

## Trust Issues | Where do we go from here?

*Aaron Brockett | Acts 15:36-40*

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Hey, how is it going today? It's good to see you.

I want to welcome all our guests and first time visitors across all our campuses. I just want to look right into the camera and say hello to our North campus, Downtown, West, anybody joining us online, and those of you here at our Northwest campus. Put your hands together at all our campuses. Make it a warm environment. It's good to see you.

A couple of quick things before we get started. First of all I want everybody to know our thoughts and prayers are with everyone on the east coast during hurricane Florence.

We partner with a great organization called Hope Force International. Due to your ongoing generosity we're able to be very nimble to respond to situations like that. So they are on the ground assessing the situation. We are in communication with them so we can know what we can contribute towards the relief efforts out there.

In fact, prior to this week Hope Force International is going to be here in town at our North campus to do some training for those of us who might be interested in disaster relief training. That is on October 26 and 27. If you want more information on any of that, tune into our social media channels and our website. We'll have all of that information available there.

I also want to mention this. Those of you who have been in our church for a while know nine months ago we sent out one of our very best – Pastor Jake Barker, and his wife Trudy and their three kids to Santa Barbara, California. They went to plant a brand new church called Mission City Church. Today is their grand opening, so we're super-excited about that.

This is a picture of their auditorium. They did their practice service yesterday. We pray this is going to fill up here in a couple of hours. They are meeting at Santa Barbara Community College, so it is a portable church with setup and tear down. I was actually out there this past Monday to meet with Jake. We prayer-walked the campus, a beautiful campus overlooking the ocean. I only secretly despised him. But we're praying God is going to reach hundreds and hundreds, if not thousands of people through this brand new church.

Their first services are today, Pacific Coast Time at 9:30 and 11, which is 12:30 and 2:00 here in Indiana. So you might just make a little note to be praying for them at that time. If you're joining us for our evening services, it already happened but you can pray retroactively. God will hear those prayers. You can pray next week.

I'll actually be out there next Sunday for the second service, so I can't wait to report back to you about all God is doing in and through that church.

Well, today we are in week two of this series of messages called *Trust Issues*. If you missed it last week, we basically said that a trust issue occurs in all our lives when we get hurt, which will be all of us. You're not getting out of this life without being hurt or disappointed or blindsided by the people you love and care for in some way.

So the result of some of these hurts is that it causes us to be somewhat hesitant and guarded towards the intentions of others. I said last week that if the currency of our economy is the dollar, at least here in the western world, then the currency of all our relationships is this powerful, yet fragile little word called trust.

And trust is so important in all our relationships. You can't have a relationship without it. And yet trust is a lot like a sand castle at a beach. It takes a long time to build, but it can be wiped out with one wave of indiscretion. And many of us know that pain of that all too well.

Trust can be wiped out with a single conversation. It can be wiped out with maybe a breach in that trust. And I heard from a number of you this past week who described some of the hurts and pain you've experienced in your life. This series kind of hits close to home for all of us.

I posed this question last week: When it comes to key relationships in your life, and I don't know what that will be for you. I don't know if that would be. I don't know if that would be 50 key relationships, 75, 100 or whatever that is – friends, family, people you see on a daily basis. I just kind of threw out this question. How do you determine how those relationships are doing?

I think for many of us it's largely subjective. We don't necessarily get a report card on relationships. That would be nice – maybe. In other area of life we have these metrics or measuring tools to help us know how it is going. We get a report card to help us know how we are doing in school. Maybe we get an annual evaluation to let us know how we are doing at work.

But what do we have when it comes to our relationships? Wouldn't it be nice if we had that little cell phone batter icon over all our relationships to objectively see how it is going? You go to brunch with a good friend, and then you look at them and see, "Oh no, our relationship is at 15 percent. I'd better contribute to this friendship more."

Maybe that would be a bad thing, I don't know, maybe ignorance is bliss.

But we don't have an objective tool to know. Here's the thing that sort of blindsided me at times. When it comes to certain relationships in my life, I might think things are going great, but you don't. And it's kind of like we are on different pages. Maybe you let that go long enough and the relationship runs into the red. And then there is this violation of trust.

We develop these trust issues and what is underneath is a fear issue. I've been let down and hurt before, and I'm afraid of being hurt again. So I'm going to put up these defenses, create this barrier around me, so you can't get to me. I'm not going to let you in, so that way you can't hurt me.

So maybe you did let somebody into your life, and then they blindsided you. They broke your trust and we discovered that this other person is a human being. And human beings will let you down.

