

CALLED TO **CONNECT**

Women's Conference



Guest Speaker

**PAM
HARDY**



MARCH

22nd
6:00PM - 9:30PM

23rd
8:15AM - 3:45PM

PAM HARDY
Guest Speaker Bio



Pam was born and raised in a Christian home in Houston, Texas. Christ graciously called her to salvation while she was in her first year of college. She met her husband, Carey, at the University of Houston while she was pursuing a degree in nursing, and they were married in 1976. After graduating from college in 1977, Pam worked as a nurse in cardiac intensive care, and then for two physicians in private practice. In 1983, with the birth of her first child, Pam left her nursing career behind and began a full-time career as a mother.

One of Pam's greatest joys is studying the Word of God and imparting its truth to other women. For several years Pam taught in the track for wives at the annual Shepherds' Conference at Grace Community Church in Los Angeles. She has continued speaking periodically at retreats and conferences for women across the United States as well as in other countries around the world.

Pam is privileged to be a pastor's wife and she and her husband have had the opportunity to minister in several churches in Texas and California. She currently serves at Carey's side, loving the people he shepherds at Twin City Bible Church in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Her main involvement through the years has been serving in the various women's ministries of the church and playing piano on the worship team. Pam's hobbies include reading, writing, and music, and she is blessed with four adult children and two grandchildren.

Friday, March 15

- 6:00 PM Dessert Bar & Mingle
- 6:45 PM Welcome
- 7:00 PM **Lesson 1 – Called to Balance**
- 8:00 PM Breakout Discussion
- 8:30 PM Worship & Closing Prayer
- 8:35 PM Game & Fellowship

Saturday, March 16

- 8:15 AM Breakfast
- 9:00 AM Welcome/Announcements
- 9:15 AM **Lesson 2 – Called to Intimacy with Others**
- 10:15 AM Coffee Break & Breakout Discussion
- 11:00 AM **Lesson 3 – Called to Forgiveness**
- 12:00PM Breakout Discussion
- 12:30PM Lunch
- 1:15 PM Game/Fun Activity
- 1:45 PM Final Announcements/Book Recommendations
- 2:00 PM **Lesson 4 – Called to Trust**
- 3:00 PM Breakout Discussion
- 3:30 PM Closing Remarks/Prayer

PRAISE PASSAGES

Session 1 - Called to Balance

Psalm 100:1-5 (NASB)

- 1 Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth.
- 2 Serve the LORD with gladness; come before Him with joyful singing.
- 3 Know that the LORD Himself is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture.
- 4 Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name.
- 5 For the LORD is good; His lovingkindness is everlasting and His faithfulness to all generations.

Session 2 - Called to Intimacy with Others

1 Chronicles 29:10-13 (NASB) —

- 10 So David blessed the LORD in the sight of all the assembly; and David said, "Blessed are You, O LORD God of Israel our father, forever and ever.
- 11 "Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Yours is the dominion, O LORD, and You exalt Yourself as head over all.
- 12 "Both riches and honor come from You, and You rule over all, and in Your hand is power and might; and it lies in Your hand to make great and to strengthen everyone.
- 13 "Now therefore, our God, we thank You, and praise Your glorious name.

Session 3 - Called to Forgiveness

Psalm 145:1-10 (NASB)

- 1 I will extol You, my God, O King, and I will bless Your name forever and ever.
- 2 Every day I will bless You, and I will praise Your name forever and ever.
- 3 Great is the LORD, and highly to be praised, and His greatness is unsearchable.
- 4 One generation shall praise Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts.
- 5 On the glorious splendor of Your majesty and on Your wonderful works, I will meditate.
- 6 Men shall speak of the power of Your awesome acts, and I will tell of Your greatness.
- 7 They shall eagerly utter the memory of Your abundant goodness and will shout joyfully of Your righteousness.
- 8 The LORD is gracious and merciful; Slow to anger and great in lovingkindness.
- 9 The LORD is good to all, and His mercies are over all His works.
- 10 All Your works shall give thanks to You, O LORD, and Your godly ones shall bless You.

Session 4 - Called to Trust

Revelation 5:11-14 (NASB)

- 11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands,
- 12 saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing."
- 13 And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever."
- 14 And the four living creatures kept saying, "Amen." And the elders fell down and worshiped.

SESSION 1: CALLED TO BALANCE

Avoiding the Extremes of Life

INTRODUCTION

1 Cor. 9:24-25

It is good to be “unbalanced” in your love for Christ!

