

## WEEK 9: TRUSTING JESUS (part 2)

### INTRODUCTION

What was something your parents did when you were younger that drove you crazy?

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Are there any things that your parents did when you were younger that drove you crazy but now when you look back, you are really glad they did them? If so will you share them with us?

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### FORETHOUGHT

#### The Importance of Faith

An interesting conversation took place between Jesus and Peter which is documented in Luke's Gospel. It reads:

**(Luke 22:31)**

*<sup>31</sup>"Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you<sup>[1]</sup> as wheat. <sup>32</sup>But **I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail.** And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."*

What do you think "sift you as wheat means"? Does this sound good or bad?

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Why do you think that Jesus would allow Peter to be attacked by Satan in this way?

(TIP: Read the verse closely; during these trials and attacks instigated by Satan; what will be tested?)

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## DISCOVER

### A Biblical Perspective; Trusting God during Trials and Hardship

According to **James 1:2-4**; why should we be joyful in the midst of difficult trials?

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According to **1 Peter 3:6-7**; what was the purpose of the suffering and trials?

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According to **2 Corinthians 1:8-9**; what was the benefit of the difficult trials? What did the hardship teach them to do? Why is this a good thing; why is it important?

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## APPLICATION

How can what we just learned change our perspective as we endure hardships and face trials?

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## DISCOVER

### Ultimately, what is Our Faith in? (What Are We Believing Will Happen?)

How can the following promises from God comfort us?

(Refer to **Jeremiah 29:11**)

*For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD , "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

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(Refer to **Romans 8:28**)

*And we know that in **all** things God works for the good of those who love him*

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(Refer to **Rom 8:38-39**)

*<sup>38</sup>For I am **convinced** that neither **death nor life**, neither **angels nor demons**,<sup>[1]</sup> neither the **present nor the future**, nor **any powers**,<sup>39</sup> neither **height nor depth**, nor **anything else in all creation**, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

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## **FORETHOUGHT**

Think about the meaning of this verse (Hebrews 12:2) as you read the following passages in the Gospel of John.

(**Hebrews 12:2**)

*Let us **fix** our eyes on Jesus, the **author and perfecter** of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

## **DISCOVER**

**Where Does Great Faith (Trust) Come From?**

Notice *how* people's faith is started (authored) and further developed (perfected)...

What resulted from Jesus performing the miracle in Cana (miracle of turning water to wine)? What was his disciples' reaction?

(Refer to **John 2:11**)

*<sup>11</sup>This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples **put their faith in him**.*

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In John chapter 13, Jesus reveals to His apostles that one of them will betray Him. What was the purpose of Him telling them in advance?

(Refer to **John 13:19**)

*<sup>19</sup>"I am telling you now before it happens, **so that when it does happen you will believe that I am He.***

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In John chapter 16, Jesus reveals to His apostles that they will be put out of the synagogue and they will be persecuted. What was the purpose of Him telling them in advance?

(Refer to **John 16:14**)

*<sup>4</sup>I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will **remember** that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you.*

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What practical purpose did the miracles serve?

(Refer to **John 2:23**)

*<sup>23</sup>Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many people saw the miraculous signs he was doing and **believed** in his name.*

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How did Jesus increase the apostles' faith in John chapter 16?

(Refer to **John 16:19-31**)

*<sup>19</sup>Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, "Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me'? <sup>20</sup>I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. <sup>21</sup>A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born*

she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. <sup>22</sup>So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. <sup>23</sup>In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. <sup>24</sup>Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete. <sup>25</sup>Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father. <sup>26</sup>In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. <sup>27</sup>No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. <sup>28</sup>I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father."

<sup>29</sup>Then Jesus' disciples said, "Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech. <sup>30</sup>**Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.**"

<sup>31</sup>**"You believe at last!"** Jesus answered.

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Why was the gospel of John written?

(Refer to **John 20:31**)

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## APPLICATION

Who was increasing the peoples' faith; Jesus or the people?

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Why do you think we are exhorted to fix our eyes on Jesus "the author and perfecter of our faith"? And how do we actually do this (fix our eyes)?

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What are some other means by which we can develop a greater faith in Jesus? (Think a bit about how you would develop greater trust in a friend).

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## CONCLUDING THOUGHT

Peter was doing just fine walking on the water when He had his eyes on Jesus. But He began to sink when he was distracted by the wind (the circumstances).

(Matt 14:28-31)

<sup>28</sup>"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."

<sup>29</sup>"Come," he said.

<sup>30</sup>Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. **But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"**

<sup>31</sup>Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "**why did you doubt?**"

## THOUGHTS FOR REFLECTION, RECONCILIATION AND PRAYER

Is greater faith in Jesus important to me? Why or why not?

Have I made the choice in advance to trust in Jesus' character, plan and Holy Spirit in times of hardship and circumstance?

Am I following Jesus in obedience, to the best of my abilities, so that *He* can increase my *faith* in Him and increase my *love* for Him?

Am I earnestly seeking to live a life full of personal experiences with Jesus?

Do I pray that He will reveal more of Himself to me and increase my faith in Him and my love for Him?