SERMON BASED STUDY GUIDE

Pastor Charlie Riley

TRUSTING GOD

OPENING & PRAYER:

Trusting God is a big deal because Proverbs 3:5-6 gives a way to live when life does not make sense: trust the Lord with all the heart, lean not on personal understanding, acknowledge Him in every way, and let Him direct the path. Personal understanding gets in the way because it tries to put God in a little box, and God does not fit in that box. The abundant life Christ promised requires more than trusting God for a ticket to heaven. Trust has to grow into every part of life.

"Lord, thank You for bringing us together at this moment right now. We ask that You would stir our hearts and minds to be curious about You and kind to one another. Please reveal more of Yourself to us as we grow closer to You and one another. We thank You for this small group time we're about to have. In Jesus' name, amen."

SCRIPTURE:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. **Proverbs 3:5-6**

Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." **Genesis 12:1-3**

Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. **Genesis 12:1**

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. **Hebrews 11:8**

But the path of the just is like the shining sun, That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day. **Proverbs 4:18**

Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to dwell there, for the famine was severe in the land. **Genesis 12:10**

What sorrow awaits those who look to Egypt for help, trusting their horses, chariots, and charioteers and depending on the strength of human armies instead of looking to the Lord the Holy One of Israel. **Isaiah 31:1 (NLT)**

Please say you are my sister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that I may live because of you." So it was, when Abram came into Egypt, that the Egyptians saw the woman, that she was very beautiful. **Genesis 12:13-14**

The princes of Pharaoh also saw her and commended her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken to Pharaoh's house. He treated Abram well for her sake. He had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male and female servants, female donkeys, and camels. But the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. **Genesis 12:15-17**

And Pharaoh called Abram and said,"What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? Why did you say, 'She is my sister'? I might have taken her as my wife. Now therefore, here is your wife; take her and go your way." So Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him; and they sent him away, with his wife and all that he had. **Genesis 12:18-20**

The godly may trip seven times, but they will get up again. But one disaster is enough to overthrow the wicked. **Proverbs 24:16**

Now when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people. **Genesis 14:14-16**

And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness." **Romans 4:19-22**

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? **Romans 8:31**

Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all. **Genesis 14:18-20**

But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich'— **Genesis 14:22-23**

Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you." **Luke 6:38**

But Sarai was barren; she had no child. **Genesis 11:30**

And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. **Genesis 13:16**

Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." **Genesis 22:2**

And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. **Genesis 15:6**

GO DEEPER:

Abraham's story shows seven areas where trust gets real: feet and future, famine, failure, fights, finances, family, and faith. Abraham's feet had to leave country, family, and the familiar place before God showed him where he was going. God meets people in the stretch, not just in the comfortable pew or the normal routine. The path may look like it is not there, but obedience in the next step reveals what God already prepared.

Famine tests whether God's provision is enough when the natural situation looks empty. God does not need human strength, human systems, or somebody trying to help Him out. Obedience opens the way for God to show that He can provide without human striving. Failure also does not wreck God's plan. Abraham lied to protect himself, caused chaos, and still found God's grace at work. The godly may trip seven times, but they get back up. God has already figured human stupidity into the equation, and even dumb mistakes can become places where God teaches, heals, and helps people move forward.

Fights come in all kinds: internal voices, external pressure, physical trouble, emotional chaos, and spiritual warfare. God's power is bigger than every one of them. If God is for a believer, the fight is real, but defeat is not the final word. Abraham also learned that finances belong under God's hand. His tithe to Melchizedek declared that God, not people, was the source of his blessing. Giving is not God trying to get something from people, but God working something through them.

Family may be one of the hardest places to trust God. Abraham laid Isaac on the altar because Isaac belonged to God before he belonged to Abraham. Laying Isaacs at the altar means releasing control and trusting God with children, family, and the things most deeply loved. Faith finally puts a person in right standing with God because Abraham believed the Lord. Trusting God remains the key to moving forward, even when the road is unclear, the fight is hard, and personal understanding has run out.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Trust God beyond personal understanding. Personal understanding wants the whole map before taking the first step. Trust obeys what God has said today and lets tomorrow unfold in God's hands. God's path may not make sense at first, but it always leads somewhere better than fear can see. **[12:56]**

2. Failure is not the end. Abraham's failure did not cancel God's call or God's covenant. Grace does not excuse foolishness, but it meets people in it, teaches them, and gets them back on their feet. A believer can repent, receive cleansing, get smarter, and move forward without living under yesterday's mistake. **[21:22]**

3. God is for every fight. Internal voices, emotional pressure, physical problems, and spiritual warfare all require more than human strength. God's presence does not mean there will be no battle, but it does mean no battle gets the final say. The cross proves that God is for His people even when circumstances are loud. **[31:31]**

4. Lay loved ones before God. Family can become an area of fear, control, and endless trying to manage every outcome. Abraham's altar showed that the most loved gifts are safest in God's hands. God calls families to release what they cannot control and trust His care, His timing, and His power to reach them.

LEARNING AND GROWING:

1. What fear led Abraham to misrepresent Sarah in Egypt, and what trouble came from that choice? **[17:40]**

2. What does Abraham's failure in Egypt show about the difference between God's grace and an excuse for foolish choices? **[21:22]**

3. What does Abraham's willingness to place Isaac on the altar reveal about trusting God with the people and gifts a person loves most? **[42:06]**

4. Is there a "famine" area right now—such as finances, work, health, or opportunity—where circumstances look empty? How can trust in God shape the response instead of panic or striving? **[17:11]**

5. Is there a loved one, child, family situation, or deeply valued hope that has become an area of control or fear? What would it look like to place that "Isaac" in God's hands in prayer and release the outcome to Him? **[42:16]**

CLOSING PRAYER:

"Father, thank you for the opportunities to grow in our faith. We will continue to lean on Your Word as we grow to bring people to know you. In Jesus' name we pray, amen."