Deut. 6:5

Ps. 9:1; 27:1, 42:1, 63:1, 73:25

Jer. 29:13

Phil.1:21; 3:7-8

I. FAMILY AND MINISTRY

A. The Balance

Family: Gen. 2:24

Eph. 5:22-33; 6:4

1 Tim 3:4-5; 5:14

Titus 2:3-5

Ministry: Rom. 12:3-13

1 Cor. 12

John 13:34

Rom. 15:14

Gal. 6:1

Eph. 4:32

1 Thess. 5:11

Heb. 3:13; 10:24

B. The Extremes

Family: Self-centered focus

Idolizing of your children

Neglect of ministry to others (disobedience to scripture)

Ministry: Wrong priorities

Family/children problems due to neglect (reap what you've sown)

II. SELF-DENIAL AND LIBERTY

A. The Balance

Rom. 14

Self-Denial: 1 Cor. 6:12, 19-20; 9:27
Titus 2:12

Liberty: Gal. 5:1,13
Col. 2:16-23
1 Tim. 6:17

B. The Extremes

Self-denial: self-righteousness
legalism
"works-righteousness"
prideful judging and lack of love

Liberty: sinfulness, worldliness
License (disregard of God's moral code)
prideful judging and lack of love

Believe as I believe – no more, no less;
That I am right (and no one else) confess.
Feel as I feel, think only as I think;
Eat what I eat, and drink what I drink.
Look as I look, do always as I do;
Then – and only then – I'll fellowship with you.

(Taken from Growing Strong In the Seasons of Life by Charles Swindoll. Copyright © 1983 by Zondervan. Used by permission of Zondervan.)

III. CONFRONTING AND COVERING

A. The Balance

Confronting: Matt. 18:15
Luke 17:3
Rom 15:14
Gal. 6:1
Prov. 27:5-6; 28:23

Covering: 1 Pet. 4:8
Prov. 19:11

B. The Extremes

Confronting: pride/judgementalism
critical, ungracious spirit

Covering: fear of man
lack of love

IV. TEMPORAL AND ETERNAL

A. The Balance

Temporal: Gen. 1:31
Ps. 104
Prov. 27:23-27; 31:13-27
1 Tim. 4:4-5

Eternal: Matt. 6:19-34
Phil. 3:20
Col. 3:1-2
1 Tim. 6:7,17
1 Pet. 1:4

B. The Extremes

Temporal: materialism
anxiety about potential losses
excessive concern about temporal issues or causes

Eternal: ungratefulness for God's creation
neglect of God-given responsibilities
unfaithful stewardship of possessions
lack of compassion for those who are suffering

V. INNER MAN AND OUTER MAN

A. The Balance

2 Cor. 4:16
1 Sam. 16:7

Inner man: Prov. 4:23
Matt. 12:34
Mark 7:18-23
Heb. 4:12

Outer man: Tim. 2:9-10; 4:7-8

1 Pet. 3:4

B. The Extremes

Inner man: introspection/self-focus/self-absorption
paralysis (excessively concerned about motives)
sloppiness or slovenliness

Outer man: shallowness/vanity
Phariseeism
wrong priorities

Quote: "Our character is the picture, our appearance is the frame; our frame should complement the picture, not distract from it" (Sandi Keasling)

VI. REALITY AND HOPE

A. The Balance

Gen. 50:20

Ps. 3

Rom 8:28

1 Cor. 13:7

2 Cor. 4:8-9

2 Kings 6:8-17

B. The Extremes

Reality: skepticism/cynicism/bitterness
pessimism and despair

Hope: naivete
foolish optimism
giddy immaturity

VII. THINKING AND FEELING

A. The Balance

Thinking: 1 Tim. 3:2

1 Pet. 1:13

Feeling: Luke 24:32

Rom. 12:9-13

B. The Extremes

Thinking: stoicism/deadness
indifference/lack of compassion

Feeling: excessive emotionalism
mysticism
easily influenced ("carried away by every wind of doctrine")

VIII. STRIVING AND TRUSTING

A. The Balance

Neh. 4:13-14
Ps. 127:1
Prov. 2:7; 3:5-7
Prov. 21: 31
1 Cor. 3:6-7
Eph. 2:10
Phil. 4: 6-7,11
Col. 1:29
1 Tim. 6:11, 12
James 4:13-15

B. The Extremes

Striving: self-confidence/self-sufficiency
"works-righteousness"
anxiety/fear

Trusting: laziness/presumption/passivity
mysticism
"let go and let God" mentality

Truly holy affections in a saint are balanced. This is the dominant trait of their sanctity. The whole image of Christ is impressed upon them...there is in Him every grace; and He is full of grace and truth. Thus there is apparent in some saints the same beautiful proportion that there is in the true image of Christ." (Jonathan Edwards, Religious Affections. [Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1984] 157-58).

