



*Trusting God in Trying Times*  
7-DAY DEVOTIONAL

*by Sharon Jaynes*



How many times have you heard the words, “Just trust me,” only to be disappointed or disillusioned? How many times have you put your faith in and counted on a person to do the right thing only to be deflated and discouraged? How many times have those words “Just trust me” turned out to be nothing more than an empty promise or a primer for disaster? Is there anyone trustworthy these days?

What is trust? Webster defines it this way: “To have faith or trust in, to rely on (someone) to do something or permit someone to use something in the proper way, to believe, to confide (someone or something) to a person’s responsible care, to commit someone or something to the responsible care of (a person), to have faith in God.”

Your life may be blessed with people you can trust—friends who really do have your best interests at heart and are there when you need them. Your life may also be littered with people you’ve trusted who have let you down. Perhaps you’ve got scars to remind you of people who’ve held your heart carelessly, walked away flippantly, or broken their word unapologetically. It has happened to all of us. And the hurt from a broken trust can make it difficult to count on people again.

But here’s some good news: God is not man. God never changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. He will never leave or forsake us. He says what He means and means what He says. God cares for you unceasingly, provides for you immeasurably and loves you unconditionally. And you really can trust Him.

Allow this 7-Day Devotional to remind you of all the reasons you have to trust God in trying times.

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<sup>1</sup> *The New Lexicon Webster’s Dictionary of the English Language* (New York, New York: Lexicon Publications, Inc.:1990), 1059.

## DAY 1: WHO'S IN YOUR BOAT?

She was among an eager group of four-year-old children crowded around my feet as I taught their Sunday school lesson. I was the teacher and they were the students—or at least that's how it started out. The pint-sized audience listened intently as I tried to create a mental image of Jesus and His disciples trapped in a thunderstorm on the Sea of Galilee.

"The winds bleeeeeeeew and rocked the little boat back and forth, back and forth. The waves were soooooo big; they splashed over the wooden sides and got the men all wet. Then water started filling up the boat—and do you know what happens when a boat gets full of water?"

"It sinks," they chimed together.

"That's right." I continued with a wrinkled brow and concerned look on my face. "That's not all. The lightening was soooooo bright, it looked like fire in the sky. And the claps of thunder were soooooo loud, the men could feel them vibrate in their chests."

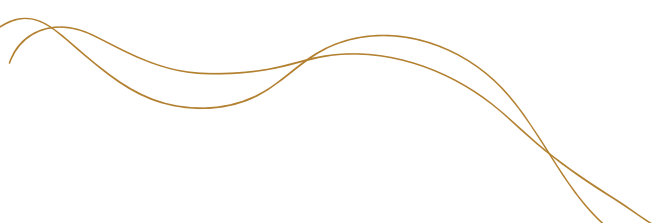
After painting this picture of impending doom and thinking I would have my "congregation" just a little worried about the fate of these men trapped in a storm, I asked the question. "Now if you were in a tiny boat, caught in a terrible storm like this one, would you be afraid?"

Then one precious little girl, confident and unshaken by the entire scenario, shrugged her shoulders and replied, "Not if Jesus was in the boat with me."

I will never forget that answer. Her words have echoed in my mind for decades, and I've come to realize that this is the answer that calms all my fretting and fears. See, just as the disciples had the storm raging all around them, many times the storms of life rage around us.

A friend discovers she has cancer, a husband loses his job, a child is born with birth defects. The bank account shrinks low, the bills rise high, the financial future looks bleak. A grown son walks away from the faith, the teenager daughter becomes pregnant, the family portrait from the early years stands in stark contrast to what you now see sitting around the kitchen table.

Waves of fear rock our boat and threaten to spill us into the depths of despair without even a life jacket to keep us afloat. Storms cause us to doubt who we are, what we have, and where we are as a child of God.



“Tell me, would you be afraid?”

“Not if Jesus was in the boat with me.”

Let's go back to the storm that Jesus just about slept through.

That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. 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?”

He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

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

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

Who is this indeed! Jesus is the Son of God who always has been and always will be. He is the way-maker, miracle-worker, promise-keeper, light of the darkness.<sup>2</sup>

Did you catch the disciples' question? “Don't you care if we drown?” Sure, he cared. He just wasn't worried. He said they were going to the other side, and to the other side they would go! No matter what storm threatened to keep them from getting there. Yes, he cared. No, he wasn't worried. And you don't need to be worried either. Jesus sees you, hears you, and knows you by name. He is in the boat with you.

God said, “I will never leave you or forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5 NKJV). Jesus said, “Surely I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 26:20). And even if the waves of worry seem to be mounting, we can trust that God is in control.

After the children filed out and scattered to Sunday lunches throughout the city, I sat in the room to digest the words of the real teacher that day. It was childlike faith in its purest form. The little girl trusted God.

