

TRANSFORMED BY TRUST
"It's All About Trust"

The Bible has a lot to say about trust – and probably no where in Scripture more than the Psalms – and certainly not more beautifully and poetically than the Psalms!

The Psalms have the ability to encourage and comfort us when we need it and they help us to TRUST, when it's hard to trust.

When I am really hit hard by fear, disappointment, anxiety, pain, injustice, my therapy – the first thing I do – is take a hot bath and read the psalms – especially the *Songs of Trust and Lament!*

Why does the Psalms have this effect on us? The Psalms were intentionally written, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to connect with our emotions and our common experiences as humans. We are created in God's image – we are emotional beings – just as God is. God has given us the Psalms to connect and to minister to the emotional part of us.

The Psalms give us images that help us see, understand and connect with truth. Some TRUTH hard to understand with rational thoughts, but IMAGE helps us. For example, what is God like? How can we begin to answer that question adequately, but the images of a Shepherd, a Shield, a Rock, and a Strong Tower help us to more easily grasp the character of God than if we were dependent on words alone.

So, too, the righteous – those who love and obey God – are likened to trees by water, sheep, fruitful vines and the apple of God's eye. When we begin to carry over the meaning of these images, our emotions get involved – and this intentional and God-given. The Psalms minister more to the heart rather than the head (mind).

The language of the heart is different than the language of the head, for the heart does not speak the same language of the mind. The language of the head (mind) has to do with reason, rational thoughts, intellect, concepts and cognitive thoughts. The language of the heart has to do with imagination, images, pictures (a picture is worth a thousand words!), meditation and pondering. We need to keep all this in mind when we read and interpret the Psalms.

The Psalms also held an important place in the life of Jesus. Sometimes the Psalms are called the prayer book of Jesus and Jesus often quoted the Psalms. In fact, there are 55 direct quotes from the Psalms in the New Testament. Their importance is seen in Luke 24:44 - He (Jesus) said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

Prayer books through the centuries have been largely based on the Psalms. The Psalms are a gift that keeps on giving and nowhere in scripture can we learn more about what it means to trust God and live in a trusting relationship with him – then in the Psalms.

The theme of the retreat is TRANSFORMED BY TRUST. We are going to examine the concept of trust by asking some questions and exploring some answers.

In this teaching, "It's All About Trust" we will answer the questions: 1) What is Trust? and 2) Why is Trust so important (to God and to us)?

In the second teaching, "Don't Waste Your Sorrows" we will answer the questions 3) What does the trusting relationship look like? or How do we trust? and 4) What can we expect to happen (in our life and our circumstances) when we choose to trust?

Question 1: **WHAT IS TRUST?**

Trust, faith and belief are often used interchangeably in Scripture – with some subtle differences.

Trust can be a NOUN or a VERB, for example: "Transformed by Trust" (noun) and "In God We Trust" (verb). **Faith** is usually a noun - and we express it as a verb (action) by saying we HAVE faith or we BELIEVE.

Scripture presents 4 different kinds of **FAITH** that calls for a response of **TRUST**.

1 – **THE Faith** – collection of beliefs and statements about God. Creeds are statements of faith. **THE** faith is what Christians believe or trust in and defend as the truth.

2 – **SAVING Faith** – which is the ability God gives people to believe in Jesus as Savior, Redeemer and Lord. The exercise of this faith or trust brings forgiveness of sins and results in us being new creations in Christ.

3 – **GIFT of Faith** – a gift of the Spirit that is given us when we most need it. "The gift of faith is a booster shot from the Holy Spirit to help us accomplish something for which our normal faith is insufficient. It is a rising up of faith from a source beyond ourselves."

4 – **Normal Faith** which involves a **person's day-to-day relationship with God and living in this world** – that is not our home. It is what we need to get through everyday life.

TRUST. Trusting God, trusting who He is, trusting what he is doing, trusting HIM when circumstances and feelings would lead us to believe the things we know about God **are not true**.