CALLED TO BALANCE - DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

I. FAMILY AND MINISTRY

1. What are a married woman's priorities according to Titus 2:3-5?
2. What are 3 examples of ministry within the body that are found in Romans 15:14 and Galatians 6:1-2?
3. Describe a time when you had to say "no" to keep a proper balance between your responsibilities to family and ministry to others in your Christian family?

II. SELF-DENIAL AND LIBERTY

1. What things was Paul thinking of when he said "all things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable" in I Corinthians 6:12? How can the questions, "Is it lawful?" and "Is it profitable?" help you make wise decisions?
2. What is the danger of misunderstanding your freedom in Christ? How does love limit your freedom? (See Galatians 5:13)
3. By what external standards have you been tempted to judge other Christians?

III. CONFRONTING AND COVERING

1. What are the warnings given to the person who is going to reprove another? (Galatians 6:1) What should be the goal of all reproof?
2. When is it appropriate to overlook someone else's sin? (I Corinthians 13:5; I John 4:8) Does that mean you condone sin? When is it unloving to overlook sin?
3. What possible motives are behind reluctance to address sin in relationships?

IV. TEMPORAL AND ETERNAL

1. How do the values of those who "lay up treasure on earth" and those who "lay up treasure in heaven" differ? (Matthew 6:19-21)
2. What is God's view of the physical world that He made? How should we view the things God has made? (Genesis 1:31; I Timothy 4:4-5)
3. What are some of the "things above" that a believer should focus on? (Colossians 3:1-4)

V. INNER MAN AND OUTER MAN

1. Use 1 Samuel 16:7 and 2 Corinthians 4:16 to describe the two parts that make up every person. What words describe the spiritual side of man?
2. What inner quality of a godly woman is precious to God? Is this a personality trait or a demonstration of trust in God? (Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Peter 3:4)

VI. REALITY AND HOPE

1. According to Romans 8:28, what is the promise of God to every Christian in every situation they face? What is the predestined end to which God is always conforming His children in Rom. 8:29?
2. What situation have you faced where you did not see how any good could come from it? List some good things you now see from that situation.

VII. THINKING AND FEELING

1. There is a seriousness about life that should be characteristic of all believers because of the effects and consequences of sin. What qualities does Paul say are important for those who are spiritual leaders in the body of Christ (1 Timothy 3:2)?
2. When has your love for God and His word caused the same response the disciples experienced when the risen Christ explained the Scriptures to them on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:32)? Please share a passage of Scripture that has thrilled your heart recently?

VIII. STRIVING AND TRUSTING

1. What was Paul's attitude toward his work for the Lord in 1 Corinthians 3:6-7? If we do not have this attitude, what sin are we guilty of?
2. Using Proverbs 2:7 and 3:5-7, chart what a believer is to do and what God does in the process of progressive sanctification. To what situation do you need to apply this today?

SESSION 2: CALLED TO INTIMACY WITH OTHERS

I. THE PATTERN FOR INTIMACY WITH OTHERS

The Godhead - the divine pattern for our relationships

Gen 1:26

John 15:26, 17:11, 21-23

II. THE MANDATE FOR INTIMACY WITH OTHERS

Mark 12:29-31 *Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord; 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 .The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."*

III. THE ESSENTIALS FOR INTIMACY WITH OTHERS

A. Essential Attitude

- Humility

Phil 2:3-4 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Rom 12:10,16

B. Essential Actions

- Serving Others

Mark 10:45

Gal. 5:13

1 John 3:16

Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12; 1 Pet 4:10

Titus 2:3-4

- Communicating with Others

Prov. 18:21

Matt. 12:36

Job 38:2

Ps. 141:3

- WHY should we speak?

Eph 4:25 – impart truth to others

Psa 66:16 – testify about God to others

Eph 4:29 – give grace to others

➤ HOW should we speak?