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<sup>2</sup> From *Waymaker* by Michael W. Smith. 2019.

So, who's in your boat? Jesus is.

**Trust Promise**

Jesus said, "I will never leave you or forsake you." Hebrews 13:5 NKJV

**Trust Proclamation**

No matter what storms may rise up in my life, Jesus is in the storm with me, and I do not need to worry or be afraid.



## DAY 2: WHO'S SURROUNDING WHAT'S SURROUNDING YOU?

I'll admit, trusting God would be easier if we could see Him and His angel armies face-to-face. But even though we can't see them in the physical realm, we can trust that they are there in the spiritual realm—a realm that is more powerful than anything we could ever imagine. Even when we don't see God working, we can be sure that is.

He shows us a powerful glimpse into that spiritual realm in 2 Kings 6:8-18. At this time, the prophet Elisha was really getting on the king of Aram's nerves. Ancient Aram (now Syria) was fighting against the Israelites, and Elisha was able to predict where and when the Arameans were going to attack. He warned the Israelite army so that they were on guard and ready when the enemy attacked. The Aramean king was furious! Here's what the Bible tells us.

This enraged the king of Aram. He summoned his officers and demanded of them, "Tell me! Which of us is on the side of the king of Israel?"

"None of us, my lord the king," said one of his officers, "but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom." (My favorite verse of the story!)

"Go, find out where he is," the king ordered, "so I can send men and capture him." The report came back: "He is in Dothan."

Then he sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city.

When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?" the servant asked.

*I've felt like before. Haven't you? Difficult circumstances press in from every side. My story looms large while I shrink small. This is too much for me! I cry. I can't do this anymore. I don't even want to go out of my house. I can't face another day! Where are you God? You promised You would never leave me or forsake me, but I don't sense Your presence. And if you are here, why aren't you doing anything? I want out of this story!*

Honest. Raw. Somewhat embarrassing to admit. Sometimes we wake up in the morning and sense the enemies all around—surrounded by problems that we cannot solve and people we cannot control.



Elisha's servant felt the same way. His faith was as flimsy as the tent flaps he was standing behind. Elisha's faith was as strong as the tent peg anchoring the canvas in place.

"Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

And Elisha prayed, "Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. (2 Kings 6:11-16)

How can we better trust God during trying times? Remember: "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." Elisha knew that there was more power and strength in the unseen reality of the heavenly host than the seen reality of the enemy's army.

Notice that the passage doesn't say that Elisha prayed that God would send an army. The warring angels on chariots of fire were already there. He simply prayed that the servant would be allowed to see them.

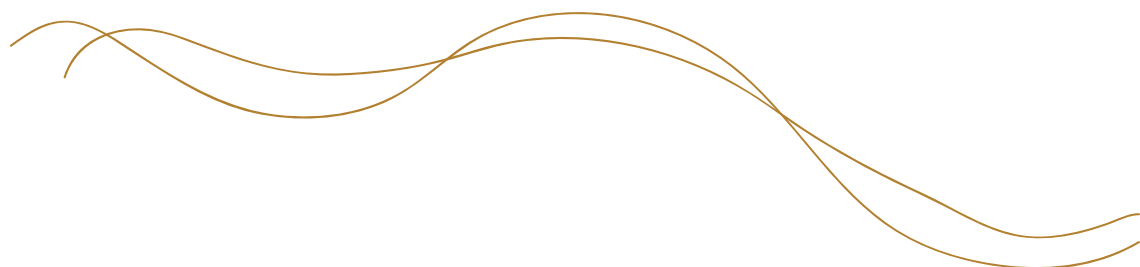
I had always pictured the angel armies on a hillside looking down and the Arameans on another hillside looking down. As if they were squaring off. But that's not what the Bible says. The enemies were surrounding Elisha, as if in a circle. At the same time, the warring angels were surrounding the enemies—a circle around a circle.

Friend, God is surrounding whatever difficult situation is surrounding you. Jesus painted this same picture in John 14:20 when he said, "I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you." (Draw 4 circles to match that verse and see where you are and who is surrounding you.)

Most likely God won't pull back the curtain separating the physical realm from the spiritual realm for us to see, but we can be assured that we are surrounded by a heavenly host ready to protect us in our deepest struggles.

And I pray: "Lord, open my eyes that I might see what is already there. Open my heart that I might believe what is already there. Strengthen my faith that I might trust that You are surrounding what is surrounding me.

Who's surrounding what is surrounding you? The angel armies and God Himself.



**Trust Promise**

Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?  
Hebrews 1:14 NIV

**Trust Proclamation**

God has sent a heavenly host of warring angels to protect me, therefore I do not need to be afraid.





