have the capacity and the desire to trust in something greater than yourself because He wanted you to have a relationship with Him. If you don't learn to trust God, you will create something to trust in. It may be a diploma on the wall.

That gives me my security. It may be money in the bank. That gives me my self esteem. It may be a beautiful husband or wife on your arm. They are my source of significance. It may be a career, a goal, whatever. But you will create something to worship. You will create something to value. You will create something to trust in.

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The second command of the Ten Commandments says "*Don't make any idols.*" Why is that? Another place in the Bible, in the book of Deuteronomy, it says this "***For your own good don't sin by making an idol in any form.***" ***Dueteronomy 4:15-16 GW*** God says, I want you to have a correct understanding of what I'm like, have a correct image of me in your mind. It's really for your own good.

This morning I want to do a couple of things. I want to ask two questions:

1. What happens when I trust something else or someone else more than God?
2. How do I become more trustworthy?

## **WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I TRUST ANYTHING ELSE MORE THAN GOD?**

There are two negative effects:

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### **1. I'm disappointed.**

Any time I expect other people to meet a need in my life that only God can meet, I'm going to be disappointed. Any time you take anything -- and we can even make good things idols, you can make your family an idol. There's nothing wrong with your family but anytime you look to any single person or any single thing in life to meet all your needs, you're going to be let down. It's the idea, of "If I could just get married, then I'd be happy." "If I could just find that right person, my life would be totally fulfilled." That's creating an idol. Or, "If I could just get this job" or "If I could just make `X' amount of money, then I would feel significant. Then I would feel confident. Then I would feel good about myself. Then life would be fantastic." You have just created an idol. And you're going to be discouraged by it.

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The Bible says this, in Jeremiah, "***Those who make idols are disillusioned.***" Always. Because they let you down.

The Bible says in Hebrews, **"Of what value is an idol? For he who makes it trusts in his own creation."** It's crazy! We look at a person in the jungle who carves out a little god and then bows down and worships it and we say, "That's dumb! You made it!" But we do that all the time with our careers, relationships, bank accounts. We act as if that is what gives us meaning in life, that's what gives us significance, that's what gives us self worth. And you're going to be disillusioned.

You create something to worship, you create something to trust if you don't trust God. It's amazing all the things people will trust in instead of God. Horoscopes, palm reading, tea leaves. We hang little crystals in our rooms or wear things around our neck even crosses or an extra Bible in the house. We think that's going to ward off all the bad things. Or we put a little statue on our car as if that little statue can protect us.

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Look at what the Bible says. **"The poor deluded fool is trusting in something that can give him no help at all. Yet he cannot bring himself to ask: Is this thing, this idol, a lie?"** When we trust in anything besides God to take care of us, ultimately we're going to be disappointed, disillusioned.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> negative effect when I trust anything else more than God;

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## 2. We're going to be dominated.

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The Bible says **"You were controlled by dead idols who led you astray."**

Anything you value most in your life... If I said "Make a list of the top ten most important things to you. Put them in order." Whatever is in first place is your god. If it is not The God, you have just built an idol. Whatever is in first place in your life, whatever you value most, eventually controls you. That's why I suggest you'd be better off to make it God. Because He's the only one wise enough to give you the right directions. This is how addictions start. Something becomes so important and pretty soon I think I'm controlling it, but it's actually controlling me.

The Bible says in the book of Psalms, **"Those who make idols end up like them and so does everyone who trusts them."** Whatever you value the most in life, you're going to become like. So if I value money most important in life, I'm going to become a materialist. I can't help it. If I value pleasure most important in life, I'm going to become a hedonist. If I value

Jesus Christ most important in life I become a Christian. Whatever you put in top value in your life is going to shape you. If it's not God it's going to warp you.

Why do we do this? Instead of just trusting God, why do we start trusting in all these other things to give our life meaning significance, etc.?