Prov 15:28

Prov 10:19; 17:27 – with restraint

Prov 15:1,2,23; 25:11 – gently, wisely and at the right time

Prov 16:21,23,24 – wisely, sweetly, and with pleasant words

Prov 31:26 – with wisdom and kindness

Ecc 9:17 – quietly

Eph 4:15 – in love

Col 4:6 – always with grace

IN OTHER WORDS:

John 13:35; 15:12-13

Rom 12:10

1 Cor. 13

1 Pet 1:22

1 John 4:7,11

IV. THE BARRIERS TO INTIMACY WITH OTHERS

Prov 4:23

Luke 6:45

A. Pride: Rom 12:3
1 Cor 4:5; 13:7

B. Fear: Prov 29:25

C. Malice: 1 Pet 2:1

D. Deceit: 1 Pet 2:1

E. Hypocrisy: 1 Pet 2:1

F. Envy: 1 Pet 2:1

G. Corrupt communication

Eph. 4:29

Prov. 21:23

Matt 12:34

James 3:6-8

- Prideful : Prov 18:2
 - Negative: Phil 2:14
 - Hasty : Prov 18:13; 29:20
 - Caustic: Prov 12:18
 - Injurious: Prov 6:16-19; 12:17-18,22; 16:28
- 2 ways to resolve conflicts
1. Let love cover it – 1 Pet. 4:8; Eph. 4:32
 2. Confront the individual humbly and biblically – Gal. 6:1; Matt 18

H. Busyness

IN OTHER WORDS:

IV. CONCLUSION

2 Cor 5:14-15

John 13:35

Col 2:9-10

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

John MacArthur, The Body Dynamic

Martha Peace, Becoming a Titus 2 Woman

Jerry Bridges, Respectable Sins

Paul Tripp, War of Words

We are called to the “one anothers” of scripture!

John 13:34 love one another

Rom 12:5 are members of one another

Rom 12:10 be kindly affectionate to one another

Rom 15:14 give preference to one another; admonish one another

1 Cor 6:7 do not go to law against one another

1 Cor 12:25 have care for one another

Gal 5:13 through love serve one another

Gal 5:15 do not bite and devour one another

Gal 6:2 bear one another's burdens

Eph 4:2 bear with one another in love

Eph 4:32 be kind to one another; forgive one another

Eph 5:19 speak to one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs

Eph 5:21 submit to one another in the fear of Christ

Phil 2:3 regard one another as more important than yourself

Col 3:9 do not lie to one another

Col 3:13 bear with one another

Col 3:16 teach and admonish one another

1 Thes 3:12 abound in love to one another

1 Thes 5:13 live in peace with one another

Titus 3:3 don't hate one another

Heb 10:24 consider one another in order to stir up love and good works

Heb 10:25 exhorting one another

James 4:11 do not speak against one another

James 5:9 do not complain against one another

1 Pet 1:22 love one another fervently from the heart

1 Pet 4:9 be hospitable toward one another without complaint

1 Pet 5:5 clothe yourself with humility toward one another

1 John 1:7 have fellowship with one another

CALLED TO INTIMACY WITH OTHERS - DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the ways our relationship with God is reflected in our relationships with other people? Whom does scripture tell us to love? (Mark 12:29-31) Who are we never told to love?
2. Humility is absolutely crucial to building intimate relationships with others. (Phil. 2:3-4; Rom. 12:3, 10) What are some of the ways that this character quality manifests itself in the context of relationship? Give a specific example from your own life of how you were ministered to by the humility of another person.
3. During His earthly ministry, Jesus was our perfect example in every way and this certainly includes His perfect communication with the people He ministered to. From the gospels, recall some of your favorite interactions between Jesus and other people. Look at the elements of edifying communication that are listed in your syllabus and identify how Jesus manifested these elements in His dealings with others.
4. Speech has the ability to either build up or to tear down relationships. Have someone read James 3:5-10 aloud to illustrate how destructive our speech can be if it is not controlled by the Holy Spirit and love for others. Then read Eph. 4:15, 29 and 4:31-32 together and discuss some key principles that should guide our speech. What do you find to be the biggest challenge personally in your communication with others?
5. Matthew 18:15-18 gives us the steps for how to deal with sin and resolve conflict between believers in the church. Review these steps. What is always the ultimate goal of church discipline? What should be our attitude any time it is necessary to confront a sinning brother or sister in the Lord? (Gal. 6:1)

SESSION 3: CALLED TO FORGIVE

INTRODUCTION

In his book, *The Freedom and Power of Forgiveness*, John MacArthur says this:

Almost no concept is more important to the Christian faith than forgiveness. The Gospel itself is a message about God's forgiveness, and Christ's teaching was full of exhortations to His people to be forgiving to one another.

Let's look at what the Bible has to say about forgiveness:

I. THE MANDATE OF FORGIVENESS

How does GOD view forgiveness?

- A COMMAND, not a suggestion

Eph. 4:31-32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another...

Col. 3:8, 12-13 Therefore, as the elect of God...put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.

Mark 11:25 ...if you have anything against anyone, forgive him...