### DAY 3: WHO'S IN THE FIRE WITH YOU?

The foundation of our faith is a clear understanding of who God is...even though His is incomprehensible. This is not based on what He does, because we cannot understand His ways and many times falsely interpret His actions. If we base our faith purely on what we see God do with our physical eyes, our journey will be a spiritual roller coaster of ups and downs, twists and turns, highs and lows. We cannot understand the mind of God or His ways. "As the heavens are higher than the earth," God said, "so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:9). Faith is believing that "Father knows best" no matter what.

Three boys who had faith in God based on who He was regardless of what He might do, were Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego. They were Jewish administrators in Babylon who served during the time of King Nebuchadnezzar. When they refused to worship the king's idols, but chose to honor the One True God instead, the King was furious!

Furious with rage, Nebuchadnezzar summoned Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. So these men were brought before the king, and Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the image of gold I have set up? Now when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe and all kinds of music, if you are ready to fall down and worship the image I made, very good. But if you do not worship it, you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand?"

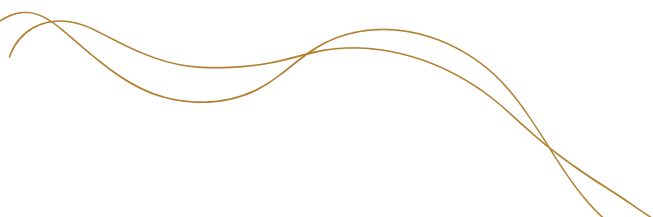
Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to him,

"King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up." (3:16-18)

The boys knew God could rescue them, but if He chose not to, they understood He had a higher purpose beyond what they could see. Do you believe that in your situation? That God has a higher purpose that you and I may not be able to see?

Here are six truths from Psalm 145 to hang on to during difficult times.

**The LORD is gracious** and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in loving devotion. Psalm 145:8



**The LORD is good** to all; His compassion rests on all He has made. Psalm 145:9

**The LORD is faithful** in all His words and kind in all His actions. Psalm 145:12

**The LORD upholds** all who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down. Psalm 145:14

**The LORD is righteous** in all His ways and kind in all His deeds. Psalm 145:17

**The LORD is near** to all who call on Him, to all who call out to Him in truth. He fulfills the desires of those who fear Him; He hears their cry and saves them. Psalm 145:18-19

By the way, do you want to know what happened to Shadrach, Meshack and Adednego? The king had the boys tied with ropes and thrown into a furnace seven times hotter than usual. Then he watched Shadrach, Meshack and Adednego dance around in the fire like they were having a praise party. Only when we took a closer look, there were four men rather than three!

Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?"

They replied, "Certainly, Your Majesty."

He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods." (Daniel 3:24-25)

Jesus showed up. The King shut up. And the boys were released without even a hint of the scent of smoke.

Who's in the fire with you? Jesus is.

### **Trust Promise**

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. Isaiah 43:2

### **Trust Proclamation**

Jesus is with me in the fiery trials of life; therefore, I do not need to worry or be afraid.



## DAY 4: WHO'S THE KING OVER YOU?

A.W. Tozer wrote, "Nothing twists and deforms the soul more than a low or unworthy conception of God."<sup>3</sup> Our concept of God, our understanding of Who He is and What He does, is of crucial importance. Inaccurate and unbiblical thoughts about God can block His power in our lives.

In the Old Testament, there are many names of God that describe His character: He is Elohim-the Creator, El Elyon-God Most High, El Roi- the God who sees, El Shaddai- the All-Sufficient One, Adonai- the Lord, Jehovah- the Self-Existent One, Jehovah-Jireh- the Lord will Provide, Jehovah-Rapha-the Lord who Heals.

When someone in the Old Testament had an encounter with God and learned something new about His character, that person often gave God a new name. Likewise, when we encounter God in our everyday lives, we will learn new and exciting aspects of His character. However, our perception of God should never be based on our experiences alone. God has given us the Bible to reveal His nature. Through that revelation, God releases His power in our lives – power that renews our minds and in turn affects our actions and emotions.

Of all the names of God mentioned in the Bible, the one that is the most powerful is I AM. Moses asked God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' then what shall I tell them?"

God answered, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you'" (Exodus 3:13-14.) Jesus answered similarly when the Roman soldiers came to arrest him in the Garden of Gethsemane. "Whom are you seeking?" he asked. "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. Then Jesus said, "I AM he." The words he used for I AM are a Greek version of the same Hebrew words God used in Exodus 3. The words were so powerful, the soldiers "drew back and fell to the ground" (John 18:6).

Oswald Chambers once said, "We act like pagans in a crisis – only one out of an entire crowd is daring enough to invest faith in the character of God."<sup>4</sup>

Several years ago, a friend sent me a tape of a sermon by Shadrack Meshack Lockridge. With the power of the Holy Spirit oozing out of his very pores, brother Shadrack began spontaneously proclaiming various names of God. Since that power packed sermon, others have taken parts of his list and incorporated them into books, sermons and musical arrangement. The following is an arrangement of Shadrack's sermon that stresses most of all, we can trust Him!