Last week we looked at this passage out of Jeremiah 17. It's not a very encouraging passage, but it's true. It basically says that human heart is the most deceptive of all things. "Who can trust it?"

So that tells me, just speaking for myself, that I can't even trust my own heart let alone yours.

Did you know even Jesus doesn't trust you? Aren't you glad you came to church today? Jesus loves you. Jesus sacrificed himself for you. Jesus wants to be in relationship with you, but he doesn't trust you. As a matter of fact, I've got a Bible verse to prove it. In John 2, this fascinating little passage says this.

"Because of the miraculous signs Jesus did in Jerusalem at the Passover celebration, many began to trust in him. **But Jesus didn't trust them, because he knew all about people.** No one needed to tell him about human nature, for he knew what was in each person's heart."

And so last week I said, and I want to be clear about what I said because I feel like maybe I was mis-Tweeted last week. Some people kind of took this and ran with it, and it wasn't really the primary point of the sermon. Welcome to my world.

I said last week that the Bible never commands us to put our trust in another person. Some of you are like, "Amen, absolutely," and that's true, but don't become bitter. The Bible commands us not to put our trust in three things specifically. Ironically they all start with p, and I don't know why.

power  
possessions  
people

All three of these things will let you down. Make a note of this for whenever we come up on the next election cycle – and aren't we all looking forward to that? We aren't going to vote a savior into office, we already have one.

You're not going to get the promotion that's going to make everything great. Don't put your trust in a promotion. Don't put your trust in your income. Don't put your trust in your status. And certainly don't put your trust in another person.

That doesn't mean you should let go of trust. I said this last week.

Just because someone has broken your trust, don't let go of it.

Please don't become a bitter person. Please don't become a closed off person. If there is anything Jesus teaches us, it's that his trust was violated yet he still reaches out. He still makes the first effort to be reconciled with you and me.

The point isn't that we become untrusting people, the point is we change the object of our trust. Because when you let go of trust, you let go of hope. And when you let go of hope, you become a cynic. There is a cynic in all of us. There is a little bit of cynicism that rises to the surface.

It's very difficult in our society today to not have some cynical thoughts. But it's really dangerous to embrace cynicism and say, "I'm proudly a cynic," because here's what cynics do. Cynics project the hurts of their past, the baggage of their past, on future opportunities and relationships. And they just sort of shut everything down.

Cynics don't let anybody in. Cynics are guarded. Cynics say, "I don't trust anybody." If you're a cynic right now I'm not trying to pick on you, because there is a cynic in me. Cynics aren't bad people, they are just hurt people. You're not a cynic because you don't care you're a cynic precisely because you did care. Maybe you cared a little too much and somebody actually broke your trust.

But the answer isn't to become guarded and closed off. Here is the thing about cynicism. If you say, "I'm not going to let anybody get close enough to hurt me," at the same time you're not letting anybody close enough to love you either. And that's the destructive thing about cynicism.

So today in week two, here is where I want to go. I want to look at this question right here.

How do you disagree in a way that builds trust?

There is this thing that's going to occur in every single relationship whether that's your spouse, your kids, your friends, your co-workers, or people at church in your group. It's this little thing called interpersonal conflict. Interpersonal conflict is inevitable. You're not getting out of any relationship without it.

Interpersonal conflict is two different opinions that clash, two perspectives that are different. It doesn't mean there is a right and a wrong, it just means there is a difference in perspective. When you come to that crossroads, we experience interpersonal conflict.

I want to throw something out here that might sound a little strange, but I want to explore this together.

Trust requires interpersonal conflict.

That interpersonal conflict isn't something to run from. I know some of us in the room are conflict-averse, we just run from it and I'm so thankful for some of us who are peacemakers in the room. But the answer isn't to run from interpersonal conflict, the answer is to navigate it in a healthy way.

And when you and I navigate a healthy interpersonal conflict well, then it actually builds trust. When it comes to some of my closest friends, some of my closest friends are the people who disagree with me all the time. They just disagree with me in a healthy way.

The Bible teaches us in Proverbs that, "Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisors they succeed." Not with one or two yes-men and yes-women, but with many advisors. And these advisors are offering different perspectives and speaking wisdom into our lives.

When it comes to our team here at the church, we have some of the most talented, godly, humble people who serve our church. In fact, can we just give a hand to everybody who serves in our church, staff and volunteers? Can I just tell you there is conflict every day? We all have different opinions, a different perspective, yet what allows us to stay healthy and grow in wisdom is navigating interpersonal conflict well.