II. THE MEANING OF FORGIVENESS

What does it MEAN to forgive?

The NT Greek term:

The OT concept - Jer. 31:34

A. God's Forgiveness of Us

1. Judicial - Col.2:13-14

2. Parental - 1 John 1:7,9

B. Our Forgiveness of Others

- Patterned after God's forgiveness of us – Eph. 4:32
- Remember - we are COMMANDED to forgive so we are in sin if we don't; therefore it is a matter of obedience, NOT feelings

Two facts about our forgiveness of others:

1. Forgiveness first takes place in the heart

Mark 11:25 And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him...

Luke 6:27-37 ...love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you...be merciful...

2. Forgiveness results in a willingness to reconcile

Matt. 5:23-24 ...be reconciled to your brother...

Rom. 12:18 If (emphasis mine) it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men...

Related Issues:

- Confronting vs. Covering

Matt. 18:15 ...if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone.

Prov. 28:23 He who rebukes a man will find more favor afterward than he who flatters with the tongue.

Luke 17:3

Prov. 27:5-6

1 Pet. 4:8 ...above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."

Prov. 19:11 A man's discretion makes him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook a transgression.

- Practical manifestation

The 3 promises:

-
-
-

- Apologizing vs. seeking forgiveness
- Forgiving self
- Forgiving God

III. THE MANNER OF FORGIVENESS

HOW should we forgive?

A. Immediately

Luke 17:3-4 ...and if he repents, forgive him.

B. Repeatedly

Matt. 18:21-22

Luke 17:4

C. Generously

Ps. 57:10; 103:11,17; 118:1; 119:64

Isa. 63:7

IV. THE MOTIVATION FOR FORGIVENESS

WHY do we forgive?

A. Positive Motivations

1. To obey God

John 14:15,21 If you love Me, keep My commandments.

1 John 2:3-5

2 John 6

2. To please God

2 Cor. 5:9 Therefore we make it our aim...to be well pleasing to Him

1 John 3:22

1 Pet. 3:1-6

Matt. 25:21

3. To be like God

Matt. 18:21-35 parable of the unforgiving servant

Ps. 86:5

1 Pet. 2:21-23

1 John 2:6

B. Negative Motivations

1. To avoid forfeiting the parental forgiveness of God

Matt. 6:15

2. To avoid being turned over to the "tormentors"

Matt. 18:34

3. To avoid giving the devil an opportunity

Eph. 4:26-27

V. THE BENEFITS OF FORGIVENESS

What are the RESULTS when we forgive?

A. In Our Relationship with God

- Blessings of obedience

Deut. 28

Ps. 1:1-3

John 14:23; 15:7-11

B. In Our Relationship with Others

- Joy and peace in relationships

Col. 3:12-15

1 Pet. 3:8-9

- Freedom from "victim" mentality

Rom. 8:28-29

CONCLUSION

Wheat: As soon as you choose to forgive with your mind and your will and commit this matter to God, you free both yourself and the one who offended you from the power of the past... (the) ability to leave the past behind belongs to God's people. The Christian life is all present and future. God has so designed it that the Christian can always begin where he is right now to live life in a new way – God's way.

- Refusing to forgive leads to anger, resentment, bitterness
 - ⇒ SPIRITUAL BONDAGE
- Choosing to forgive leads to joy and peace
 - ⇒ SPIRITUAL FREEDOM

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE

John MacArthur, *The Freedom and Power of Forgiveness*

CALLED TO FORGIVE - DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In your own words, explain the parable of Matthew 18 and what this tells us about our responsibility to forgive those who sin against us.
2. When we refuse to forgive someone, what are some of the destructive consequences that will manifest themselves in our lives?
3. What is the MAIN thing you have personally learned from the forgiveness lesson?
4. Is there some specific action you need to take now based on what you have learned?
(examine your heart/repent of unforgiveness toward someone, go in person to someone to make things right, etc.)

SESSION 4: CALLED TO TRUST **(Based on the book *Trusting God*, by Jerry Bridges)**

INTRODUCTION

- The heart of the Christian faith: trust
- The challenge of the Christian life: trials

James 1:2-3 ...when you encounter various trials...

Job. 5:7

1 Pet. 4:12-13

Our goal is to have Paul's perspective on suffering:

2 Cor. 12:7-10 ...therefore I am well content with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties...for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Two key issues...