This is the kind of **faith** or **trust** we find most in the Psalms – trusting God in the ups and downs of everyday life – in the pleasure and pain that living life in our world can bring.

What is this TRUST? How can we define this **everyday faith**? Trust is *believing (putting our hope and confidence) in God's character and promises, regardless of our feelings and circumstances*.

Abraham is called the *Father of Faith* -- or the Father of all who believe or trust because he is our best example of faith in Scripture. Abraham was given a humanly impossible promise – that he and Sarah would have a son from their own bodies – long after it was physically possible to conceive.

Genesis 15 give us a picture of his spiritual ups and downs:

. . . the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision:

"Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward."

But Abram said, "O Sovereign LORD,

what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir."

Then the word of the LORD came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir." 5 He took him outside and said, "Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

Genesis 15:6

*Abram **believed the LORD**, and he credited it to him as righteousness.*

In Romans 4 we get a wonderful picture or description of what it means to trust God. We actually get to see the process in ACTION – we can see what faith looks like so we can do it!

Romans 4:18

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be." 19 Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. 20 Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, 21 being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

This is one of the best pictures or definitions we have of trust:

1. Abraham heard God's promise (an important first step)
2. Evaluated the situation (did not deny what was REAL – compared the promise against reality)
3. Made a **reasoned decision** to put his trust in God and his promise (trust is not "blind" leap)
4. And then lived accordingly – acted like it was true – **even before it became reality**

Trust is a process -- we learn it, re-learn it, practice it, begin again – but if we stick with the process – it becomes REAL . . . and each time we "fail", we are closer to the goal!

And we will know it's real because it will change the way we

- **Think**
- **Speak** and
- **Act** –

In fact, trust is not real until it changes the way we **think, speak** and **act** – and then our emotions will follow because emotions always follow thoughts, speech and actions.

Trust is more than intellectual assent – just **knowing** that God will supply my needs, for example. Trust is believing that he will supply MY needs. Trust is a heart decision and decisions of the heart always effect our thoughts, speech and actions – and then our emotions.

We see this same process of TRUST in the theme verse for this weekend:

Psalms 28:7

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to him in song.

Strength is inner, personal power and from the inside, He gives us the resources we need. He is also our **shield**. What does a shield do? Does it stop the trouble (that thing that is going to hurt or disappoint from coming)? No – these things will still "hit" you – but God is a shield and won't let them **harm** you. He takes the "sting" out by being your shield.

When I was a child, we used to have "green apple" fights in our neighborhood. Yes, we threw small, hard green apples at each other! To shield ourselves against the "sting" of the apple hitting us, we used the tops of metal garbage cans as shields. These shields did not stop the green apples from coming or hitting, but the shield did protect from the hits hurting us.

In this way, God is our **shield**. As our hearts trusts in him and we put our confidence in who he is and all his promises to us, **we are helped** – we are changed so that we think, speak, act differently. **Then**, our hearts leap for joy and we will give thanks to him in song (an emotional response).

So, What is trust? Trust is believing (putting our hope and confidence) in God's character and promises, regardless of our feelings and circumstances.

Let me give you some other ways to define (picture, understand) what trust is. **Trust** is living as if God's character and promises are true – **all the time!** Some things in our lives may be true most of the time – but not all the time. People that we know well may act in an expected way **most** of the time or we can count on a trusted recipe to turn out **most** of the time or we can depend on a person to come through – **most** of the time.

Other things in life we can **ALWAYS** depend on: gravity or the sun rising and setting and seasons. In fact we even have colloquiums that reflect things we can ALWAYS depend on: Is the Pope Catholic? Do birds fly south? Do bears sleep in the woods?

In which category does God fall for you? Is he faithful to his promises and character most of the time or ALL of the time? Trust is living (thinking, speaking, and acting) as if God is all of these things ALL OF THE TIME.

