

## Trusting God: Part I

Every person is a trustor. Several corollary issues emerge from this fact including the object of your trust (who) and the form trust takes. Trust has an object. It may be self, or it may be something outside of self. Scripture teaches that man as a result of the fall and God's judgment was born a self-trustor (Prov. 3:5-8; 28:26; Ps. 49:12-13). Trusting in self is part of man's rebellion and it has consequences. Psalm 49 teaches that self-trustors are like beast. Animals are not inclined to ask nicely, say thank you, or wait their turn. They are getters. They live for self, in the world for themselves. Esau was depicted as one more concerned with himself and filling his own belly (Gen. 25:29-34). Esau lived according to his physical appetite. He did not trust God.

Man remains a self-trustor in varying degrees even as one saved by grace. However, salvation brings a radical change in man's heart and with it a change in man's orientation, bent, inclination, and capacity (John 3:3-8). Trusting God becomes a reality and a duty, but it is more. Trusting God is now a privilege and blessing. Growing as a God-trustor requires a change in your view of God and your view of self. The two are mutually linked and inversely related (John 3:30).

Trusting God simplifies life. It is a most wise and profound endeavor of the believer. Trusting God makes a statement about God's power and control, His wisdom, and His love. The God-trustor declares several things: that God is totally sovereign and in control; that God is infinite in His wisdom and purposes; and that God is good and perfect in His love. When the believer trusts God he is stating that God knows best. The Bible teaches that God wills/decrees what is best for Him and His people (Pss. 115:3, 135:6). He does what is best with the best possible means. Those facts should motivate you to trust God. He is trustworthy. That fact is an undeniable, non-negotiable truth. However, there is a rub, a problem. When you come face to face with God's providence (life events), you wonder and even ask is God trustworthy. The three-fold declaration of God's trustworthiness as given above is based on Scripture. In the "heat of life" what is your standard? Is your standard yourself – your experience, your logic unrelated to biblical truth or your feelings? Or is your standard the Bible, which is God's purposeful, powerful self-expression? Trusting God means trusting His word. In it God gives you all you need for life and godliness including trusting Him (2 Tim. 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:3-4).

Trusting God requires knowledge of who God is, what He has done, and what He promises. Further, it requires experiencing His goodness and gaining confidence that God has proven Himself trustworthy (Rom. 12:1-2; Ps. 34:8). The Bible teaches that God has proven Himself trustworthy. God has no obligation to prove Himself. He is God. Yet, Scripture makes clear that faithfulness to Himself by the keeping of His promises is one aspect of God's essence. He is the promise-making and promise-keeping God. He says what He means, means what He says, and brings all things to pass for His glory and the good of His people (Ps. 15:3, 135:3-6). The cross proves that fact and the resurrection affirm it.

Knowledge and confidence of God's trustworthiness will be gained and grow as you trust and obey. Matthew 7:24-27 spells out this fact. Jesus describe two kinds of people: both were hearers of His word and housebuilders. However only one group weathered or rightly responded to the storms of God's providence (life). This group heard and obeyed. They had built their house on rock. Scripture depicts God and Christ as the Rock (Deut. 32:4, 15, 18, 30-31; 1 Cor. 10:4). Yet in Matthew 7:24-27, Jesus teaches that doers (obedience) of the word are the wise housebuilders. In the passage, Jesus teaches that the rock or firm foundation is obedience to the Triune God. Elsewhere, Scripture teaches that blessing comes in the doing – obedience: not simply duty but devotion. (John 13:18; James 1:25).

**Application:**

1. How does the truth that God is trustworthy influence you in pleasant and unpleasant circumstances?
2. How do you know God is trustworthy?
3. What is your response to a God who is in control and works all things for His glory and your good?
4. What motivates you to trust God?
5. What motivates you to trust self?

**Trusting God: Part II**

Scripture proclaims that God is trustworthy (Isaiah 45:7; Lam. 3:37-38; Gen. 50:19-21; Rom. 8:28-29). God's trustworthiness is based on who He is as demonstrated by what He does. He is the Promise-maker and Promise-keeper. Scripture answers the question that everyone faces: can you trust God? Is God trustworthy? Asked another way: is God worthy of your trust? God's answer is a resounding yes! Man was created a faith-based being. Man's faith has an object and man acts according to his faith. Everyone places their faith and trust in someone or something. Adam was created with the capacity and desire to trust God and to rightly interpret God, himself, and circumstances. Post-fall, instinctively, man's first inclination is to trust self. When he does, he is acting as a fool.