When it comes to my marriage, Lindsay and I will be married 20 years next summer, and it's not been the high moments, the happy moments, the mountain top moments, it's been in the valleys of disagreement where we've grown closer together.

So, interpersonal conflict can be a real gift if it is handled well.

I want to turn our attention to our passage today. It's in Acts 15 if you have a Bible or a Bible App. I want to look at a friendship between Paul and this guy named Barnabas. They experienced interpersonal conflict, and they didn't handle it well and we can learn some things from it.

In order to kind of set this up so we know what is going on, for many of you this will be review, but for some it is brand new information. Paul is this guy we've been looking at. Last week we looked at a little letter he wrote to Philemon. But today we want to look at an example earlier in his life, between him and Barnabas, earlier in his life before he became Paul. His name was Saul and he was a guy you did not want to mess with.

He persecuted and killed Christians and thought he was doing God a favor in that. God gets ahold of Saul's life on the road to Damascus. Jesus radically changes his life, but the other

believers didn't necessarily know if they could trust him or not. And look at what it says in Acts 9:26.

"When Saul arrived in Jerusalem, he tried to meet with the believers, but they were all **afraid** of him. They did not believe he had truly become a believer!"

And I don't know what that would have looked like. Paul shows up to their meeting, their gathering, their group or whatever and he's like, "Hey guys, I've got the secret handshake. I've got my card to show you I really am a believer."

And they are like, "Whoa, wait a second you're the guy who last week was trying to hunt us down. We don't exactly know if we can trust you," and I don't blame them. This would be like Charles Manson showing up at your group saying he is now a believer and you're like, "That's awesome, but how do we know you're not going to cut our face off and wear it as a mask? How do we know?"

I just gave you a little window into my warped mind. Pray for me.

And so that's when Paul has this really good guy named Barnabas speak up on his behalf. Look at what it says in verse 26.

"Then Barnabas brought him to the apostles and told them how Saul had seen the Lord on the way to Damascus and how the Lord had spoken to Saul. He also told them that Saul had preached boldly in the name of Jesus in Damascus."

What Barnabas is doing is speaking up for him saying, "No, you can trust him. His life has been changed." Barnabas is one of my favorite people in the Bible because he is such a natural encourager, in fact that's what his name means. His name means "son of encouragement." So he believes in Paul and places his own reputation on the line.

Does anybody have anyone in your life so good at encouragement that it's almost annoying, or am I the only one? I've got a few people in my life. Every now and then I feel like I need to get ahold of them, text them or call them or go see them. I need to encourage them. Then I walk away from that interaction feeling more encouraged than I encouraged. I am so annoyed and am like, "You out-encouraged me, and I don't appreciate that."

This is the kind of guy Barnabas was. There was nobody out encouraging him. He was a natural encourager, and because of this Paul and Barnabas developed this friendship and become a team. In the Book of Acts we read about something called a first missionary journey. They hit the road together and lead people to Jesus and start all kinds of churches together. They just have this great partnership.

Because where Paul is strong, Barnabas is weak and vice versa. So Paul would go in and hit people with logic and truth, and then Barnabas would patch them up with love and

encouragement. And there were all these churches that would spring up all over because of their partnership.

But then in chapter 15 tragically we read about a disagreement that fractured their relationship permanently. Look at what it says in Acts 15:36.

“After some time Paul said to Barnabas, ‘Let’s go back and visit each city where we previously preached the word of the Lord, to see how the new believers are doing.’ Barnabas agreed and wanted to take along John Mark. But Paul **disagreed strongly**, since John Mark had **deserted** them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in their work.”

So what you need to understand here is this guy named John Mark is actually Barnabas’ cousin, and he was with Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey. For reasons we don’t know, John Mark baled on them. About half way through the trip he left, and it really got under Paul’s skin. And we don’t know if he ran out of money, we don’t know if he got homesick, we don’t know if he wanted to go home and see his girlfriend, we don’t know.

What we do know is that Paul is a type A, driver, get-it-done kind of a guy and he sees this as a betrayal and he never lets it go. So now Paul and Barnabas come together to talk about the team they want to put together on this second missionary journey – sort of an NFL fantasy draft.

Paul’s like, “Who have you got?” and Barnabas is like, “What about John Mark?”

And it says this is verse 39.

“Their disagreement was **so sharp** that they **separated**. Barnabas took John Mark with him and sailed for Cyprus. Paul chose Silas...”