We must learn to view our circumstances through God instead of viewing God through our circumstances! For example, we say, "God is good all the time; all the time God is good!" This goodness has nothing to do with our circumstances or even God's good gifts to us. It's God's nature to be good – it is the essence of who He is. Just as it's the nature of water is wet and fire is hot, so it's God nature to be good. God's goodness isn't changeable or diminishing. God cannot NOT be good!

Because God IS good, he does good things – always! There is NEVER a time that his action in your life is not GOOD. So trust is choosing to believe and act as if that is true – even when circumstances and feelings might say differently. Trust is taking God "at his Word."

And when hard times come – pain, disappointment, upsetting circumstances –
We are tempted to say –

- Where are You, God?
- What are you doing? Maybe God is angry . .
- Maybe I've done something wrong . . .
- I'm being punished . . .
- God doesn't really care about this . . . it's not important to him . . .
- Doubt his goodness, his love, his compassion,

But, when we choose to trust, we affirm what we know is true about God – and we put our hope and confidence there. We say, "I don't understand, but You are good and I choose to believe that you will work this disappoint for my good – regardless of how I am feeling or what the circumstances are.

That is essentially what I am doing when I say I take a hot bath and **read the Psalms** when trouble hits. I'm reminding myself of who God is and the the vision of who he is begins to overwhelm my **thoughts** and then my heart begins to focus on **who God is** and I begin to trust, my emotions follow – which usually means I begin to experience peace.

Example:

A while ago, I was caught in the middle of a situation between 2 to 3 other people where expectations were not being met, causing uncomfortable dynamics between those involved. I couldn't do anything "fix" this situation and I didn't see how anything good could come from it. In fact, a lot of bad was coming from it! It was totally out of my control, yet it effected me and one that I loved.

I could continue to fret, try to fix it, focus on the pain, think about how bad it was and project ahead at all the bad that would come from this situation. In doing so, I would be doubting God's goodness and his purposes. I would, in effect, be saying that I was sure that he wasn't going to do anything about it as I got down on myself and focused on my perceived failure. All of this effected me mentally, emotionally and physically and I was actually sick to my stomach when I thought about it!

At this point, I realized I had 3 choices. I could:

- Escape/deny – go to something "pleasurable" (food, drink, shopping, etc.) for comfort and escape. This, in fact, is how addictions are developed.
- Continue on the path of doubt and self-condemnation – judging and condemning others; experiencing anxiety, fear, negative thinking, pity and anger –
- Trust God

I chose to at least **try to trust** –

First, I went to God with the problem. I "poured out my heart" and told him what I was feeling and thinking and what a disaster the whole thing was! Then I quieted myself in his Presence. I pictured myself with Jesus and I listened for what I might hear him say to me. As I did this – it seemed that his words came to me – and I wrote them down as I was hearing them:

Do you believe I am allowing this for your good? The story right now doesn't seem to have a good ending. Can you trust me that it will? Can you believe that it will be all worked together for good? This thought will be your sense of peace right now – not the resolution the situation. Can you believe I have allowed all this anxiety and discomfort to surface because I love you? That is what you need to rejoice in (that I love you) and not whether the situation is over or not. Can you believe that a harvest of righteousness and peace will come from this and that it will lead to your holiness. Don't be disabled by this – instead be healed! It is not only you that I am working in. You are all my children and I have a purpose for everyone involved. I knew everything that was going to happen before it happened. I will work this all out for good and that is what you have to believe and focus on.

As I chose to TRUST in my heart, my thoughts changed, which brought a change to my feelings and emotions – which then allowed me to **act** in a more kind and loving way.

So, trust is confident expectation that God is who he says he is and that he will do what he has promised to do. Trust is not a power or a force. It is not a vehicle by which we can coerce God to do something that is not his will. It is not wishful thinking or a positive mental attitude. It is simply an expression of confidence in the person and character of God.

Trust is thinking, speaking, acting, making decisions based on what He has said about Himself. It is taking God at his Word – even when it looks foolish – or you don't "feel" it or your circumstances deny it.