In the book of Proverbs, wisdom is defined as fear of the Lord which necessitates trusting God (Prov. 1:7; 3:5-8; 9:10; 15:33; 19:23; 28:26). Overwhelmingly Scripture testifies that God is trustworthy. Yet many deny that fact by action and or inaction. Their standard for such a conclusion is not the Bible but their experience, their feelings, or their own reasoning apart from Scripture. Such was the case with Rabbi Kushner in his book: *Why Do Bad things Happen to Good People*. When faced with a child born with the genetic premature aging condition (progeria), he used his own experience and logic to determine if God was good and impotent or powerful and not good. His own reasoning and experience rather than Scripture were the foundation for his conclusions. He concluded that "fate dealt him an interesting hand." Functionally, he "cut God down" to a size that fit his definition of good and bad. Such it is with many including believers. The fact is: God is wise, powerful, and good. God plans all things and works His plan. God is up to something in all things and that something is for His glory and the good of the believer.

Functionally it may be difficult to trust God. Why is that? His ways and thoughts are not ours (Isaiah 55:8-9). We don't think or desire as God does. We are not God. But sometimes we wish we were. We have established that God is trustworthy. God is not the problem. Do you really believe that fact and how do you act upon it? Your acceptance or rejection of the truth of God's trustworthiness does not change the fact about God. Therefore, since God is not the problem that leaves you – the person. Remember God created man as a faith-based being. Scripture teaches that you can trust God because you are saved by grace through faith AND you are a new creature in Christ (Eph. 2:8-9; 2 Cor. 5:17). You have the capacity to think God's thoughts, desire what he desires, and glorify and honor him by acts of the will. Moreover, you have been gifted with saving faith and enabling grace. God does not give defective gifts or make vain promises. Faith and grace are not the issue.

Failure to trust God results from a disconnect in what you are in Christ and how you function. Trust is more than simple cognition – knowing facts. Although saving faith includes knowledge about Jesus, it is more. Even the demons knew Jesus was the Son of God (James 2:19). Saving faith also involves an act of the will. You receive and accept truth that has been made desirous and understandable by the work of the Holy Spirit in you. Energized by the Holy Spirit, you act upon biblical truth in a way

that honors God. Trust and obey are twin pillars of saving faith and enabling grace. Saving faith is informed and intelligent which leads to thoughts, desires, and actions that are God-pleasing. When you do trust God you are becoming more like Christ, the ultimate God-truster.

**Application:**

1. God is trustworthy; as a believer, you are a God-trusting person. These are non-negotiable truths. What is your response to them?
2. Write out what makes it easy to trust God.
3. Write out what makes it easy to trust self.
4. What does the cross and the resurrection have to do with trusting God (see Rom. 8:31-37).

**Trusting God – Who is God? Part III**

Since sin's entrance into the world, the existence of God has been a most discussed proposition. Does He or does He not exist, and if He does what kind of God is He? These are fundamental questions that demand appropriate answers in order to rightly live in God's world. Even the last statement is a propositional statement of fact and truth: this is God's world. And since it is, you and I can't live any way we choose. There are consequences for choices.

A fundamental non-negotiable truth about God is His existence. He is and He is majestic, awesome, good, purposeful, and powerful. The statement is simple and clear, yet immensely profound. The functional validity of this truth for you is tested daily. How so? Faced with troubles and pressures, everyone interprets and concludes something about himself and God. For the believer, troubles and pressures (actually we are speaking of God's providence not simply "life") are the context for the practice of functional atheism or growth in Christ by grace.

The Bible, which is the only source of truth (another propositional, objective, absolute truth), tells us that everyone knows God (Romans 1:18-20). But the unbeliever does not know God as he ought and God as He is. He may acknowledge Him as big but not too big. He knows God as powerful but not too powerful. Paul teaches that everyone is a knower of God. Yet the unbeliever, and often the believer, suppresses or attempts to hide the truth of God. When the believer and the unbeliever "do their own thing," they functionally deny the truth that God is and has something to say about every thought, desire, and action of every person. When people function in this manner, they act as if the world is theirs and they can function any way they desire. When they do they function as self-pleasers (Judges 17:6; 21:25; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Titus 3:3).