<sup>3</sup> A. W. Tozer, *The Best of Tozer* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1978), p. 120.

<sup>4</sup> Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest* (Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House Publishers, 1992) May 30

He is unparalleled and unprecedented.  
He is the centerpiece of civilization.  
He is the superlative of all excellence.  
He is the sum of human greatness.  
He is the source of divine grace.

His name is the only one able to save,  
And His blood is the only power able to cleanse.  
His ear is open to the sinner's call.  
His hand is quick to lift the fallen soul.  
He's the eternal lover of us all – every one,  
And you can trust Him.

He supplies mercy for the struggling soul  
He sustains the tempted and the tried.  
He sympathizes with the wounded and broken.  
He strengthens the weak and the weary.  
He guards and He guides the wanderer.  
He heals the sick and cleanses the leper.  
He delivers the captive and defends the helpless,  
And He binds up the broken-hearted.  
He's for you...and you can trust Him.

Jesus is the key to all knowledge.  
He's the wellspring of wisdom.  
He's the doorway of deliverance and He's the pathway of peace.  
He's the roadway of righteousness.  
He's the highway of holiness.  
He's the gateway to glory,  
And yes – you can trust Him.

Jesus IS enough...He's the all sufficient KING...  
He's the King of the Jews.  
He's the King of Israel.  
He's the King of Righteousness  
And He's the King of the Ages.

He's the King of Heaven.  
He's the King of Glory.  
He's the King of kings and  
He's the Lord of lords.  
And "yes" again, you can trust Him.



And rejoice in this my friend...He is a Sovereign King.  
There is no gauge to measure His limitless love.  
There is no barrier to block His blessings outpoured.  
He is enduringly strong.

He is entirely supreme.  
He is eternally steadfast.  
He is immortally faithful.  
He is imperially powerful.  
He is impartially merciful.  
He is Jesus – God's Son – and you can trust Him!

I wish I could more accurately describe Him to you' but  
He's indescribable.  
He's incomprehensible  
He's invincible.  
He's irresistible

You can't outlive Him and you can't live without Him.  
The Pharisees couldn't stand Him,  
But they found they couldn't stop Him;  
Pilate couldn't fault Him.  
Herod couldn't kill Him.  
Death couldn't conquer Him  
And the grave couldn't hold Him!

My friends...  
He' the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.  
He's the God of the future and the God of the past.  
And we rise to speak His Name again and again...Jesus...Jesus  
He is Jesus...He is for us...and WE CAN TRUST HIM!

Who's the King over you? Yahweh, the great I AM.

### **Trust Promise**

There is none like you, O LORD; you are great, and great is your name in might. Jeremiah 10:6 ESV

### **Trust Proclamation**

My God is greater, stronger, and mightier than anything I will ever face; therefore, I do not need to be worried or afraid.



**DAY 5: WHO HAS THE BEST PLAN FOR YOU?**

As I look at the happy faces of our little Jaynes threesome smiling back at me from various pictures around our family room, I'm reminded that God's plans and our plans are not always the same.

When my husband, Steve, and I decided to have children, we conceived with no problem. Steven Hugh Jaynes, Jr. was born with a shock of thick black hair and long Bambi-like eyelashes that had the nurses measuring for record-breaking length. I loved being a mother more than any role I had ever experienced. Never in my life had I imagined so much love could be wrapped in such a small package.

Steven was about two-years-old when we decided to expand our family once again.

"Steven," we explained, "We are praying that God will give Mommy and Daddy another Jaynes baby so you can have a little brother or sister."


He thought that sounded like a good idea, so he ended our family prayer time each night with the benediction, "And God, please give Mommy and Daddy another Jaynes baby. Amen."

After six months, there was no news of another Jaynes baby. I was perplexed. Then a year passed with no news. I was distraught. Then two years passed with no signs of another child on the way. I began sinking in a sea of fear and doubt. All the while, *Steven prayed each night, "And God, please give Mommy and Daddy another Jaynes baby."*

Steve and I began traveling down the frustrating road of doctor visits, infertility treatment, and timed intimacy (which is anything but intimate). Then I began worrying about how this "unanswered" prayer was going to affect Steven's faith in God.

Steven was approaching five-years-old and we still had no news. Apparently, it was not the Lord's desire for us to have another child at this time, and I didn't know how to tell Steven that we didn't have to pray that prayer every night. I kept hoping that he would just forget about it. But he didn't forget about it anymore than he forgot the "Amen" at the end of a prayer.

So I began to pray, *Lord please show me how to ease out of this predicament. Show me how to tell Steven that we don't need to pray for another baby every night. I do not want this seemingly unanswered prayer to damage his faith.*



We had a miniature table and chairs in the kitchen where Steven and I ate lunch together each day. One day while sharing peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, Steven looked up, and in his sweet little voice said, "Mommy, have you ever thought that maybe God only wants you to have one Jaynes Baby?"