It is a choice. Our minds consider and examine the data and possibilities and then we choose where to put our trust. As we put our trust in God – his character and promises – our emotions follow. **Trust** seldom comes "automatically." Rather, it is something we **choose** to do or learn to do.

Question 2: **WHY IS TRUST SO IMPORTANT?**

First, **trust has many benefits.**

Psalms 1:3 - (Those who trust) are like a trees planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

Psalms 23: 3 – (The Shepherd) restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Psalms 27:1 - The LORD is my light and my salvation— whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life— of whom shall I be afraid?

Psalms 27:5 - For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his tabernacle and set me high upon a rock.

Psalms 27:10 - Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will receive me.

Psalms 37: 4-6 - 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 do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun.

Psalms 37:19- In times of disaster they will not wither; in days of famine they will enjoy plenty.

Psalms 32:7 - You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance. I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.

Psalms 32:10 - Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him.

The Psalms teach us that:

- THERE ARE BENEFITS TO TRUSTING GOD
- WE REAP WHAT WE SOW
- THERE ARE CONSEQUENCES TO OUR CHOICES

Trust has many benefits!

Another reason why **trust** is so important:

God "needs" trust in order to bless us and work his will in our life.

God "needing" is not a limit on his power and sovereignty; rather it is the way he chooses to work. God desires our cooperation. God wants to bless us – to meet our needs – to work in our situations – to bring good even from what is evil and wrong

But this process is NOT automatic. He is limited in what he can do unless we meet him with **trust** and **faith**. **Hebrews 11:6** tells us that not only does faith/trust please God, but without it it is **impossible** to please him. Why? The reason our trust so pleases him is because it release him to respond to us and give us what we need. Trust puts us in a position to receive what God wants to give!

Analogy:

Consider a parent who wants to help child with project. The parent has everything the child needs – experience, resources, concern and love. But the child does not want help. Perhaps they are resentful, proud, or just don't believe the parent knows what you are doing, etc.

If this is the case, here is only so much you can do for the child – even though you have everything they need! That is what **trust** is to God. If we don't have trust, there is only so much he can do – although he wants to do more.

Another reason why **trust** is so important:

Trust matters in **this life and the one to come**. In his book, *Your Eternal Reward*, Erwin Lutzer writes about something that we don't hear a lot of teaching on -- The Judgment Seat Of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:10

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. The judgment of believers doesn't decide our destiny, of course, but we will **give an account** on how we lived our life and used the resources God gave us -- and this will have an effect on our life in heaven.

Lutzer points out that we often erroneously believe that:

- ✓ Everything will be even in heaven
- ✓ Or everyone will receive the same reward
- ✓ Or that we may get different rewards, but it really won't impact all eternity

We will not be judged for how much we have done or even the length of time we serve, but we will be judged on our **faithfulness** – our **trust-ful-ness**.

A few years ago I saw an interview with Billy Graham by Diane Sawyer. She asked him, "How would you like to be remembered?" Billy Graham answered, "I would like to hear that Lord say to me, well done good and faithful servant – but I'm not sure I will!" Billy Graham realized that he would not be judged on the length of time he has served Christ or even how much he has done. He realized that his **faith** and **trust** in God was what is really important.

Trusting is laying up for yourself treasure in heaven. **Romans 4:22-24** - *And because of Abraham's faith, God declared him to be righteous. Now this wonderful truth—that God declared him to be righteous – wasn't just for Abraham's benefit. It was for us, too, assuring us that **God will also declare us to be righteous** if we believe (trust) in God . . .*

Our faith or trust is credited to us. Righteousness – right standing with God – is credited to us if we trust God. It is deposited in our eternal "account." It is important in this life, but even more important in the next. Trust has eternal consequences – it does matter if we trust in this life. **2 Tim. 2:12** - *If we endure hardship, (by trusting) we will reign with him. If we deny him, he will deny us . . .*

So, three reasons why trust is so important:

1. It has many benefits in this life
2. God "needs" our trust
3. Trust matters in the life to come

One more things about trust:

TRUST NEEDS A RELATIONSHIP IN ORDER TO WORK

When we trust – we let go of all control, props, plan B's and keeping our options open. Trust is counter cultural and counter-intuitive. Trust is placing yourself and your well-being in the hands of another with no guarantees about **what**, **when** or **how** things are going to work out.

