**Hezekiah Digging Deeper Week 5**

We have seen how Hezekiah had great faith and trust in the Lord and times when he struggled with it. We also saw in the teaching this week how Sennacherib tried to cause Hezekiah and the people of Judah to not put their faith in Hezekiah or the Lord. I want to spend some time looking at the concept of trust. I said in the teaching that the Lord is the only one who is 100% trustworthy 100% of the time. We are going to be digging into situations where we see the trustworthiness of the Lord shine through and be examining our trust in the Lord. It is vital to our faith journey for us to be able to put our trust in the Lord.

Trust is at the heart of every healthy relationship. I’m not talking about blind trust. I’m talking about trusting another person because that person has already proven him/herself to be trustworthy. So, how do we develop trust with other people? We usually start by trusting someone with something small and insignificant and if they prove trustworthy with that, then we may trust them with bigger, more important things. This is a Biblical concept that Jesus taught.

Luke 16:10-11 “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. **11**If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?”

This passage refers to trust in regards to things of monetary value – our confidences, secrets and feelings are even more precious than material things but the same principle applies. When we first meet someone, we don’t share our most intimate thoughts, desires or concerns. We may start by sharing something insignificant and if we find they are trustworthy with that then little by little, we will trust them with things that are more precious to us.

The problem with trusting people is that even those we trust the most may let us down. People aren’t perfect, and they will inevitably let us down at some point. According to the Greek-Hebrew Key Word Study Bible, the word dishonest in this verse comes from the Greek word adikos and according to the New Testament Lexical aids the word adikos “pictures one who shows no concern for the proper and due treatment of things, but instead lives according to his own conception of value and fairness – usually making himself the object of ultimate worth and significance.” In other words, fairness depends upon me – what is the most fair for me and what I value most for me. Don’t we all sort of operate out of that thought process?

Even our spouses and best friends who we trust implicitly may not follow through on something we ask them to do. Can you recall a time when times have you counted on someone to do something and then he/she forgets or procrastinates doing it?

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 It’s not that he/she intentionally didn’t do it but perhaps the person got busy doing something else or thinking about something else – something that ultimately was valued as more important than what we have asked him to do. Have you ever been the one to not follow through on something that someone else was counting on you to do?

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How many times have you shared something with a close friend in confidence only to find out that she shared it with someone else? Or have you been the one to betray a confidence?

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God is the only one who is completely trustworthy. Everything in His Word is true – if God says He will do something, you can rest assured that He will. We are going to look at some examples from Scripture where we see God’s trustworthiness. The first on is God’s promise to Abraham.

Genesis 15:4 And behold, the word of the Lord came to him: “This man shall not be your heir; your very own sonshall be your heir.”

Now we will see God’s fulfillment of his promise to Abraham.

Genesis 21:2 And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the time of which God had spoken to him.

Did you notice the end of that verse – at the very time God had promised him? God is not just trustworthy with the general idea of a promise – He is trustworthy down to the last detail.

Genesis 18:10 The Lord said, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent door behind him.

Sarah had Isaac at the time that God promised – within a year. If God was that specific in the details of when Sarah had a baby, we can be assured that He is interested in the details in our lives as well. Are there ‘details’ in your life that you need to share with the Lord? Are there things you have thought about taking to Him in prayer but decided not to because it really ‘isn’t that big of a deal’? God wants to be in the details of our lives. What details do you need to share with God?

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God also made a promise to Noah.

Genesis 6:17 For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die.

God’s fulfillment of His promise to Noah.

Genesis 7:23 He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark.

Again, God was trustworthy down to the last detail – everything on the earth was destroyed – not just the creeping things that move along the ground but also the birds of the air. God is always keeps His word whether what he promises is something positive as in the example of providing Abraham with a son or negative where he told Noah he was going to destroy the earth and everything in it.

I want us to look at another person in the Old Testament that put his trust in God and God saved him. He is someone that most of you are probably very familiar with. His name is Daniel. Probably at the mere mention of his name, you immediate thought about the story of Daniel and the lion’s den. That is exactly what comes to my mind as well. We all know that Daniel was saved from the lion’s den, but do you know why? Read the following Scripture.

Daniel 6:23 Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.

Why did the Lord save Daniel?

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I want to share a quote from the book “The Shack” by William Young, “It’s extremely hard to rescue someone unless they are willing to trust you.”

An example of this is a lifeguard who is trying to rescue someone who is drowning. The rescuer can’t really save the drowning person without the cooperation of the one needing to be rescued. The rescuer needs the person in need to trust him/her otherwise the drowning victim will drowned and likely pull the lifeguard down with him/her. That is what God wants from us – He wants us to put our trust in Him so He can rescue us.

Ladies, we often find ourselves in difficult situations, when we are faced with the odds against us and other people against us. When you face your own lion’s den, who do you turn to during these times? If you feel like you are in the midst of your own lion’s den, write a prayer below asking the Lord for His help – turn to Him and trust that He will move in your circumstances.

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Sometimes, we aren’t the one who needs to be rescued, sometimes we know someone who does Would you ask the Lord to reveal to you who you know that needs rescuing and then write a prayer on their behalf – be their prayer warrior, stand in the gap for them asking the Lord to rescue them. Ask the Lord if there is anything else He wants you to do, record it and then be obedient.

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We know Hezekiah trusted the Lord and then had a season where he faltered. He was not the only one who suffered from this.

Psalm 20:7-8 Some trust in chariots and some in horses,
     but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.
 **8**They collapse and fall,
     but we rise and stand upright.