Shocked, I answered, "Yes, I have thought that maybe that is the case and if it is, I am so thankful because He has given me all I have ever hoped for in a child wrapped up in one package, YOU!"

Then he turned his little head like a robin and said, "Well, what I think we ought to do is keep praying until you're too old to have one. Then we'll know that's His answer!"

What a great idea! I had been worried about Steven's faith, but all the while, it was my own faith that was suffering. I was having trouble believing that God loved me when He was withholding what I wanted most...a houseful of children. *How could He love me and not give me the desire of my heart? I wondered. Maybe He doesn't love me after all.*

Steven didn't know how old too old was, but he did trust God. When he was four years old, he used to sing this song:

*My God is so big, so strong, and so mighty.  
There's nothing my God cannot do.  
The mountains are His.  
The valleys are His.  
The stars are His handiwork too.  
My God is so big, so strong, and so mighty.  
There's nothing my God cannot do.*



He knew God could do anything. If His answer was no, he didn't have a problem with that. I told him "no" many times and he understood that no did not mean "I don't love you." "No" just meant "no," because I am your mom and I know what's best for you. Likewise, if God says "no" to me, it is not because He doesn't love me, but because He is my Father who knows what is best for me.

God is not a benevolent Grandfather who gives His children whatever they want. Rather, He is a loving Father who always does what is best for His children to become well-disciplined offspring who are conformed to the image of Christ. And like a good father, sometimes that means saying "yes" and sometimes that means saying "no."

The Lord taught me a great lesson through my little boy. Through his childlike faith, I saw an example of the trust I should have toward my Heavenly Father who loves me and knows what's best for me...even when I don't understand. No matter what you are

going through today, know this—God is your Heavenly Father who knows what's best for you, and you can trust Him.

Several years later, while writing a Bible study on the Song of Solomon, I noticed the bride said, "I am the Rose of Sharon" (2:1). Prompted to look up my name, Sharon, in my Bible Dictionary, I discovered that it was a fertile valley in Bethlehem. And while I don't have the household of physical children that I had hoped for, God showed me that I was that fertile valley with hundreds of spiritual children around the world.

When we trust God with our broken or unfulfilled dreams, He can transform them into something better than we ever imagined.

Who has the best plan for your life? Your Heavenly Father does.

### **Trust Promise**

All the ways of the LORD are loving and faithful toward those who keep the demands of his covenant. Psalm 25: 10 NIV

### **Trust Proclamation**

The ways of the Lord are loving and faithful. No matter what the outcome of my trial may be, I know that God has my best interest in mind.





**DAY 6: WHO ARE YOU GOING TO BELIEVE?**

All through our faith journey, we will have to make decisions about whether or not to trust God. One of the most tragic stories in the Bible is one in which men and women made a decision not to trust God. In the book of Exodus, Moses led about two million previously enslaved Israelites out of Egypt, across the Red Sea on dry land, and on toward a good and spacious place God had promised them.

During their journey, God rained down manna from heaven, dropped quail from the sky, and poured water from a rock. Who wouldn't trust God if he or she had witnessed all that? But history proves that men and women can witness God do mighty miracles and still not believe.

Yes, God led the children of Israel into the wilderness, but they were never meant to stay there—to die there. The same fate can happen to you and to me if we settle comfortably into the milquetoast, mediocre land of in-between rather than move courageously and expectantly into the land of milk and honey—life to the full fraught with precious promises and mighty miracles.

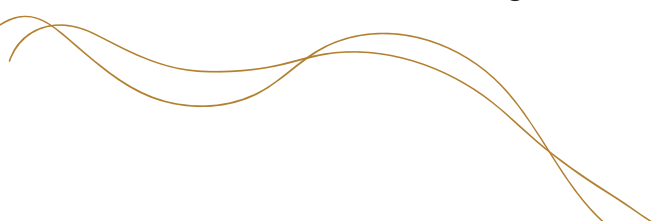
Moses led the people under the blood-stained doorframes of the Passover, across the dry land of the Red Sea, and to the front door of the Promised Land. God guided them with a fire by night and a cloud by day. He took care of their needs and brought victory over every enemy they faced. And yet, when it came time to march into the Promised Land, the land that was theirs for the taking, they cowered in unbelief. They did not trust God to win the battle for them. Here's what happened:


“Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites,” God instructed Moses. So Moses sent twelve spies to scout out the land. When they returned, ten gave the following report:

“We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there...”

Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, “We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.”

But the men who had gone up with him said, “We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are.” And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, “The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size ... We





seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them.” (Numbers 13:30, 14:8, 9).

The twelve spies were not sent into the land to access the problematic obstacles. They were sent into the land to take a peek at the promised blessings and bring back a sampling of its richness. This was not meant to be an exploratory mission to case the joint. Their names were already on the title deed. It was supposed to be a trip to get the folks stoked about the promises that waited just beyond the border.

