



Session 1: Trusting God

Preparation: Practice and reflect on last week's Spiritual Health Practice.

Opening Prayer (Read Together)

O God, our deliverer, as we embark upon this journey of faith and love, open the way in us for healing and growth. Make a way where there appears to be none. Replace our fears with trust in you that we may learn to attach our lives to you above all other things and people. Let us receive your unfailing love. Let us be transformed by it, that your love may flow through our lives into the world. Amen.

Reviewing Last Session's Spiritual Health Practice

- What happened for you? What results did you notice?
- How did it feel to focus on your spiritual health in this way?
- Where did you find yourself passing judgment, good or bad, on the process of growing your spiritual health?

Scripture Readings: Exodus 14:10-21 and Luke 1:5-25

Watch the Video (hyperlink)

- [The 9 Essentials of Spiritual Health: 1. Trusting God - YouTube \(hyperlink\)](#)

Video Learning Points. Write your thoughts and reactions here as you watch the video.

GPS stands for God-Personal-Social. The GPS measures the depth of our relationship with God, ourselves, and other people. The GPS helps you to locate where you are right now so that you can begin a journey led by the love of God.

Spiritual health is the degree that we receive the restoring love of God, are personally transformed by it, and share God's restoring love with other people. The three factors of spiritual health are our level of attachment to God, our level of Self-differentiation, and our level of Empathy for others. Each factor has three essentials to guide us along the way.

In terms of our attachment to God, the three essentials are trusting in God, communicating with God, and holding a sense of closeness with God.

*“Trust” in Hebrew is *betach*, which means “to seek refuge in.” *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, lean not on your own understanding. Acknowledge him in all you do, and he will make straight your path. Proverbs 3:4-5**

Trust is about safety. *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1*
Are there people in your life that you seek refuge in? Do you turn to God for refuge?

We don't tend to put our trust in God until we have no other options. The Israelites were stuck between the Red Sea and the Egyptian Army. Moses had learned to trust in God. “Stand firm...the Lord is going to fight for you.” Moses knew that in the moment God was leading them. Through Moses' trust, God parted the sea. It still took trust to walk through the parted sea.

In the story about being paralyzed by anxiety before leading worship, the Spirit said, “I want you to walk out of your office and I want you to engage with the people. And by the time the first hymn plays, you’ll be fine. The fear will go, the anxiety will be gone.”

Zechariah and the Angel: Your wife is going to have a baby. Zechariah’s experience of disappointment had taught him to doubt. Have you given up on the possibility of rebirth?

In the story about fertility struggles and waiting for the adoption, the phrase “I’m going to believe it for you.” When we can’t believe and trust anymore, we need people that can believe for us and in us. What makes it so hard to trust?

Where has trust been broken for you? What has damaged your ability to trust?

When our hearts are broken our brains experience damage. Our brains and our lives and relationships become dis-integrated when our trust is broken. The brain is like plastic. It can be reshaped and can learn to trust.

Johns Hopkins Medical School studied mental illness, hypertension, malignant tumors, coronary heart disease, and suicide in 1377 participants over 31 years. They found that the single common denominator was not diet or exercise, it was a lack of closeness to their parents.

Without a secure attachment, it is very difficult to trust anyone, no less an invisible God. You can't go back and rewrite the past, but there is hope for now. The solution to building trust and healing broken trust is being heard and feeling felt by another.

What if we were heard and had the feeling of being felt by God?

Discussion Questions (You do not need to use all of these.)

- What struck you most about the message?
- When was a time that, like the Israelites between the sea and the army, you felt trapped or stuck? How did God lead you through?
- Name a circumstance, like Zechariah's, where you have struggled to trust in God. What or who helped you?
- What are some events that have damaged your ability to trust people or God?
- Who are some people in your life in whom you seek refuge? Do you seek refuge in God?
- When was an instance that you were heard and felt by another person?
- What would it feel like to be heard and felt by God?

Spiritual Health Practice for the Week: Building Trust Exercise

1. Find a partner and set aside one hour. When you are the speaker, share two things: 1) Some way that you feel stuck. 2) Some way you feel called to serve God that seems impossible.
2. For the first 30 minutes, one person speaks, and the other person listens with love.
3. Then switch places for the second 30 minutes.

4. At the end of the hour pray for each other about the two things that you each brought up.

Prayer for Healing and Growth

Leader: Trustworthy God, we desire to trust you more and more. Heal us of our broken trust.

Let us lift up ways our trust has been broken and trust that God will lead us to healing.

- **Participants** write or speak, out loud or silently, ways that their trust has been broken.

“God, my trust was broken when. . . .”

All: God, we trust that we are being healed of our broken trust. Help us to trust you and your promises in all the circumstances of our lives. In the trustworthy name of Christ Jesus, we pray.

Amen.