Those who trusted in chariots and horses were brought to their knees and fell where those who trusted in the name of the Lord rose and were able to stand firm. Isn’t that what we want, to be able to trust in someone who will give us strength to rise up against our foes or our difficult circumstances and stand firm? Can you recall a situation where the you put your trust in the Lord and He helped you to stand upright or firm?

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Another example from the Old Testament of people putting their trust in the Lord is found in Chronicles.

1 Chronicles 5:18-22 The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh had valiant men who carried shield and sword, and drew the bow, expert in war, 44,760, able to go to war. **19**They waged war against the Hagrites, Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab. **20**And when they prevailed[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Chronicles+5%3A18-22&version=ESV#fen-ESV-10449a)] over them, the Hagrites and all who were with them were given into their hands, for they cried out to God in the battle, and he granted their urgent plea because they trusted in him. **21**They carried off their livestock: 50,000 of their camels, 250,000 sheep, 2,000 donkeys, and 100,000 men alive. **22**For many fell, because the war was of God. And they lived in their place until the exile.

Okay, there were only 44,760 men and yet with the help of the Lord who “answered their prayers, because they TRUSTED in him”, they were able to overtake 100,000 people along with their animals – is God good or what?

Is there a situation where you are feeling outnumbered? Do you ever feel like it is you against the world, your family, your friends, your group? The Reubenites and Gadites felt this as well, and they prayed and trusted God to help them and God moved mightily. Let God help you if you are outnumbered – who better to have on your side. Tell God about the situation and ask for His help.

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The Lord has proven himself to be trustworthy to those who depended upon Him and put their complete trust in Him. God is all about completeness and having all of us.

Mark 12:30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.

Exodus 34:14 14 Do not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. (NIV)

The Lord wants all of us and He is a jealous God. The notes from the NIV Study Bible say “The “jealousy” of God demands exclusive devotion to himself. In order to be able to trust God, we have to first understand that he is completely trustworthy. He kept his promises to Abraham and Noah down to the last detail, He responded to the prayers of Hezekiah and the Reubenites and Gadites because they trusted Him. God is a jealous god who wants all of us. Are you willing to give all of yourself to God or do you only give a part of yourself? Do you want him to answer some of your prayers or all of them. Often we are only willing to give God 50% but we expect 110% from him 110% of the time.

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We saw Hezekiah trust in the Lord when he first became King and all he did to prepare the priests, Levites and the Temple. We saw how he reinstituted the Passover and how he organized the priests and Levites so the people would have strong religious leaders. But as the Assyrian army began to attack nations around him, especially their success with the Northern Kingdom, his trust in the Lord began to wane.

Hezekiah was faced with a lot of difficulties around him and it caused him to falter.

2 Kings 18:25 Moreover, is it without the Lord that I have come up against this place to destroy it? The Lord said to me, “Go up against this land and destroy it.

This envoy is telling Hezekiah’s envoy that the Lord God – the God of Judah TOLD them to go up against Judah and destroy it. Talk about some bold talk – lying about the Lord speaking to them.

Have you ever had someone tell you that the Lord said…or the Lord told them to tell you… ? What did they say and how did you receive the information?

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The Lord does use people to share information with others. We need to be open to when the Lord wants us to speak to someone else. Has the Lord ever used you to share something with someone else? What was it and how was it received?

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The Assyrian envoy shouted in a language that the people would understand in order to make sure they would hear and be intimidated. They were doubling down on their threat. When we feel the need to double down – to make sure we are ‘making our point’ we can be ASSURED that we are not doing it in love. Have you ever double downed in an argument or felt the need to ‘make your point’ or make sure someone ‘understood exactly what you were saying or perhaps you were trying to teach them a lesson’?

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Everitt M. Fjordbak, in Hezekiah: A Study in the Faith of Judah’s Great King, says this, “ The loss of faith is not an overnight thing. Neither is the growth of faith. One does not lose faith nor backslide all of a sudden. Little by little, circumstances and problems and trials will begin to make inroads into one’s faith and cause it to erode It is a creeping series of events that end in catastrophe.” This is what happened to Hezekiah and the same thing can happen to us. Have you ever experienced a time when circumstances, problems and trials caused your faith to erode?

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What did you do to get back on track? How did your faith walk improve?

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I went through a time like this when my father was ill. He lived in Kansas and I lived in Texas. I was flying back and forth and spent 60 out of 90 days in Kansas while still working at the church and the fire station. It was an incredibly difficult season for many reasons. My father was put on hospice care at the same time that two of my closest friends’ parents were also on hospice care. I believe what got me through that season was prayer. I would love to tell you that it was my prayer life, but it wasn’t. In fact, I was so exhausted I didn’t have much of a prayer life. What I did have was wonderful friends who were lifting me up in prayer – I had prayer partners carrying the lion’s share of the load. We see something similar with Hezekiah in Isaiah.

Hezekiah sent people to Isaiah and asked Isaiah to pray – he wanted Isaiah to join him to be his prayer partner.

Isaiah 37:4 It may be that the Lord your God will hear the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to mock the living God, and will rebuke the words that the Lord your God has heard; **therefore lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left.**

What about you? Do you seek out others to pray with you when you are in distress? Do you have prayer partners? If you have prayer partners, write a prayer of thanks and consider reaching out to them and sharing how thankful you are for their partnership in prayer. If you don’t, write a prayer asking the Lord who He wants you to partner with in prayer and then reach out to that person.

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