

How to Trust Again When You Have Been Hurt by God's People

Trust is a hard thing to come by, and once our trust is broken we usually make vows or statements to never trust again.

Trust ... What does it look like? What does it feel like? How do we obtain trust, and how do we learn to trust again?

I am sure there are many questions you have pondered and asked yourself over and over and over again. How do we know who we can trust and what do we do when we don't know how to trust? Trust. It must come forth. We must allow ourselves to trust again.

What about God? What about trusting Him? Trusting God is not a natural response. Being in ministry, I have met many people who have not trusted God and don't know how to truly give it all to God.

As I ponder the word "trust," many things come to mind. I think to myself, how can I impact the world on the word "trust" in one little simple article.

I remember the first time I discovered I didn't trust God. I was prayer walking near my home in the early morning hours. I always have my iPod ear buds stuck in an ear listening to worship music. As I was prayer walking, I started singing at the top of my lungs this song and the word "trust" came out. I stopped in my tracks as I discovered I didn't trust God. It was devastating. I listened to the song repeatedly as the revelation came forth and I am staring at the clouds. I didn't trust God.

It led me on a journey to journal everything about trust—what

I could trust God for and what I couldn't trust God for. I wrote down scriptures in the Bible and allowed the Father to take me on a journey of discovering how to trust Him.

Along the way as I was learning how to trust people, I was being hurt by the church and by people of God. You know what I am talking about, right? We all have been hurt by people in the body of Christ, right?

I am discovering we all have hurts as I travel the U.S. The pinches, the distrust, the hurtful words, people not believing in our concepts and ideas, people in the church not embracing our passion for Jesus or the controlling spirits attempting to rule over us and the church. It seems like the church has torn us down and disintegrated the trust we once had for people and for God.

As we journey on further through life, we discover it is difficult to trust people again. The same hurts, the same lies, the same rejections seem to keep rearing their ugly faces around us. Instead of seeking to be healed from these deep wounds, we seem to allow them to pile up on top of each other. We continue to get hurt and sit under leadership that has also been wounded which in turn further wounds us when our leaders are ministering out of a place of hurt. How can we learn to trust again when the church has been wounded and continues to wound its people?

We must first learn to trust in our most heavenly Father. Our Father loves us with an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3). He has plans and purposes for us and there is no room for distrust in those plans and purposes (Jer. 29:11). He is a Father who desires to give good gifts to His children (Luke 11:13).

We need to come to a place of total surrender and trust with our Father. We can't look at our Father as a representative of a person in this situation. Our heavenly Father is not going to let us down, like earthly people do. Our heavenly Father

can be trusted.

We need to trust God daily, minute by minute, hour by hour, second by second. It is a conscious decision ... it is a choice. What choice are you going to make? Men will fail us, we will fail ourselves, but God's love never fails and His mercies are new every morning (1 Cor. 13:8, Ps. 59:16).

God proves Himself to us time and time and time again, even when He doesn't have to. He chooses to. We need to choose to trust Him. We need to choose to sacrifice to Him.

As I ponder the year and the things once again He causes me to trust Him with, I discover that I learned my lessons years ago and I can trust Him, and so can you. We can trust Him when we give up something He has asked us to give up that it is for our good.

We trust Him that we need to live by faith and not by sight. As we surrender those things most precious and valuable into the hands of our living omnipresent God, we can trust that He will replace them, restore them and rebuild them. We don't always know why God calls us to sacrifice money, time, ministry, employment, friendships, homes, relationships, churches, possessions or anything else He calls us to give up for Him.

However, as we look back we can discover while we were in the situation that perhaps, maybe for that small moment we did trust Him, and then as we add up the number of moments we will discover we have built up some trust for our heavenly Father over the years.

As we trust our heavenly Father, then we will begin to trust people. We will trust the God we see in people. It must start with our Father, our heavenly Father.

As we begin to truly know Him we will see His reflection in people. Everyone can trust God for something, but how many of

us can trust God for everything? Think about where you need to trust God. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to show you and reveal to you how to move into a place of trust with Him, because He is trustworthy.

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How to Move From Faithless to Fearless in the Lord

Elijah was fearless in front of King Ahab in 1 Kings. In the beginning, Elijah had no fear. King Ahab was an evil king, worshipping Baal.

Elijah went in front of him and commanded no rain. During this time, God provided for Elijah in the miraculous. God sent ravens to feed Elijah and then when the brooks dried up, God led him to a widow to provide for him. Elijah then goes out and kills the false prophets in great numbers.

Elijah is given some supernatural strength from God to outrun Ahab's chariot. So far this sounds like a story of victory, and it is. But on the same day Elijah won the battle, he ran for his life. He allowed Jezebel's words and reputation to intimidate him.

"Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life as

the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time." And when he saw that, he arose and ran for his life and went to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die, and said, "It is enough! Now, Lord, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!" (1 Kin. 19:2-4).

He wanted the Lord to take his life, (vs. 4). He was intimidated and fearful of Jezebel. Here God had provided for him over and over again, but he allowed Jezebel's words to intimidate him.