Sending in the twelve spies was supposed to be the denouement of the story: the final part of the narrative in which the strands of the plot are drawn together and the climax of a chain of events occurs. Instead, the story took a nosedive.

“But the people who live there ...” Whenever we add a “but” to the promise, we’re in trouble. And they were in trouble. Oswald Chambers notes,

Human frailty is another thing that gets between God’s words of assurance and our own words and thoughts. When we realize how feeble we are in facing difficulties, the difficulties become giants, we become like grasshoppers, and God seems to be non-existent. But remember God’s assurance to us: “I will never ... forsake you.” Have we learned to sing after hearing God’s keynote? Are we continually filled with enough courage to say, “The Lord is my Helper,” or are we yielding to fear? <sup>5</sup>

Guess who the people believed? They believed the ten spies who said, “we can’t” rather than the two who said, “we can because God already has.” They believed the wrong report. They didn’t trust God to do what He said He would do.

All night the unbelieving Israelites cried and wanted to go back to Egypt, while Caleb and Joshua tried their best to convince them to move forward and live bold.

“The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. If the Lord is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. Only do not rebel against the Lord. And do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will devour them. Their protection is gone, but the Lord is with us. Do not be afraid of them.” (Numbers 14:5–9)

No matter what Joshua and Caleb said, the people refused to believe. They had the opportunity to go into the land, but not the trust in God to possess the promise. I cringe at those words wondering how many times they have been true of me. I mourn the

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<sup>5</sup> Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*, edited by James Reimann (Grand Rapids, MI: Discover House, 1992), June 5.

opportunities not taken because I lacked the faith to possess the promise. Evangelist Leonard Ravenhill said, “The opportunity of a lifetime must be seized within the lifetime of the opportunity.”<sup>6</sup> And they missed the opportunity because of fear and unbelief.

Because they feared the battle, they lost the blessing. They clung to the cul-de-sac safety of the wilderness and preferred its riskless tedium to the adventurous boldness of believing God. The sin of unbelief sabotaged God’s perfect plan—just like it can in your life, in my life.

Finally, God said “enough.” “In this wilderness your bodies will fall—every one of you twenty years old or more who was counted in the census and who has grumbled against me” (Numbers 14:29).

Instead of taking hold of what was already theirs, the Israelites wandered in the wilderness of unbelief for the rest of their lives. That entire generation died in their stiff-necked refusal to believe, except for Caleb and Joshua. They were one in a million. That’s what I want to be. I’m thinking you do too. That’s what trusting God can do.

So here’s my question to you: Whose report are you going to believe? Are you going to trust that God’s Word is true—that you are who God says you are, and God will do what He says He will do? Or are you going to believe the naysayers who say, “you can’t,” “you won’t,” “you never will”? Are you going to listen to the voice of fear that says, “I can’t do it,” or are you going to believe the voice of God that says, “I already have”?

Who are you going to believe? I’m believing God.

### **Trust Promise**

The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O LORD endures forever.  
Psalm 138:8 ESV

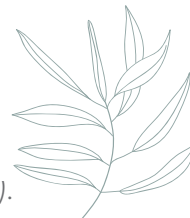
### **Trust Proclamation**

I believe that God will do what he said he will do. I don’t have to worry about the outcome of my obedience. I am no grasshopper, but a mighty warrior who trusts that God will fight the battles he calls me to.

*\*Today’s devotion was taken from Take Hold of the Faith You Long For: Let go, Move forward, Live bold.*

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<sup>6</sup> Leonard Ravenhill Quotes, [www.leonard-ravenhill.com/quotes](http://www.leonard-ravenhill.com/quotes) (accessed 14 July 2015).



**DAY 7: WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?**

The first generation of slaves-set-free were not allowed to enter the Promised Land. Their grumbling and unbelief kept life to the full at arms' length. But when the next generation came along, they believed God would do what He said He would do. They moved forward to take hold of the promises and lived bold to claim what their parents never saw. What made the difference? Let's take a look.

After the death of Moses, God said to Joshua, Moses' aide,  
 "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses."

No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.

Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go." (Joshua 1:3–7)

It is that sentence "I will give you every place where you set your foot," that stops me in my tracks every time. God had given the Israelites the land, but they still had to take it. They had to trust God and put their foot down. They had to take hold of the promise.

Just because God gives you a promise does not mean it is automatically yours. You have to believe it and take hold of it! Paul wrote: "I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me" (Philippians 3:12). In order to experience a thriving faith—the abundant life to the full—we must take hold of that for which Christ Jesus has taken hold of for us.

I just love miracles. Don't you? I love reading about times when God mysteriously and supernaturally intervenes in someone's life—times when what was impossible with man became a reality with God. But almost every time, God performed a miracle in the Bible, He required men and women to participate—to trust Him and put their foot down.