I’d love to be able to tell you that they eventually reconciled. I’d love to flip to that passage before the end of the Book of Acts that shows you they came back together, kissed, and made up and everything was great.

You see, one of the things about the Bible is it doesn’t work like a 30 minute sitcom. You know what I’m talking about? The Bible doesn’t work like Full House, Growing Pains, or Cheers, or whatever where there is a problem, an issue, and they get it resolved by the commercial break. It just doesn’t happen that way.

One of the refreshing things about the Bible is how human it is. This is pretty human. The fact that it would be included in the Scriptures shows us just how authentic this is. Luke never says to us that they reconciled. In fact one of the tragic things about this is we don’t have an evidence they did.

In fact Barnabas isn't really ever mentioned again. They did not handle this interpersonal conflict well. But it doesn't mean it didn't affect Paul's heart in some way. We do have evidence that his heart changed towards John Mark in two little instances in some other letters he wrote. In Colossians 4:10 Paul says this.

"Aristarchus, who is in prison with me, sends you his greetings, and so does Mark, **Barnabas's cousin**. As you were instructed before, make Mark welcome if he comes your way."

When he was mentoring a young man by the name of Timothy he says this in 2 Timothy 4:11.

"Bring Mark with you when you come, **for he will be helpful to me in my ministry.**"

So we see that eventually Paul's heart was changed, it softened towards John Mark. But it came at the expense of his friendship with Barnabas.

I bet if he were here today he would say to us, "I wish I could rewind the clock. I wish I could go back and navigate that disagreement in a healthy way." But yet they didn't.

What do you do when you sort of lock horns with somebody you love and care for? You see things a bit differently. There are two things I want to leave with you today from this passage. The first is this, and I've already said it but want to say it again.

Trust requires interpersonal conflict.

Don't run from it. Face it in a healthy way. How do we face it in a healthy way? It's through this little principle right here.

Try to understand before being understood.

Just try to understand before being understood. Now this isn't original with me. In fact many of you may recognize it. I think this one of Steven Covey's habits of highly effective people. It's biblical. It's this, "I'm going to try to put myself in your shoes. I'm going to see things from your perspective."

I wonder how things might have changed if when Paul disagreed sharply with Barnabas about John Mark if Barnabas would have sat back for a minute and said, "Hey man, I guess I underestimated how much his departure really hurt you. Do you want to tell me about that?"

And Paul could have been like, "One of the things I've always appreciated about you Barnabas is that you're such an encourager. I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for your encouragement. So can you tell me what you see in this kid? Can you help me to see what I am not seeing? Can I borrow a little bit of that and actually believe in him?"



If they would have had a conversation instead of an argument, I wonder how things might have changed. How things might have been a little bit different. Can I say to you is there any relationship in your life right now where you might apply these two powerful principles?

Instead of running from conflict or diving in and handling it in a destructive way, what if you were to say, "Interpersonal conflict is actually a gift. It can lead to greater love and intimacy and trust if I handle it in a healthy way. And the core foundational principle of handling it in a healthy way is I need to seek to understand you before I seek to be understood."

If you could apply this in your marriage, with your kids, on social media, in politics, and when it comes at work... It doesn't mean somebody has to win and lose. It doesn't mean you've got to win the debate. It doesn't mean you've got to agree with them after you seek to understand them.

It's just that when you seek to understand it lowers the defenses and it builds trust. It actually opens us up to being about to hear what the other has to say.

Several months ago I had somebody who asked if they could meet with me. They had some issues they wanted to talk to me about. We sat down together and I could tell right out of the gate that it was one of those conversations where they weren't quite interested in what I had to say. They just wanted to tell me how they felt.

That's okay, fine. That's very hard for me, because I'm an explainer. I'm a preacher. I want to explain everything and I have a very logical mind. If you say something that isn't accurate, I want to speak into that and annoyingly correct it.

And so I had to sit on my hands and keep my mouth shut. I just tried to listen to them and they talked for about 45 minutes. There were a few inaccuracies, but I wasn't keeping score. I was just trying to listen to them. They kind of got done, just sort of talked themselves out. I wasn't sure if I had permission to speak yet.

I just said, "Hey, do you want me to say anything?" and they said, "Yeah." I just said this, and it was the guidance of the Holy Spirit in that moment. I just said, "What can I do and what can I say that will help you feel better?" That's all I said.

They looked at me with tears in their eyes and said, "You already have," and they stood up, gave me a hug, and walked out.