I. THE TRUSTWORTHINESS OF GOD

A. God Is Completely Sovereign

Gen. 50:20

Job. 42:2

Ps. 103:19; 115:3

Dan. 4:35

Lam. 3:37-38

Is. 14:24, 27

Col. 1:16-17

Eph. 1:11

2 Tim. 1:12

- *providence* defined: "God's providence is His constant care for and His absolute rule over all His creation for His own glory and the good of His people." (Jerry Bridges, *Trusting God*. [Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 1988] 25).
- Purpose of God's sovereignty: His own glory and the good of His people

- Three key questions for every situation:



B. God Is Infinite In Wisdom

Rom 11:33-34

Ps. 147:5

Prov. 2:6; 3:19

- *wisdom* defined: "The selection of the best end of action and the adoption of the best possible means for the accomplishment of that action." (Trusting God, p. 18)

God, in his wisdom, often uses trial and adversity to accomplish His purposes:

Ps. 119:67-68, 71, 75-76

Heb. 12:5-11

Isa. 55:8-9

Rom. 9:20

Rom. 8:28-29 God's purpose for our "good" is NOT comfort or happiness but conformity to the image of His Son

1. Benefits of trials

Deut. 8:2,16

Job 23:10

Ps. 66:10

Rom. 5:3

James 1:2-4

1 Pet. 1:6-7; 5:10

2 Cor. 1:4-5; 4:17

Phil. 3:10

Eccl. 7:3-4

2. Behavior during trials

1 Pet. 5:5-7

Ps. 27:14; 57:1; 61:1-4, 62:8

2 Cor. 4:16-18

C. God Is Perfect In Love

Jer. 31:3

Rom. 8:35-39

Isa. 54:10

- For the clearest evidence of God's love, we must look to Christ's sacrificial death for us on the cross and NOT to our circumstances

John 3:16; 15:13

Rom. 5:8

I John 3:16; 4:9-10

Ps. 145:8-9

Eph. 2:4-7

2 Thes. 2:16-17

II. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MAN

A. The Development of Trust

1. I must study

God's Word: Prov. 22:17-19 ...so that your trust may be in the Lord...

Ps. 9:10

Ps. 119:50, 71, 93, 105

Other Resources: *The Attributes of God*, by A.W. Pink

The Knowledge of the Holy, by A.W. Tozer

Our Awesome God, by John MacArthur

2. I must pray

Phil. 4:6 ...in everything by supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God...

Ps. 34:4; 61:1-4

3. I must choose

Prov. 3:5-6 we must make the choice to trust

Luke 1:38

Hab. 3:17-18 Yet I will exult...I will rejoice...

B. The Results of Trust

1. For God—honors and glorifies Him

1 Cor. 10:31 ...or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

2 Cor. 5:9 Therefore we make it our aim...to be well pleasing to Him.

Ps. 40:3

2. For man—joy and peace of heart

Is. 26:3 You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because He trusts in You.

Phil. 4:7 Be anxious for nothing...and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Ps. 5:11; 33:21; 34:8

Jer. 17:7

CONCLUSION

- A word about our children

Tozer: We are often hindered from giving our treasures to the Lord out of fear for their safety; this is especially true when those treasures are loved relatives and friends. But we need have no such fears. Our Lord came not to destroy but to save. Everything is safe which we commit to Him, and nothing is really safe which is not so committed. (A.W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God* [Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 19XX] 28).

Our game plan – 1 Pet. 4:19

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Jerry Bridges, *Trusting God*
John MacArthur, *The Power of Suffering*
Elisabeth Elliot, *A Path through Suffering*
Elisabeth Elliot, *Finding Your Way Through Loneliness*
A.W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God*
Maurice Roberts, *The Thought of God*
Maurice Roberts, *The Christian's High Calling*
Sinclair Ferguson, *A Heart for God*
John Piper, *Desiring God*
The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter, www.elisabethelliot.org

SCRIPTURES FOR MEDITATION:

Ps. 13:1-2, 5-6
Ps. 18:30
Ps. 31:14-15, 19, 22
Ps. 32:10
Ps. 34
Ps. 56:3-4
Ps. 94: 18-19
Lam. 3:22-25
Matt. 11:28-30
John 14:27
2 Cor. 4:16-18
Heb. 4:15-16
1 Pet. 2:21-23; 4:19; 5:5-7

QUOTES

Jerry Bridges, *Trusting God: Even When Life Hurts* (Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 1988)

In order to trust God, we must know Him in an intimate, personal way...it is more than just knowing facts about God. It is coming into a deeper personal relationship with Him as a result of seeking Him in the midst of personal pain and discovering Him to be trustworthy. It is only as we know God in this personal way that we come to trust Him. (p. 20)