Another fundamental non-negotiable truth concerns man's religious nature. He was born a religious being – a worshipper. Man worships something and someone. The key is who will he worship and how will he worship. The one true God is the God of the Bible. He deserves full allegiance and devotion. He demands it because He has the sole right to every creature's worship. In Acts 17:22-31, Paul applied this truth to the philosophers in Athens. He recognized that the men of Athens "were in every way" very religious. He based this statement on the number of physical idols and temples present in the city. These men had conjured up a god as they knew him. Paul seized this opportunity to present to them the true God in the context of the cross and the resurrection (Acts 17:31-32; 1 Cor. 15:1-3). They knew God but not as He is and as they ought. In response, many rejected the true God in lieu of the god(s) of their own making. They were the god-makers and self-worshippers, actually worshipping themselves.

The unbeliever rebelliously misuses his knowledge of God. He attempts to hide God from himself and himself from God. This is a foolish and futile activity which originated in the Garden (Genesis 3:8-

14). Too often the believer functions in this manner. This activity is as a result of the legacy of previous membership in Satan's family and kingdom with its darkness, debasement, and deadness. Self-pleasing is a way of life that competes with pleasing God. Old habits must be replaced. With regeneration, the Holy Spirit indwells the believer and gives him a new light – light to understand and apply a whole different set of principles to himself, others, and circumstances. The work of the Holy Spirit is captured in Ephesians 1:15-19. The Holy Spirit opens blind eyes and hearts to the things of God. As a result, the believer thinks differently. He changes his thoughts about God and himself. Moreover, his desires change. He seeks to please God rather than himself. And his actions change. He puts off personal law keeping in order to earn something from God. In its place, he puts on obedience not simply as duty, but as privilege and blessing. He earnestly seeks to please God by becoming more like His Son. In at least two places the Father spoke of the Son in the following: "This is my Son whom I love; with him I am well-pleased.." (Matt. 3:17; 17:5)

#### **Application:**

1. What is your view of God and why?
2. What is your view of self and why?
3. Read Ps. 82:1-6 and John 10:34-36. Then compare and contrast your views of God and yourself with the Pharisees' and psalmist's view and make the appropriate adjustments.

### **Trusting God – God is Trustworthy: Part IV**

If God's love is perfect, but His power is limited and His purpose can be thwarted, God is not trustworthy and He is not dependable. If that were true He would not be God. To be trustworthy (I include such characteristics as being faithful, loyal, devoted, dependable and unchangeable), God must be completely sovereign, infinite in wisdom, and perfect in love. In His goodness and love He wills what is best for Him and His people. In His wisdom He always knows what is best. In His sovereignty He brings to pass the results of His love and wisdom. Sovereignty of God refers to His absolute power and control. What would be the significance of the fact that a single event in the entire universe could occur outside of God's control? It would mean that God would be limited in power and effect, and not completely sovereign. Moreover, if God claims to be sovereign and in control, He would be a liar and untrustworthy because his control would be limited and useless. Most people deny God's absolute sovereignty.

Confidence in our sovereign God is crucial to trusting Him. God makes claims based on His sovereignty (Ps. 50:15; Joshua 1:5,9; Hebrews 13:5-6). God created man a rational, religious being. He was to know and worship Him as Creator and Controller. Post-fall, God's people – believers – were re-created to know God not only as Creator and Controller but as Father, Savior, and Deliverer (Rom. 8:15-17; Ps 3:7-8; 50:15; 140:6-8). There are at least two aspects of God's sovereignty: His absolute independence to do as He pleases and His absolute control over the actions of all His creatures. The Scripture paints God as majestic, excellent, and awesome.

No plan of God can be thwarted or altered. God does as He pleases and only as He pleases (Pss. 115:3; 135:6). No one and nothing can frustrate or hinder His plan and purpose (Isaiah 14:26-27; 43:13; 46:8-13; Acts 2:23-24; 4:27-28). If God's purposes can be thwarted, another is stronger and nothing is certain. Rather, what God has decreed comes to pass and no one can hold back His hand or bring Him into account for His actions. He accomplishes His will in and through every event. Therefore, no event, circumstance, or action by another can occur outside the bounds of His sovereign will. If God's power is not absolute, complete, and comprehensive, He is limited, His

control is limited, and He does not have the power to save, guard, and sustain. But He is absolutely sovereign and He guards what He ordains. What occurs is only what He ordains (Prov. 16:1, 4, 9, 33; 19:21; 21:1,30-31; Isaiah 45:7; Lam. 3:37-39; Eph. 1:4,11-12; James 4:15; 1 Peter 1:3-4; 2 Tim. 1:12). This picture of God may seem unbelievable. It is to those who have a view of a small God which has been shaped by the person's experience, feelings, or logic. That person has attempted to create his own god. He will fail miserably. He can expect hardness and misery in his life (Prov. 13:15b).