We can be sure that God is good – but he is not always "safe" – just as Mr. Beaver described Aslan in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. "He is a good lion – but not a safe lion."

If we do trust, we need to be careful about **who** we are trusting and we will want to **know** the person we are trusting. **Trust** and **knowing** go hand-in-hand – they are 2 sides of the same coin. You cannot trust someone you do not **know** – and if you truly trust someone – it is because you really **know** them.

We know this from experience. Think of a person you really can trust. You trust because they have **shown themselves trustworthy**. You trust them because you **know** them – through experience – and they have proven themselves to you in **relationship**. As you have lived with them, talked, shared, listened, watched and found them to be true to their word – you chose to trust them because they treated you fairly and honestly. In relationship, they proved to have your best interests at heart and that they were not out to hurt or harm you.

It is the same with God. We need to KNOW him by experience, in close relationship – in order to trust him more and more. Sometimes, we find that we know a lot ABOUT God, but do not know (by experience, in relationship) very well. When we don't know God for ourselves, we find it hard to trust him. When we don't really know God, we are going on hearsay.

How do we get to know God better? The same way we get to know a person better. We live with them in relationship and a big part of that relationship is communication – two-way communication.

If we want to **know** God well enough to **trust** Him, we need a close relationship with Him that includes two-way communication. We need to hear God **confidently** and **consistently** in order to really trust him.

Before I learned to hear God's voice, I spent a lot of time trying to figure out what I was supposed to do. I guessed a lot – hoped I got it right. I tried to trust – but that is hard when you're not sure what is expected. I knew God loved me – but it was hard to feel loved and special. I felt love *en masse*.

Learning to hear **confidently** and **consistently** turned my relationship with God "upside down." When I say HEAR GOD, I mean his **personal words** to us. God always speaks through his written Word and his written Word is always the basis and yardstick for listening. Hearing God is always based on his written Word, but the written Word is not the only way we can hear God.

God wants to have personal conversations with us. Not everything he wants to say to us is in the Bible. A conversational relationship with God is normal Christian living. It is part of being a Christ-follower. John 10 tells us that Jesus calls his own sheep **by name**. His sheep follow him because they **know** his voice. Jesus says that he has other sheep, not of this fold and they too will listen to his voice.

All through the Gospels, Jesus says – FOLLOW ME – I'll show you the way. When Jesus says follow me, he doesn't mean follow his teachings, or his principles or his ideals. Instead, he says, "Follow **Me**."

It is interesting to note that you cannot follow a person unless you can either **see** them or **hear** them. Think about it -- it's impossible! God desires a conversational relationship with everyone of his children. This has always been his intent. It is God's very nature to speak. He **is** speaking and he longs to be heard.

We all hear differently – according to the unique way God has made us – our personalities, background and experiences or whether we are predominantly right-brained or left-brained. But God wants us to hear him – his personal words to us.

I believed that before – and I sometimes heard, but it wasn't **consistent** – nor was I **confident**. I've read tons on books on hearing God and they all agreed that God is speaking and we are to listen, but they were not very good at teaching HOW to listen – how to hear.

A few years ago, I was introduced to a **method** that helped me to **consistently** and **confidently** hear God's personal voice to me. Before I talk a bit about the method, I want to talk about the **process** of God speaking to us.

We all hear differently – in different ways – but regardless of the **means** – through Scripture, another person, a sermon or book, a song, creation, picture or image, vision, dream, gentle inner whisper – whatever the **means** – the **message** comes to us in the same way.

Think with me for a minute. When we hear God speaking to us, regardless of the means, what is the one thing they different ways all have in common? How does the message get to us? God speaks to us in spontaneous, unpremeditated thoughts. A personal words comes to us in our thoughts – our minds.