Our first priority in times of adversity is to honor and glorify God by trusting Him. We honor God by choosing to trust Him when we don't understand what He is doing or why He has allowed some adverse circumstance to occur. (p. 30)

Confidence in the sovereignty of God in all that affects us is crucial to our trusting Him. If there is a single event in all of the universe that can occur outside of God's sovereign control then we cannot trust Him. His love may be infinite, but if His power is limited and His purpose can be thwarted, we cannot trust Him. (p. 37)

God knows exactly what He intends we become and He knows exactly what circumstances, both good and bad, are necessary to produce that result in our lives. (p. 121)

While it is certainly true that God's love for us does not protect us from pain and sorrow, it is also true that all occasions of pain and sorrow are under the absolute control of God. (p. 30)

Sometimes we come to the place where we do not demand of God that He explain Himself, but we try to determine or comprehend for ourselves what God is doing. We are unwilling to live without rational reasons for what is happening to us or those we love. We are almost insatiable in our quest for the 'why' of the adversity that has come upon us. But this is a futile as well as an untrusting task. God's ways, being the ways of infinite wisdom, simply cannot be comprehended by our finite minds. (p. 125)

If we are to experience peace in our souls in times of adversity, we must come to the place where we truly believe that God's ways are simply beyond us and stop asking Him 'why' or even trying to determine it ourselves. (pp. 126-127)

But though we should never ask a demanding 'why?' we may and should ask God to enable us to understand what He may be teaching us through a particular experience. But even here we must be careful that we are not seeking to satisfy our souls by finding some spiritual 'good' in the adversity. Rather we must trust God that He is working in the experience for our good, even when we see no beneficial results. We must learn to trust God when He doesn't tell us why, when we don't understand what He is doing. (p. 125)

Maurice Roberts, *The Thought of God* (Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1993)

To have God in his mind and thought is the believer's constant source of strength. (p. 4)

The thought of God should be the Christian's panacea. It should cure all his ills at a stroke. (p. 5)

Panic is the sinful failure to apply our knowledge of God to particular problems. Panic is possible only when God is obscured from our thoughts by visible circumstances. (pp. 6-7)

The degree of a Christian's peace of mind depends upon his spiritual ability to interpose the thought of God between himself and his anxiety...for it is not outward circumstances that can drag us down, but our own reaction of despair to them, when we fail to perceive the hidden hand of God in all events. (p. 7)

Our thoughts must be re-educated to have a high view of God...(we must) bend our minds to the task of concentrating on His infinite greatness. (pp. 13-14)

SUGGESTIONS FOR INTERCESSORY PRAYER REQUESTS:

SPIRITUAL CONDITION (for all loved ones)

Genuine salvation

Spiritual sensitivity (a tender, open heart toward spiritual things)

An enduring love for and obedient attitude toward Jesus Christ and His Word

True repentance and sorrow over their sin

A strong desire to know God and glorify Him

A strong desire for Bible study and scripture memorization

CHARACTER QUALITIES (for all loved ones)

Fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control

Unselfishness, sacrificial love, and forgiveness toward others (especially toward other family members)

A love for honesty and truth (and a hatred for lying!)

Humility and a grateful spirit

Holiness/godliness in daily living

Wisdom/seeking God's guidance in decisions

That they would conquer their personal areas of weakness (list them) (Ex: pride, selfishness, anger, etc.)

Special requests for husbands

Purity and faithfulness (mental, emotional, physical)

Leadership in the family (family worship, setting standards, etc.)

Wisdom in decision-making

I Tim 3:2-7 (above reproach, husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous, one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence, not a novice, having a good reputation among those who are outside the church)

Titus 1:5-9 (blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful Word that he may be able to exhort and convict)

Special requests for children

Love and respect for parents/a submissive, obedient, teachable spirit

That they would learn to personally trust God and depend on Him at all times

Leadership qualities (integrity, wisdom, discernment, and courage)

Courage to stand against peer pressure and temptation (not be controlled by "fear of man")

Moral purity/physical purity till marriage (daughters especially: concern for modest dress)

That they would someday be a godly wife or godly husband

Pray for future spouse (genuinely converted, live a godly life, be obedient to the Word)

Physical protection for children

"A Quiet Mind"

(Amy Carmichael, *Toward Jerusalem*. [Fort Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1977], 34. ©, Used by Permission.)

What room is there for troubled fear?
I know my Lord, and He is near;
And He will light my candle, so
That I may see the way to go.

There need be no bewilderment
To one who goes where he is sent;
The trackless plain by night and day
Is set with signs, lest he should stray.