Now, I'm standing there going, "What? I didn't teach you anything. I didn't explain or show you the error of your ways. I just kind of listened." I'm standing there with emotional vomit all over me. Do you remember that scene from Ghostbusters where the dude gets slimed? They felt great, I'm covered in slime.

I remember just thinking, “All I did in that moment was seek to understand where they were coming from.” For most of us, we just want to know we’re heard. The people in your life, they just want to know that you hear them. That’s one of the damaging things about social media.

Even some of the originators of social media are coming out and apologizing for their invention and saying, “We realize this wasn’t good for humankind. There are a lot of benefits to it, but we’re actually shouting over each other. We’re not seeking to understand, we’re seeking to be understood. It’s devoid of relationship.”

I wonder if Paul and Barnabas would have just sat down and heard each other out to seek to understand, how that might have changed things. What this requires is curiosity, curiosity about the people in your life. If you’re a cynic and you embrace cynicism it chokes out curiosity. Have you ever noticed that cynics are rarely curious? We’ve already pre-judged. We’ve already come to some conclusions. We’ve already put you in a box.

So when you set aside cynicism you open yourself up to curiosity. You say, “How do you see the world?” and “How do you feel about that?”

Once again, my wife has helped me with this more than any other person on the planet. Lindsay is very, very different than me. It’s not a cliché, marriage really is for my holiness, not just for my happiness. And actually as I’ve grown in holiness, the result is happiness. So it’s not either or. As you grow holy, that’s the way to true happiness.

Lindsay just sees the world very differently than I do. At first it was conflict, but now I see it as a gift. She is a feeler, I am a thinker. Lindsay has this incredible ability to sit down with a small group of people and within about 20 minutes she can tell you what everybody is feeling.

I don’t even know what I’m feeling, let alone you. My wife is like this finely tuned sports car. She is beautiful to look at. I want to be seen next to her. I am not quite sure how it all works under the hood, but I really, really like her. That’s how it works. And she’s not even in this service right now, so I’m not going to get brownie points for that.

So this isn’t just how to win friends and influence people. This is the core of the gospel message. Did you know that? We looked at that passage from John 2 that tells us that Jesus doesn’t even trust me or you, yet he loves you enough that he came here to die for you so that we might be reconciled with him.

You know that passage that totally changed my life was not John 3:16, although I love it, but it was the Book of Romans where it says, “While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” A good man would give his life for somebody else, possibly, but Jesus, he gave his life for us while we were still breaking his trust.

Do you know that’s what sin is? Sin isn’t the naughty list. Sin is whenever we’ve breached trust in God. We’ve actually said to God, “I don’t trust you. I don’t trust what you say. I don’t trust

what you think about me. I don't trust that your way to live my life is actually better," so we decide to do our own thing and breach that trust. It's called in.

And God said, "The only way to reconcile the breach of that trust is by sending my son Jesus." And Jesus subjected himself to have his trust broken in every one of his relationships. Jesus' family betrayed his trust. They didn't believe that he was who he said he was. Jesus' disciples, his very best friends, they broke his trust.

And oftentimes we think of Judas, but it was actually all of them. You know that most moving this for me is the night before Jesus' arrest and crucifixion, he washes the disciples' feet included those of Judas. He's washing that would actually usher the man to go betray him in a few hours.

And if Jesus can do that, maybe I can too. There is this great passage in 2 Corinthians that talks about what God has done for us through Jesus.

"This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ."

And then that passage goes on to say this.

"And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation."

You see, the gospel message is a God who loves you enough to reconcile with you. And what does reconciliation mean? It literally means to return to harmony. It literally means to make compatible once again. It's not about justifying your actions in the mind of another person. It's not about convincing that other person that they were wrong. It's not about resolving the past, but it's being able to move beyond it. It's not about seeing eye to eye, but creating an environment of peace in spite of past offenses and current differences.

So God has reconciled us to him through Jesus. And now he's given us this ministry of reconciliation. This is the very heartbeat of our church, it's why we exist. Because we know that is a great big world that has trust issues. We live in a very broken world, and there is a God who desires to reach out and reconcile the world to himself. And his plan is to work through each one of you and me.

So our mission is a church, and you've heard us say this before if you've been here a long time. I can't say it enough. We need to be reminded all the time. We exist to remove barriers, unnecessary barriers, to bring people to Jesus. If you are a Christian who has just started coming to our church or you've just moved to Indiana and are looking for a new church, please don't misunderstand that statement.