### **Application:**

1. What is your standard for God's trustworthiness? Do you use the Bible or your feelings, experience, and or logic unrelated to Scripture? Give reasons for your answer and the results of using whichever standard.
2. What is your view of Scripture?
3. How do you view the Scripture passages given above? Do you agree or disagree and on what basis?

## **Trusting God – Are You Trusting God: Part V**

Scripture, God's personal, powerful, purposeful self-expression, cries out that God is trustworthy. You, believer, are a new creature in Christ (regeneration: John 3:3-8; 2 Cor. 5:17). Therefore, you have the capacity to trust God. Believers learn to choose to trust God in every situation. You don't need to respond in any situation or to any person with discouragement, sinful anger, worry, and or sinful fear. All of these reactions are the result of wrong thoughts and desires about God, yourself, and others. Rather, God is in heaven, and all is right with the world: (Eccl 5:1-3). How do you respond to this truth?

Believers often function as unbelievers. There are two basic responses to God and His control: reject it, either outright or via grumbling and complaining or embrace it. A person may grumble and complain because God's sovereignty and His god purpose is not always apparent (Heb. 2:8-9). Another is the feeling or conclusion that "it doesn't seem as if God is in control." Another common reason verbalized or not stems from the conclusion that "it doesn't seem that God's control is good." The person does not like or want things the way God has ordained "all things" of Romans 8:28-29. Another reason for grumbling and complaining stems from the belief that God owes the person a "good" explanation. These conclusions, and others, are based on judging God and His control subjectively via the person's feelings, experience, and reasoning. Grumblers and complainers are "unhappy campers." Control is the issue and more specifically, their lack of it. They compete with God and often express themselves by worry, sinful fear, sinful anger, and depression. Bad feelings run rampant, and too often, one's proper vertical reference is suppressed. The problem is not things and other people but one's response to God.

As a believer you have saving faith. You are now properly faith based. You are a God-trusting person. How then do you prove faithful and trusting? Consider these activities.

Remind yourself daily that God is good, powerful, and purposeful. He is in control for His glory and your good. Next, recognize that there is a need for your faith to be pruned and you to grow in faithfulness (Romans 5:1-5; James 1:2-4,12; 1 Peter 1:6-7). God deserves the best. Unless you adopt this perspective, you will be tempted to resist God's providence as His tool for you to use for your growth in Christlikeness. You will be tempted to ask for a sign (like Peter in Matthew 14:22-33). You will be tempted to grumble and complain (Phil 2:14-17).

Exercise your faith – proving faithful – daily by applying biblical principles as a whole person

(thoughts, desires, and actions) in any situation. Growing in faithfulness is not simply a duty but a blessing and a privilege. In terms of thoughts and desires, read, recite, and meditate upon God's truth (Ps 119:9-11, 18). Carry on as you verbalize, memorize, and internalize that truth. Complete the exercise as you actualize – put it into practice – the non-negotiable truths regarding God's Being and His promises. Your view of God and His control, of yourself, and of others will change as a result. When that happens you will not be self-focused but God and other-focused. Your goal and pleasure will be pleasing your God for His glory (Ps. 46:10)

Remember that you are whole person – thoughts, desires, and actions. In every situation (really God's providence) you bring thoughts, desires, and actions. Growth in Christ means that each of these (your thoughts, your desires, your actions) must be in line with God's truth that is appropriate for you at the moment. Here is an example. Your best friend has abandoned you for whatever reason. You remember that the situation is the context and not the cause of your whole-person response. Aware of this truth helps you evaluate yourself from God's perspective and respond properly.

### **Application:**

1. In regard to thinking, ask: how does God want you to think about this situation, the other person, yourself, and Him? Compare your thoughts with appropriate biblical truth.
2. In regard to desires, ask: what do I really want? Is it in line with what God desires for Himself and for me as His child?
3. In regard to action, ask: How should you act in order to a 2 Cor. 5:9 person?
4. Get busy applying these truths daily. Prove faithful in so-called "little things" so you can look forward to being faithful in "big things."

