

TRUSTING GOD IN EVERY PART OF YOUR JOURNEY

Are you Joseph, Joshua or David?

Trust is something so important that all of us have struggled with at some point in our lives. So many of us have even been let down by the people we should trust the most including parents, siblings and, so sadly, spouses.

To trust means you give away control. To trust means it is out of your hands and you have no back-up plan. In a world full of people breaking our trust, we CAN trust our Father. He reminds us in Proverbs 3:5-6

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.”

I love learning from real people. So today I want to tell you a bit more about 3 beloved Bible personalities in 3 completely different stages of their lives and I want to show you how they managed to trust God through the good, the bad and the ugly of the seasons they were in. I want you to think about the season you are in right now and divide it into 3 seasons.

1. Are you on top of the world and doing really well after a time of learning and challenges?
2. Or are you maybe walking through the valley of death? Feeling like nothing is working out the way you envisioned it?
3. Or are you maybe somewhere in-between? Not at the top yet but also not too bad, just maybe going through some changes?

Wherever you are today I pray that God will really open your heart to stop leaning on your own understanding and trust in Him for the season you are experiencing.

First I want you to imagine a time machine. We are going to travel back in time to the year 1000BC. In Jordan the ancient rock city of Petra is still modern and flourishing because of its position on a major caravan route. In America the population is growing rapidly and the mammoth has just gone extinct due to better weapons and the increased success of hunters. In Mexico the Olmecs are building giant clay platforms which we can still see standing until today. But in Jerusalem a shepherd is on the throne. His name is King David and he is in the best season of his life. Already king of Judah for a decade, he is now also the anointed king of Israel and has brought the 12 tribes into one realm. This didn't come easy. After years of hiding in caves and running from the authorities, he is safe and loved and respected by his people.

Are you also in a fantastic season of your life? Have you overcome great heartache and struggle to get where you are today? Then please be inspired by how David handled this time. In his victory, he still relies and trusts in the Lord. In Psalm 13:5 he sings:

"I have trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation."

In Psalm 9:10 he serenades his Father:

"Those who know your name trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you."

We know very well that this is not the end of David's story. But while he was on top he was dancing before his God and writing Psalms still sung 3000 years later.

David trusted God with his whole heart. He lived with such great energy and joy. He was certainly not perfect, but time and time again experienced the joy of God's forgiveness even when he had to suffer the consequences of his sins. May those of you, seated on your own thrones and successful in your endeavours in this season of your life continue knowing God as your provider, your security and your fountain of living water.

With the sound of Psalms sung from the royal courts, we now get back in our time machines and travel back another 1100 years. It is the year 1898 BC and on the North American continent those Mammoths are still roaming the plains in their thousands. But on a different continent a 17-year old boy in the lush region of Hebron is having a fight with his brothers. They might be older than him but they are certainly not better. God said so. In fact, God said that they will bow down before him and he tells them so. Did they handle this little scuffle with dignity and maybe a light punch on the shoulder like brothers do? No. They take his beautiful coat, throw him in a well and then, instead of cooling off, they get even angrier at him and sell him to a passing slave caravan.

Of course we are talking about one of my favourite people in our world history. When we read about him in Genesis 37 Joseph is in the worst season of his life. After quite a blessed upbringing he is judged unfairly, thrown in a hole and then sold as a slave. By people he kinda trusted. Many of us have been there. But during all these trials, he never once loses faith in God. He never stops trusting that everything will work together for his good. It makes me think of Psalm 56:3-4:

“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?”

Another really interesting thing I picked up when I researched this story a bit deeper: When Joseph was in this difficult place in his life, not only did he continue trusting God but HE also remained someone that others could trust. In Gen 39:8 Potifar's wife is flirting with Joseph and he responds with these words: "Look, he told her, my master trusts me with everything in this entire household. How can I do such a wicked thing as this." So Joseph didn't use his suffering as an excuse for bad decisions. He was still trustworthy himself in the worst of times.

When we are thrown in holes, treated as slaves, unfairly accused and stuck in jail, do we continue trusting in our God? Do we continue doing our slave work to the best of our ability as if working for God himself or do we sit and sulk and feel sorry for ourselves? In your valley of death, be like Joseph, pick up your head and do the work God has put in front of you. He has an amazing purpose and a plan to take you where you need to be.

So, we have talked about trusting God in the best of times and the worst of times. But what if you are maybe somewhere in-between? What if you are going through some changes in your life and are simply feeling a bit unsure about the future?

Let's get back in the time machine one more time and now we are traveling back towards the future. It is the year 1250BC and at a place called Gilgal on the edge of Canaan a man named Joshua is entering a completely new season in his life. He has just spent 40 years wandering the desert, becoming the person God wants him to be so he can enter the same promised land that Joseph left 650 years earlier. Sometimes

God takes us on the most amazing journeys, not to get to a different place but to become a different person.

Remember, when the Israelites left Egypt the red sea opened miraculously before them. But when they were entering the promised land, they had to step into the fast flowing Jordan river before it stopped flowing. Sometimes God calls on us to TRUST HIM and take the first step in faith before he makes a way through the waters. If you are entering a new season in your life, be encouraged by these beautiful words to Joshua:

Jos 1:9 Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”

Of course Joshua WAS strong and courageous. He lead his nation into the promised land and went on to defeat 31 kings over the next seven years. After that he still lived long enough to divide the land among the 12 tribes and help with managing it thereafter. He eventually died of old age living in the land of milk and honey. All because he trusted God when no one else did.

Whatever season you are currently experiencing in your life: victorious like David, tough like Joseph or something in-between like Joshua, I hope you can draw strength from their lives and apply it to your own.

We don't have time machines to see the past or discover what will happen years from now but we can trust our God who knows exactly what the future will bring.

Isaiah 26:3-4

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting rock.

Do your own research:

Life Application Bible

Blue Letter Bible

Good old Google!