The reason we create idols is we want a god we can control. We want to shrink God down so we can manage Him. We want to reduce Him to our size so we can put Him in a little box. Really, we don't want a God in life, we want a genie. I don't want a God that I have to serve. What I want is a god who serves me. I don't want a God that I have to worship and love. I just want a god who loves me and lets me do whatever I want to, regardless of whether it's right or wrong. I want a genie. I want to control God, assign Him to a place.

This is the ultimate expression of individualism that everybody gets to create their own god. You create your own god to match your lifestyle and he says, "Everything you do is OK." What you don't like in other people are all the bad things. Then I create a god who says all the things I like to do are fine but all the things I disapprove of, my god says those are wrong. We each create our own little god. That's called making an idol and God says, "Don't do that!"

We still do this today in America. We have some people who want to make a flag waving God, who runs around justifying all their political opinions. "God's on our side!" God, the flag and me. We have other people who want to create a status quo god -- don't rock the boat, live it the way it is. There are certain people who want to create a success god, which says, "God wants everybody to be filthy rich." So we can justify materialism. On and on. God says, Don't do it. Don't reduce Me down in size. Don't cut Me into little pieces. Don't misrepresent Me. I want people to know the truth about Me.

I need to warn you of what's called syncretism. It's a very prevailing philosophy in the world today. Syncretism is the idea of combining a bunch of ideas from many different philosophies and ways of life, put them all together and that will become your philosophy. That becomes your religion. Get an idea here and there, throw in a few of yourself, make them up, and that's what God's like. We have this all the time in our society.

God says, Don't do that. It's just a combination of old lies. When I get into that kind of stuff, it inevitably leads to disappointment and domination and eventually destruction of my own life. I lose my own identity. I stop becoming what God made me to be.

So then, the second question is: **How do I become more trustworthy?**

How can I develop trustworthiness in me?

Actually, we could even back up and ask the question, why is it even important to be trustworthy?

This quote comes to mind;

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***"The greatest single cause of atheism today is Christians. Those who acknowledge Jesus with their lips then walk out the door and deny Him with their lifestyles is what an unbelieving world finds simply unbelievable."*** ~ Brennan Manning

The reason why it is important for you and I to be trustworthy is because of what it says to those around us. For people who supposedly love God or are in a relationship with him, to say one thing and do another, that is unbelievable, especially to people who are looking at faith issues or trying to discover Jesus. If Christ followers want to be believable they have to be someone who does what they say they will do, their word needs to be their bond.

## **How Do I Become More Trustworthy**

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### **1. Tell the Truth**

I need to be truthful if I am to be trusted. Any untruth will cause my trustworthiness to fade. Even those seemingly small little white lies that we tell to divert conflict from us or to protect someone else. They have a way of stealing from us our ability to be trusted.

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### ***Ephesians 4:15 MESS***

***God wants us to grow up, to know the whole truth and tell it in love—like Christ in everything.***

Truth telling is difficult at best. But it is very necessary if I am going to be a person of my word. I have to be truthful even when the truth is painful, but I have a responsibility to tell the truth in a loving and kind way.

Spouses, this starts with us. We have to be honest and truthful with each other. We have to tell the truth not just parts of the truth, to spare someone pain or to protect ourselves. Tell the truth.

Parents we need to tell the truth to our children, this starts believe it or not way back with the things that we celebrate; Like Christmas and Easter, what kinds of things are you telling your kids that isn't really true?

I believe this so very much that being truthful to our children is crucial because if our kids find out that Santa and the Bunny and the tooth fairy aren't real, then what about God and Jesus? They will draw the same conclusion. Also we will be showing them by example that it is ok to not be truthful in some things. Is that the example and message we want to send to our kids? I don't.

If I am going to become more trustworthy I need to first start telling the truth.

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## 2. Trust God

For me to be trusted, I have to trust in the one who is ultimately trustworthy, God. He can be trusted. But to trust him I have to discover who he is and who he isn't.

If you don't know God and you don't know what He's really like, or you've got some of these phony ideas about Him that you've picked up who knows where, you're not going to trust Him. When God says things like, "I thought up sex and it's to be reserved only for marriage."