Build an ark.  
 Lift your staff.  
 Fill your jug.  
 Gather jars.



Make a cake.  
Blow a trumpet.  
Give a shout.

Jesus echoed his Father's cadence in the New Testament.  
Take up your pallet.  
Cast your nets.  
Stretch out your hand.  
Wash off the mud.  
Look in the fish's mouth.  
Roll away the stone.  
Stand up straight.  
Cast your nets.  
Go and tell.

Yes, God does miracles. And in every one of the above-mentioned marvels, God's power followed someone's obedience. The key to experiencing the abundant life of relationship with Christ is obedience, and most people don't even like the word. But it is the pathway to the faith you long for.

Oswald Chambers wrote, "Even the smallest bit of obedience opens heaven, and the deepest truths of God immediately become yours. Yet God will never reveal more truth about Himself to you, until you have obeyed what you know already."<sup>7</sup> If you haven't heard from God lately, perhaps He is waiting for you to do something that He has already told you to do.

The battle plan to take the Promised Land was as simple as it was strange. March around the city of Jericho with all the armed men. Do this in silence, once a day for six days. Then on the seventh day, walk around seven times with the priests blowing the trumpets. Have the whole army give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the army will go straight in.

Now, that was a strange plan. God's infinite ways often don't make sense in our finite minds. Sometimes you have to be willing to look ridiculous and be radical to live a remarkable life. The choices you make when you feel God's nudge will become the hinges on which your destiny swings. Each individual decision you make, to obey or ignore God's promptings and directives, is a thread that weaves the tapestry of your life. And in order to fully obey, we have to trust God with the outcome.

Jericho was tightly shut up. Sometimes it can feel that our promises are tightly shut up. That doesn't mean that we give up. That means that we suit up, step up, and keep

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<sup>7</sup> *Oswald Chambers, My Utmost for His Highest*, edited by James Reimann (Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House 1992), October 10.

moving forward.

God said, "See, I have delivered them into your hands." Notice that verb tense. God did not say, "*I will* deliver them into your hands." He said, "*I have* delivered them into your hands." He had already done it, but they had to trust and obey Him, and put their foot down to receive it. I love how God speaks in past tense to our present problems.

But here's the conundrum: What do you do when what God says doesn't match up with what you see? When all you see is a big wall standing between your promise and your present situation?

There will be times when you are doing everything you know to do, and you still don't see any movement. The Israelites walked around Jericho for six days, and as far as they could tell, nothing happened. I'm sure it unnerved the people behind the wall, but as far as the walkers could tell, not one brick fell.

This is where many give up—when they don't see any progress. The son is still taking drugs. The daughter is still living with her boyfriend. The husband is still cold and aloof. The bank account is still hovering on in double digits.

"God, throw me a bone," I cry. "Show me a little something! Let me see just a hint of progress! Can I see one brick fall?" And God says, "Keep walking ... by faith. Trust Me."

Just because you don't see God working does not mean that He isn't. Jesus said, "My Father is always at work" (John 15:17). The writer of Hebrews notes: "So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised" (Hebrews 10:35).

Today, you might be on lap number seven and not even know it. Joshua told them to march around Jericho, but he didn't tell them how many times they were going to have to do it. He just said, "march forward" and "remain silent."

Supposed they had stopped on day six saying, "This is ridiculous. I'm not feelin' it. Not one stone has fallen to the ground. I don't see any progress. Those folks are probably in there laughing their heads off. I'm going home."

They would have missed the blessing.

I wonder how many times I have missed the blessing because my trust wore thin and I stopped too soon.

Perhaps you've wondered:



How much longer will I have to wait until God brings my prodigal home?  
How much longer will I have to struggle with this unbelieving husband?  
How much longer will I have to endure this dead-end job?  
How much longer will I have to go without a job?  
How many more laps will I have to walk around Jericho before the walls come tumbling down and I can take hold of my Promised Land?

I don't know the answer to the question of how much longer, but I do know this, tomorrow could be the final lap. So, I'm going to trust God and keep on walking. I hope you will too.

### **Trust Promise**

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.

Joshua 1:9

### **Trust Proclamation**

No matter what happens in my life, I will not be afraid or discouraged, because I trust that God will be with me wherever I go.

\*Today's devotion was taken from Take Hold of the Faith You Long For: Let go, Move forward, Live bold.



## 15 VERSES ON TRUSTING GOD

In the Bible, James tells us, "Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again, he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops" (5:17-18). What's so special about that passage? To me, it's not that he prayed about the rain. It's those three little words, "just like us." He was just like us! He didn't have more faith, but He had strong faith.

James also wrote, "faith without works is useless" (James 2:20). In other words, if we simply say that we believe something in our minds, but do not appropriate or demonstrate it in our actions, it does not bring life to us or to those around us. As we exercise our faith by trusting God, it grows stronger.