## **Trusting God – God and You: Part VI**

God's Being is a fundamental truth for everyone. God is. He exists. A corollary question follows: Who is this God that is? More personally, what is your view of God? Your view of God determines to a great degree how you function in His world, especially in relation to others. The Bible teaches that life – every person's daily existence – has both a vertical and horizontal reference. This truth is summarized in Matthew 22:37-40 (love the Lord your God and your neighbor as yourself) and 1 John 4:19 (the believer loves because he has received God's saving love). These two references are linked. Moreover, your vertical reference and your view of God are interrelated. Your view of God is a reflection of and determines your love of Him and your view of self and others. How do you answer the question: Who is the God of His world? How are you doing loving God?

The above presupposes that you agree and embrace the truth that God is. Moreover this God is the Creator of His universe and is the Controller of it. He did not create Himself – He has always been. He is eternal. This fact answers the question: where was God before He created everything? He was not any where but every where. He created all the "wheres" and is present in them. The picture is one of an awesome, majestic, big God. He is transcendent – far beyond His creation and His creatures. Yet He is present with His people. He is one of a kind – sui generis. He is self-existent, self-sufficient, self-determining, and absolutely independent. Yet He is personal. He is the believer's God as well as Lord of heaven and earth.

Can God do all things? It depends on what you mean. God is free as is any other being but He is limited by His nature (as is man). God is limited by His God-ness. He can't lie, change, or sin. He is true to His own nature. He does what pleases Him (Pss. 115:3; 135:6). What pleases Him is to save a

people for Himself. In this way the triune God is most glorified.

One aspect of God's activity is His providential control. The term "life" is so often misused. The term's meaning is most often divorced from God's control. Therefore people speak of life as if it is "something" that has its own power, direction, and destiny. Biblically, God is the Author of all of life. Life is God's – it is His creation. His ordering of the universe reflects His nature – He is a God of order (1 Cor. 14:33). His activity in His world reflects His care and concern for His creatures and Himself. Therefore, "life" is not the problem. How you respond to circumstance is determined by your view of God, self, and the situations and circumstances brought about by God's control. Hebrews 1:1-3, Colossians 1:17, and Acts 17:24-31 (among other passages) teach that all existence is the result of God's continued governing, directing, and preserving all of His creatures and their actions. You may be thinking and mumbling – "So what?" The answer is simple and yet profound: God is – He exists and we exist because He created. These are non-negotiable truths. Therefore everyone is vertically referenced. As a believer you love God and grow in that love only because He loved you first. He is the initiator of love because He is love (1 John 4:19; 4:8). His creative power includes the work of regeneration and its results. The believer is a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17) with a new record, family, and status. As a result the believer loves God and neighbor. Paul picks up this theme in Romans 13:8-10. There he teaches that the believer is forever indebted as a lover – first to God and then to his neighbor as a reflection of first being loved.

**Application:**

1. Knowledge of God leads to knowledge of self: write out your view of God and then your view of self.
2. How has your view of God affected your response to Him in both good and hard times?
3. How has your view of God influenced your view of self (write out) and your view of others (write out)?
4. In what ways has your knowledge of God and self-changed as a result of being a Christian?
5. How have you used that knowledge to live as a God-pleaser according to 2 Cor. 5:7, 9?

**Trusting God: Part VII**

Everyone, believer and unbeliever, thinks, desires, and acts out of AND based on faith. As a believer, the key to trusting God is never faith as such. Saving faith is God's gift to every believer (Gal. 2:16; Eph 2:8-9). There is no salvation apart from it. Trusting God is one activity of believers. It is what believers are to do as duty, privilege, and blessing. How much faith do you need to trust God? The keys to trusting God are the proper object of saving faith and the proper use of the gift of faith. Trusting God means growth in faithfulness. The believer is to grow as a trusting person. In contrast, the unbeliever has faith but it is non-saving faith. Faith yes but he trusts himself. That is all he can and wishes to do (Rom. 8:5-8). Consequently he trusts in others and in things in order to get for himself (see Proverbs 3:5-8).

The apostles walked, talked, and witnessed Jesus – His Person and His work. At times they seemed to get "it." They had an idea of who Christ was and perhaps the significance of that fact. But at other times they seemed clueless. If we are honest with ourselves, we function in the same way. "Clue-lessness" has been, and will continue to be, the case for all believers in varying degrees throughout the ages.