My path may cross a waste of sea,
But that need never frighten me;
Or rivers full to very brim,
But they are open ways to Him.

My path may lead through woods at night,
Where neither moon nor any light
Of guiding star or beacon shines;
He will not let me miss my signs.

Lord, grant to me a quiet mind,
That trusting Thee, for Thou art kind,
I may go on without a fear,
For Thou, my Lord, art always near.

"Thy Way Is Perfect"

(Amy Carmichael, *Toward Jerusalem*. [Fort Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1977], 52. ©, Used by Permission.)

Long is the way, and very steep the slope
Strengthen me once again, O God of hope.

Far, very far, the summit doth appear;
But Thou art near my God, but Thou art near.

And Thou wilt give me with my daily food,
Powers of endurance, courage, fortitude.

Thy way is perfect; only let that way
Be clear before my feet from day to day.

Thou art my Portion, saith my soul to Thee,
O what a Portion is my God to me.

Loving Lord and Heavenly Father,

I offer up today all that I am, all that I have, all that I do, and all that I suffer, to be Yours today and Yours forever. Give me grace, Lord, to do all that I know of Your holy will. Purify my heart, sanctify my thinking, correct my desires. Teach me, in all of today's work and trouble and joy, to respond with honest praise, simple trust, and instant obedience, that my life may be in truth a living sacrifice, by the power of Your Holy Spirit and in the name of Your Son Jesus Christ, my Master and my all. Amen.

Elisabeth Elliot Gren (Used by permission)

In heav'nly love abiding,
No change my heart shall fear;
And safe is such confiding
For nothing changes here.
The storm may roar without me,
My heart may low be laid,
But God is round about me,
And can I be dismayed?
(Anna L. Waring, born 1820)

(The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter, May/June 1994,
elisabethelliott.org/newsletters/may-june-94.pdf)

“For Our Children”

By Amy Carmichael

Father, hear us, we are praying,
Hear the words our hearts are saying,
We are praying for our children.

Keep them from the powers of evil,
From the secret, hidden peril,
From the whirlpool that would suck them,
From the treacherous quicksand pluck them.

From the worldling’s hollow gladness,
From the sting of faithless sadness,
Holy Father, save our children.

Through life’s troubled waters steer them,
Through life’s bitter battle cheer them,
Father, Father, be Thou near them.
Read the language of our longing,
Read the wordless pleadings thronging,
Holy Father, for our children.

And wherever they may bide,
Lead them Home at eventide.

(The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter, May/June 1994,
elisabethelliott.org/newsletters/may-june-94.pdf)

CALLED TO TRUST - DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Divine sovereignty is a theme that is consistently taught throughout the Bible. From the following verses, list some specific areas over which God is sovereign.

Prov. 16:9; 19:21; Lam. 3:37
Exo. 4:11
Dan. 4:17; 2 Chr. 20:6
Prov. 21:1
Jer. 10:13; 14:22
Isa. 45:7; Lam 3:38
2 Chr. 13:15-16; Prov. 21:31

2. In Psa. 115: 3, the Bible states that God does whatever He pleases. In the following verses, what attributes of God ensure that whatever He does is always right?

Psa. 145:9
1 John 4:7-8
Rom. 11:33, Col. 2:2-3

3. In your own words, write a definition of the sovereignty of God. In what areas of life do you find it easy to accept God's sovereignty? In what areas do you have the most difficulty?
4. We saw that Paul was grateful in 2 Cor. 12:7-10 for the positive effect of trials in his life. From the verses below, list some of the beneficial results of our suffering.

Deut. 8:2,16
Rom. 5:3
James. 1:2-4
1 Pet. 1:6-7
1 Pet. 5:10
Phil. 3:10
2 Cor. 1:4-5
Rom. 8:18; Col. 3:1-2

5. Think back to various trials that you have experienced in life and write down at least one benefit that you have personally experienced as a result of your suffering.
6. The book of Psalms is full of comfort for the suffering believer. Read the following verses and write down the image (or images) of God that are found in each one.

Psa. 9:9; 71:7
Psa. 61:3
Psa. 18:1,30; 28:7
Psa. 18:31; 31:3; 71:3
Psa. 40:17; 70:5
Psa. 27:1
Psa. 23:1; 80:1
Psa. 5:2; 44:4

7. From the above, which image of God is the most meaningful to you personally and why? Stop now and thank Him for the encouragement He provides for us in His Word.



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A series of horizontal lines for writing.

*Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering,
for He who promised is faithful;
and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,
not forsaking our own assembling together,
as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another;
and all the more as you see the day drawing near.*

Hebrews 10:23-25