Exercise the faith you have been given. Find one promise in Scripture, confess it, believe it, and make it yours. Then pick another, then another and another. Soon that mustard seed of faith will take root, shoot toward the sky, sprout branches, and produce a bumper crop of fruit. God's promises are like precious gifts that He extends to His children. While we accept those gifts, we must always remember that the promises themselves are not what will change our lives, but the Promise Giver who fulfills them. The psalmist reminds us that "the LORD is faithful to all his promises" (Psalm 145:13), and it is His faithfulness that brings those promises to pass.



1. Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not learn on your own understanding. I all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6
2. The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him. Psalm 28:7
3. Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act. Psalm 37:4-5
4. "When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can flesh do to me?" Psalm 56:3-4



5. You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. Isaiah 26:3

6. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvations. Isaiah 12:2

7. Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10

8. And those who know your name put their trust in you, for you O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek you. Psalm 9:10

9. When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. Psalm 5:3

10. Blessed in the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit. Jeremiah 17:7-8

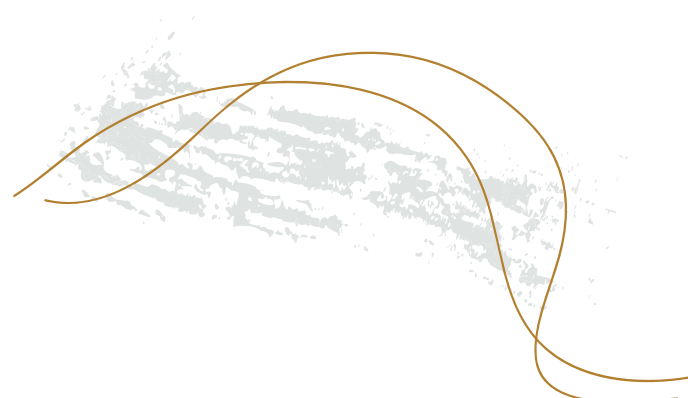
11. "The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is safe."  
Proverbs 29:25

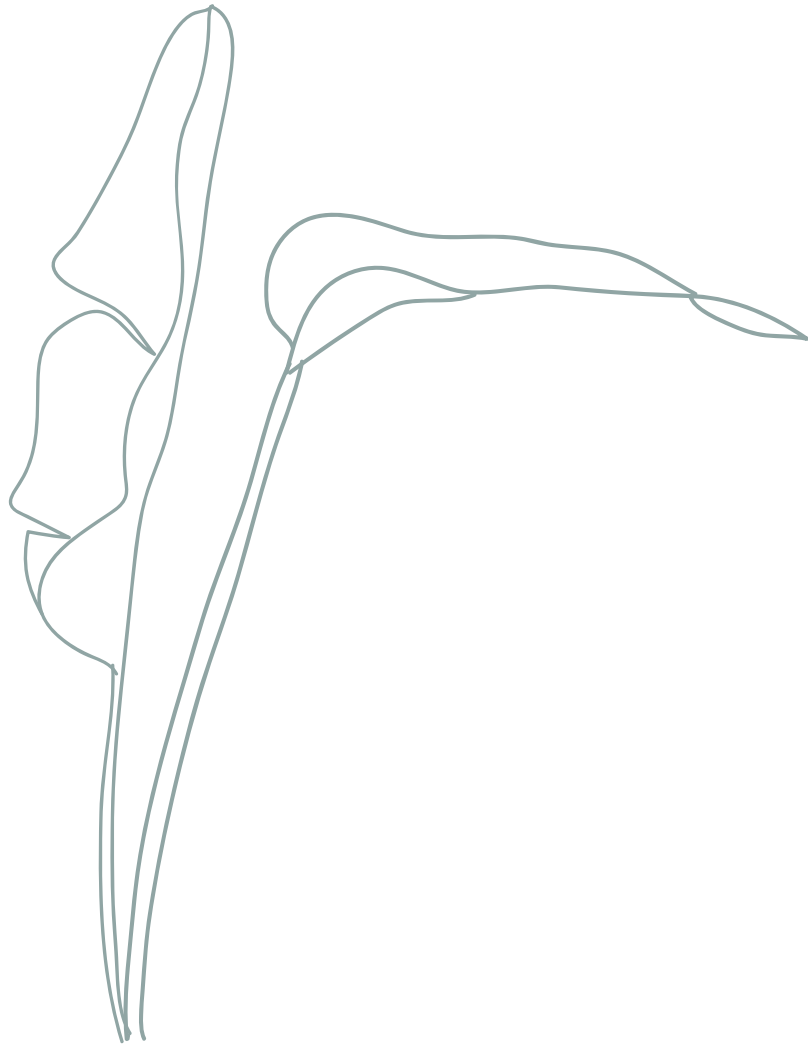
12. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

13. "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me."  
John 14:1

14. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

15. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7





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