If you don't really know God, you're going to go, "Who are You to tell me what I'm to do with my sexuality? Who set You up as judge?" You're not going to trust Him. When God says, "I want you to tell the truth even on your taxes." "Why in the world should I do that? I don't know who You are. On what basis should I trust You?" If you don't know God, you tend to question all the things He says to do.

On the other hand, if you really know God and you really know how much He matters to you and how much you matter to Him, and if you really know what He's got in store for your life and if you really understand that He has your best interest at heart, then you don't have trouble at all following what He says. It doesn't make sense to me, but I know you always do the right thing when you follow God. He created the owner's manual and He made me and I figure He knows more about life than I do. He's just trying to help me avoid some pain. It all comes down to, **Do you know Him?**

That's why God says, in the Bible,

**Proverbs 3:5-6 NLT**

***Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.***

I want you to make sure that you really know the real Me, not some phony image or some idol. That's a problem today because most people spend more time in front of the television than they do reading God's word. So, we get most of our ideas about God from television.

And what happens is that we end up creating an idol of convenience who justifies what you do. That's not the truth. What matters is not what you and I think God is like. What matters is what God says He is like. And He's very clear about it in His word. What matters is truth. Truth matters, not just what I think up. You've got to know what God says. That's why God says, If you don't know Me in the true way, you're worshipping an idol. If you don't know the truth about Me, you can't trust Me. If you can't trust Me, we can't have a relationship. All relationships are built on trust and truth. If they're genuine. If they're not, it causes all kinds of problems. The alternative to trusting God is worry, conflict, and feeling like you've got to control it all. That is a very stressful, miserable way to live. God says, "I've got a better idea. Trust Me!"

And I can trust God, because;

**a. BECAUSE HE ALWAYS TELLS THE TRUTH.**

He is the truth. God is truth incarnate. Truth is defined by God. He is the essence of truth. The nature of God are those things that are right. The things that are not right are those things that are anti-God, anti His nature. They're the opposite.

The Bible says, *"We can completely count on him, for it is impossible for God to lie."*

**b. BECAUSE HE LOVES ME.**

He says it over and over in the Bible -- many, many places. He demonstrates it in your life every day. You were created as an act of God's love. God thought you up and created you to love you and to let you love Him. You were created as an object of God's love. The Bible says over and over God loves you.

Every one of you who have been parents are going to remember this. Remember the time when your children were small and you were in a swimming pool and they couldn't swim yet. They stood there at the edge and you were in the pool. You'd say, "Come on, jump to me. I'll catch you." They didn't know how to swim and they were frightened. You'd say, "It's OK. Just trust me. I'll catch you." The child wants to, but it's just that step of faith...

At some point when they do jump off into your arms and you surround them with your arms of love, can you remember, first, the joy that they felt when they'd take that step of faith? What a rush to trust and not be disappointed!

I remember those times with my girls what I felt when they'd jump and I'd grab them: "My kids trust me!"

Don't you know that's how God feels? When you step across the line and say, "OK God, who am I kidding? I've been trying to run this thing on my own." You step across the line and jump into the arms of God and He grabs you in love and God says, "Finally! My child trusts Me. The one I created, that I made, that I've loved even before they even existed. Finally, they trust Me."

What I'm talking about today is not just for those of you who are seekers but for those of you who have been Christians 20, 30, 40 years. You've never really given everything in your life to God. You've held back your finances. Or you've held back your career. Or some other area. Where you are saying; "I know better than God in this area. I can't afford to do what God says." On the day when you jump into His arms and say, "One hundred percent God, I'm going to do whatever You say. You tell me the truth and You love me. I don't care if it's popular. I don't care if it's hard. I don't care if I don't understand it. I don't care if it's difficult or there's problems with it. I'm going to do what You say in my finances, in my relationships, in my time, with my life, with my dreams. And God, I give it all to You. I give You all the things I'm ashamed of in my past. And I give You all my hopes and aspirations for the future. I'm jumping into Your arms." It will be a rush you've never known.

Prayer;