In Matthew 14:22-33, the apostles are in the midst of the wind and waves (an apt picture of God's hard providence). Jesus came to them walking on the water. What an amazing sight that must have been. The apostles were fearful – terrified. Jesus knew people and His close friends from the inside-

out. He ministered to them by speaking reassuring words. He stated the fact of His existence and gave an exhortation. He tells them to take courage – be strong-hearted and not fearful. He attaches a strong reason as to why they should: It is I (see Exodus 3:6; John 8:58). His presence was to carry the day. His presence required Peter and the disciples to respond.

Jesus is the ever-present, powerful, Almighty God. Apparently that statement spoken by Jesus did not satisfy Peter (and I assume the other disciples). Peter asked for a sign. Graciously, Jesus gave him one. He uttered the simple invitation: come to me. Peter stepped out of the boat onto the water and moved in stepwise fashion toward Jesus. What an amazing experience. Initially his physical eyes (and his spiritual eyes – his heart) were fixed upon Christ (see Colossians 3:1-3; 1 John 3:1-3). As a whole person (thoughts, desires, and actions) he was properly vertically oriented. He walked on water! It is when he perceived his surroundings bigger than him and therefore Christ that he began to sink. Yet he quickly “regained focus” and called out to Jesus for salvation. Jesus drew drowning Peter to himself while reminding Peter of his un-faithfulness – O you little faith. How little was Peter’s faith? How much faith did Peter need to walk on water? How much faith did he need to continue his walk toward Jesus? On his own, Peter did not get to Christ. He did not prove faithful and trusting. Yet Jesus did not abandon him. He moved to Peter! Peter was learning. Peter’s epistles suggest that Peter always cherished this experience. How patient and merciful our God is.

### **Application:**

1. As a believer you have saving faith. (Eph. 2:8-9) You are now properly faith-based. How then do you prove faithful and trustworthy?
2. Matthew 14:22-33: How are you like Peter? How are you dislike Peter?
3. Review 1 Samuel 17: compare and contrast Peter and David. What do you learn?

## **Trusting God: Part VIII**

How are you growing as a God-trustor? The question assumes several things:

- that you are a serious believer;
- that you are eager to grow in that area of your life;
- that you agree that God deserves your trust;
- that you are blessed in the doing.

What follows are practical ways to promote growth as a God-pleaser.

First, recognize that there is a need for your faith and trust to be pruned and for you to grow in faithfulness (Rom. 5:1-5; James 1:2-4,12; 1 Peter 1:6-7). Unless you adopt this perspective, you will be tempted to resist God’s providence (which people too often call “life”) as His tool for you to use.

Growth in Christlikeness is one activity of the believer and should take center stage. You will be tempted to ask for a sign, like Peter or like Gideon who asked for two signs (Matthew 14:22-33; Judges 6:36-40). Moreover, you will be tempted to grumble and complain (Phil. 2:14-17).

Second, exercise your faith thereby proving yourself genuine – faithful and trustworthy. You do this by applying biblical principles as a whole person (thoughts, desires, and actions) 24/7. The “calling to mind” is to be regular and daily but especially at those times it is easy to doubt God’s goodness. In terms of thoughts and desires, read, recite, and meditate upon God’s truths that are most appropriate for you in your situation (Ps. 119:18). Follow by memorizing, verbalizing, and actualizing truth daily. Apply – act upon – the non-negotiable truths regarding who God is and His promises and who you are as His child (Ps 119:9-11).

To help you, remember that you are whole person – thoughts, desires, and actions. Growth in Christ



means that each of these aspects must be brought in line with God's truth that is most relevant for you at the moment. In every unpleasant or potential unpleasant situation (really God's providence) you bring thoughts, desires, and actions to it. Consider this example. Your best friend may have abandoned you for whatever reason. You are aware that the situation is the context and not the cause of your whole-person response. Awareness of this simple truth is very important as you respond (and you will respond).

Third, determine how God wants you to think and desire in your situation. How are you to relate to the other person, yourself, and God? Compare your thoughts with the appropriate biblical truth. Are you in line with the truth that God is trustworthy and works all things for His glory and the good of His people (Rom. 8:28-29)? How are you responding in and to the situation and ultimately to God? How are you functioning as a Christian oyster (2 Cor. 5:9)? How are you using irritations to make the pearl of Christlikeness?

Fourth, get busy. Apply the above suggestions daily and rejoice in God and His grace.

**Application:**

1. Keep track of how you proved faithful and trustworthy in big and little things and record your motivation and how you did.
2. Answer the questions: what made it easy and what made it hard to trust God?
3. What truth about God has been most beneficial in growing as a God-trustor?