This should not surprise us. **1 Corinthians 2:9-16**. *“No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.” But we know these things because God has revealed them to us by his Spirit, and his Spirit searches out everything and shows us even God’s deep secrets. No one can know what anyone else is really thinking except that person alone, and no one can know God’s thoughts except God’s own Spirit. And God has actually given us his Spirit (not the world’s spirit) so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us. But people who aren’t Christians can’t understand these truths from God’s Spirit. It all sounds foolish to them because only those who have the Spirit can understand what the Spirit means. We who have the Spirit understand these things, but others can’t understand us at all. How could they? For, “Who can know what the Lord is thinking? But we can understand these things, for we have the **mind of Christ**.*

We can know what God is saying to us through the Holy Spirit who gives us the "mind of Christ." Amy Carmicheal understood the process by praying the prayer, "Holy Spirit, think through me until your thoughts become my thoughts."

This is also the way Scripture was written – the Holy Spirit put "thoughts" into each writer's mind – and it is still **the way** God speaks to us. So, whether God is making a personal application through scripture, or speaking through one of the other means we have mentioned, he does so by putting thoughts into our minds.

Once we realize this is HOW God speaks to us, and can expect to hear his voice and even invite it. Realizing this common denominator (God speaking to us in our minds through spontaneous unpremeditated thoughts) made me realize that I can invite and expect God to speak to me. I can be much more **consistent** and **confident** that he will and does speak.

The method I learned consists of 4 steps:

1. Quiet yourself down – *Be still and know that I am God . . .* Psalm 46:10
2. Fix your eyes on Jesus – Hebrews 12:2
3. Tune into or begin to listen to spontaneous, unpremeditated thoughts, trusting that God is filling your mind with his thoughts, by the Spirit.
4. Write down what you hear – as if God is speaking to you --

A good place to begin is to use a portion of Scripture and ask, "Lord what do you want to say to me through this verse?"

When we listen this way, there are some safeguards we need to follow. What we hear from God is not **predictive**. We still walk by faith and not by sight. What he says to us is for us, not for someone else. Also, this method is to be practiced within the Body of Christ, not in isolation. Therefore, you should have 2-3 close spiritual friends with whom you can look to for confirmation that what you heard is compatible with Scripture and God's character.

If you have a way to **confidently** and **consistently** hear God speaking to you – then practice it for all it's worth! If, however, you struggle with hearing God's personal words to you, this method may be of help to you.

You can find a free brochure describing this method of listening to God at the following web address:

<http://www.cwgministries.org/Free-Christian-Books-and-Articles.htm>

Is it easy to trust? No, it isn't always easy. When there is fear, anger, sorrow, pain and our situations seem a mess, trust is living on the edge – it does not feel safe. Other solutions to our problems feel much safer, comfortable and less risky! God knows the risk, but he does not ask us to do the **impossible**.

Andy Stanley, in his book *Visoneering*, tells the story of his young son who was walking a brick wall in their yard under the watchful eye of his father. When his son got to the highest part of the wall, he said, "Daddy, I don't want to do this anymore." Immediately, Andy stretched out his arms and said, "Jump!" His son looked at the wall, looked at his dad, looked at the wall and looked again at his dad. He asked, "Are you going to catch me?" "Yes, I will catch you," was the answer. Without hesitation, he jumped into his father's arms.

Andy makes this observation:

*When he jumped he was still very much afraid. But his confidence in me was stronger than his fear of jumping. He honored me with his act of courage. There was never any question as to whether I could or would catch him. **The issue was whether his confidence in me would supersede his fear.** It did. And in that moment, I experienced in a small way what our Father experiences when we act on our faith (trust) in spite of our feelings and surroundings (circumstances).*

This is all God asks of us . . . and when we choose to jump despite our fear, anxiety, and put our confidence and **trust** in WHO God is and WHAT he promises, wonderful things happen. God has us right where he wants us – in the very palm of his hand – and he promises us that it will be worth it in the end.