

Real Trust – Part 1

Isaiah 8:11-22

Pastor Guy Gray

Choosing to Trust in Times of Trouble (8:11-16)

What we do in times of trouble is the most revealing thing about our lives. When crisis is looming before us, when things are literally falling apart all around us, our attitudes and our actions reveal what's really going on in our hearts. The question is: where will we put our trust in times of trouble? Where will we focus our attention?

Isaiah lived in troubled times. The economy was beginning to fail. The threat of war was increasing. The complexity and instability of international politics was confusing and frightening. All of this was terrifying to the people of Jerusalem. They were under a huge amount of emotional strain. In the midst of all this pressure they had to make choices. Some lived in denial. Some turned to politics for a solution. Some looked to alternate forms of "spirituality" for help (forms that were not in line with God's Word). Some people just basically "lost it," and lived in a constant state of anxiety.

We are called to live in real trust in the true and living God. This is the choice we are called to. In Isaiah 8:11-22, God speaks to Isaiah and puts this choice before him. In this passage Isaiah himself becomes our example of how to live in times of trouble. At the heart of the passage is this reminder—unless our focus is on the reality of God himself, our faith cannot stand. People were afraid of many things in Isaiah's time. Many things had captured their attention. God told Isaiah that he needed to keep his attention on God instead. It is the LORD that we are to "fear" above all. This is the amazing paradox of faith. The more we see the reality of God—the more we live in true awe and reverence for God (the "fear of the LORD"), the more we are set free from the fear of other things.

To Live by Faith and Not "By Sight" (8:17-18)

The really challenging thing is that we cannot see God. God seems intangible and abstract to us. All our troubles seem so real—so tangible! Isaiah says that God was "hiding His face from the house of Jacob." God is hidden from our eyes. In times of trouble God seems even more hidden. We long to see some tangible demonstration of God's reality. Instead we just see the situation going from bad to worse. So Isaiah has to make a choice. He chooses to "wait for the Lord." He chooses to put his trust in God. This is what it means to live by "faith rather than by sight." (2 Corinthians 5:7). This is the choice that is before us day by day as we live in this fallen world. When we make this choice, something amazing happens. When we live by real trust, our very lives become signs and symbols of God's reality to people all around us. This is why Isaiah said that he and his children were signs and symbols to the people of his day. Do you know how powerful it is when you choose to truly trust in the LORD?

Above All, the Light of God's Word (8:19-22)

How can you trust God when you can't see Him and things are falling apart? The people of Isaiah's times were tired of waiting for a God they could not see. So they went to sorcerers and "spiritualists" to get spiritual answers. They were totally off track! God directs them back to his Word of revelation—to the "law" and the "testimony!" The Word of God in Scripture is the key to real trust in God. This is the only true "light" for our lives. In times of trouble, we need to dive ever deeper into God's Word in the Bible. This is where we will see the awesome reality of God and His perfect plan. This is the way we can build our faith (Romans 10:17). This involves a choice as well. There are many "voices" in our world we can listen to, but to truly trust the LORD, we need to be careful about what voices we listen to. We need to focus very intently on God as revealed in His Word. As we do, trust grows. Peace grows in our hearts. Our witness

to a hurting world becomes more powerful. May the LORD help us to put our trust where we really should—may we do so more and more in these challenging times!

For Reflection this Week:

Read Isaiah 8:11-22 every day this week.

Spend time praying, listening, and journaling.
Let the Lord speak to you through His Word.

River West Happenings

Sunday, June 15th •

Grade Move-up Day for all Kids at River West!

If you have questions contact Lindsie Bailey or Pastor Josh at 699.2226 or lindsie@riverwest.org or josh@riverwest.org

Saturday, June 21st • Saturday Morning Prayer at River West @ 8-9am

If you would like to take a more active role in the heart of our church through prayer, come join us during this amazing time of seeking and rejoicing in Gods plans for us as a church and community of believers.

This group meets on the 3rd Saturday of each month. For more information contact Jeff Nopper @ 245.1841 or Ryan Lee @ 235.9388

July 14th-18th •

Vacation Bible School K-5th

Register now...forms are in the lobby & at the church office. Contact Lindsie at 699.2226 or lindsie@riverwest.org

Sunday • June 22nd El Salvador Mission Trip Information @ 7pm at the Community Center

We have a team traveling to El Salvador this fall-November 1-7. If you are interested in going, come to this meeting to get informed! . Applications are due by June 30th. For more information contact Chris Coffman at 699.2226 or chris@riverwest.org

Thursdays • Starting June 26th • Summer Marriage Study at River West Church, 6:30-8:30pm

This 5 week study is all about "Love & Respect" in your marriage relationship. Weather you've been married for one day or one million days, you and your marriage will defiantly benefit from this great study! For more information contact Pastor Josh at 699.2226 or josh@riverwest.org