I know it can be misunderstood. Oh, you exist to remove unnecessary barriers to keep people from Jesus? So you're lowering the bar, watering it down, trying to make it more palatable to seekers? No. We're actually trying to clear that path to get people to Jesus so he can do what only he can do.

Jesus said in Matthew 28, "Go and make disciples of all nations," and then in the gospel of John Jesus said, "If you lift up my name, I'll draw all men and women unto myself." It's as if he is drawing people to himself. So he says, "Please don't get in the way. Could you just try to clear the path, help people get to me, so that Jesus can change them?"

So that's going to require us to navigate interpersonal conflict well. People who live certain lifestyles, people who have different politics, people who maybe think different things about social issues to go, "You know what? I'm going to sit down on the inside and trust that God is bigger than this situation. I'm going to seek to understand before being understood." That opens up the door to people to receive Jesus.

About 15 years ago Lindsay and I were living in California. We were part of a church plant out there. We lived in apartment, this was before kids, and the apartment complex had a hot tub. So most every night we would go out and sit in the hot tub, and just kind of talk before going to bed. I remember there was this other couple out there, and we began to talk with them.

They were very, very nice. Then he asked me the question that can either make or break a relationship with me. He said, "What do you do?" And I said, "Well, I'm a pastor," and immediately his body language got rigid. His wife or girlfriend, whatever she was, she gets out of the hot tub and dries off and immediately leaves.

And so then I said, "What do you do?" He was like, "I own a book store," and I was like, "Oh that's great. I love half-price book store. Is it Barnes and Noble?"

He was like, "It's nothing like that. We sell books and music that you Christians are against." And that was Lindsay's cue to get out of the hot tub, get dried off, and head back to the apartment. And so it was just the two of us sitting there. I remember thinking to myself, "I can either fight him or run."

I'm a debater. I remember once again just having this Holy Spirit moment where he said, "Would you just sit down on the inside and listen to him?" So as much as he tried to pick a fight with me, I just refused. I just tried to be as gracious as I could. I tried to ask more questions that make statements.

I just listened to him. I'd love to tell you I led him to Christ that night. It would be an awesome story if he stood up and said, "We're in water. Why don't I be baptized?" That would have been amazing, but it didn't happen that way. But I'd like to think I moved the chains a little bit in his life, to borrow an analogy from football.

Because it didn't end contentious, like we weren't riding a tandem bike at the end of it, but at least we weren't fighting each other. Honestly I can't remember his name. It's been 15 years ago, and I've never seen him since. I have no idea what his life looks like now. But there have been moments when I've thought about him. There've been moments when I've wondered.

That passage is true that Jesus said of him. Jesus is drawing him to himself, whether he knows it or not. So this issue is, "Did I get in the way or did I clear the path that day?" I'd like to think I helped clear the path and got him a little bit closer. I don't know if he's a follower of Jesus today. I don't know if I'll see him in heaven.

But maybe one day he might come up to me and say, "That moment was a pivotal moment because you actually helped bring me a little bit closer. You actually built up my trust instead of destroying it."

Can I just ask you this? Who is God placing in your path right now that you might help move the chains to get them a little bit closer to Jesus? Who is it in your life right now that you're just butting heads with all the time? Maybe it's your spouse. Maybe it's your kids. Maybe it's a co-worker. And maybe you can begin to see interpersonal conflict as a gift.

It doesn't mean it would be hard. It didn't mean it won't be challenging. It doesn't mean there is not going to be some days when you're just cross-eyed and say, "I don't know how we're going to get out of this." But if you handle it well, it can actually lead to greater trust because trust requires it and it's actually a gift.

We are going to spend a few moments together reflecting on this message. I don't think everything I've said today applies to every single person listening to this. But is there maybe one thing? Is there maybe one thing where we go, "That was for me. That was for me, and God wants to push this into my life."

Can I just give you a clue as to what that might be for you? It's probably the part that made you the most uncomfortable. It's probably the part you didn't like the most. Just be open to it and say, "God, will you just work that into me now?" We'll spend a few minutes doing that together and then we will stand to our feet and sing.

*Father, we come to you right now and I thank you for this powerful truth. We've all got trust issues, and God I just pray that we would be reminded of what you have done to reconcile us to you. Give us that same kind of courage and faith. Work in the room right now. Bind up our wounds, challenge us if we are too confident, but I pray that we have an encounter with you in these next few moments of quiet.*

*We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.*