God wants us to be full of faith not fear. We too could be compared to Elijah. There are days we are filled with faith and feel as though we can conquer our mountains and then there are days we are plagued with fear and run from our problems instead of confronting them with faith. We too like Elijah don't always look back and remember what God did for us in the past and how He protected us, cared for us and provided for us.

We were not created to be faithless; we were created to be fearless. The Bible says, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love," (1 John 4:18).

When we know the love of the Father we can be fearless, because then we are perfected in His love. The Father loves us. He loves you and He loves me. That is reason enough to have faith.

We are going to have challenges and obstacles placed in front of us, similar to what Elijah experienced. It is what we do in those times of confrontation and situations that will determine if we will be fearless or faithless. We must always remember, God is on our side and, "He who is in you is greater

than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

I remember one time I was at Garden of the Gods and God led me to run up one of the rock formations. It wouldn't seem like a big challenge to most, but to me it was. It was out of my comfort zone. I would run up and take a break in increments to stop and absorb what our Heavenly Father had for me.

I remember arriving at the point in which He finally told me to stop. I encountered Him and had a vision, it truly was supernatural. As I ran back down to my husband, I said to him, "I feel alive, I feel so alive, I feel free. Something was broken off of me!" I was so full of joy and happiness and I felt so alive because I was not faithless, I was fearless.

God presented me with something He wanted me to do and I was fearless in doing it. As a result, it filled me with faith and made me fearless and brought forth freedom.

God is going to put things in our path to build our faith. He is going to give us assignments to root the fear out of our lives. How do we accomplish the assignments? By embracing what He asks of us.

As we embrace them we will move through them more easily, instead of resisting what He asks of us. We will accomplish the task and in return it will create us to be fearless people, not faithless people.

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Does Your Will Often Wrestle With God's?

Is God on your wrestling mat or is He in the center of trust within your heart? Do you wrestle with God showing Him that you think you know best? Do you ponder in the early hours of the morning contemplating why me, or more so, why not me?

Do these countless thoughts run through your mind that you attempt to get rid of time and time again with no avail? When we are so desperate to see a world be greatly impacted for Christ and His kingdom we can get impatient.

Do you ask yourself where is God and why can't you hear Him? Have you pursued Him recently for Him or just when you want answers to specific questions? Do you throw God on the mat and wrestle with Him for what He is calling you to do in this season; thinking it is not significant enough; not impactful enough for the kingdom?

The truth is no matter what we do for the Lord it can never be enough; we can never be satisfied while teenagers are still cutting themselves, while New Agers don't know Christ, while parents are abandoning their homes and leaving their spouses for the pleasure of the world, while infertile couples long to hold a baby in their hands and while people are dying and going to hell every day.

What we do never seems to be enough. In the waiting we must learn to be content and trust in God. We long to reach the world for Christ. It isn't happening fast enough when you know time is short, when you are seeing signs and wonders in the heavens and know Jesus is coming soon.

We must be doing more, reaching more, exploring more of this world for pockets of people that have yet come to know Christ. We must be part of a greater impact for reaching the kingdom for Christ.

But God knows. He knows He is on your wrestling mat, but you want to wrestle with God because you want to control what your future holds. It's because you haven't totally surrendered to God.

What if He knows the best way you can impact those people for Christ. You want to do this ... (whatever it is you want to do), but what if God wants you to do this? (The very thing you are wrestling against Him) ... What if God said, "This is your destiny ... (to do this?). ... The thing you don't really want to do or the thing that was not in your dreams; your plans ... but what if it could reach even more people for Christ? Could you surrender your will for His? Could you stop wrestling with God for a moment and sacrifice yourself on that mat?

Could you allow God to pin you to that wrestling mat and could you allow Him to have the final countdown? Allowing God to do that takes submitting your natural flesh and your soul. You have to put your body, mind and soul in a state of submission to the Father. It isn't easy, but we must get to that breaking point of being totally submitted and surrendered to Him. We must truly cry out as Jesus did in the garden, 'NOT MY WILL BUT YOURS BE DONE.'

How do you be content with where you are knowing that so many people need the Jesus you have come to know and love so dearly? By knowing you are in a planning process of God and while you are waiting for that dream to manifest you are being created in the image of the Master Potter's hands.

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Why Do We Lift Our Hands in Worship?

All through the Bible you see scriptures of people bowing down or lying prostrate, yet some of us have had experiences where we were hesitant to lift our hands in worship. When we feel that gentle tug inside; it is the Holy Spirit within us.

We feel like we want to do something such as raise our hands, but then we see our friends and family nearby and we are concerned about what it looks like and if they are doing it. We want to worship the Lord in a new way, but we are scared. We are concerned by fear of the unknown and fear of man.

When you are praying or worshiping in any situation you can lift your hands in praise and adoration to God. When you lift your hands to God in prayer or song you are releasing the Holy Spirit, showing Him you adore Him and you are saying, "God, I am open to you and a touch of Your presence." You are worshiping and exalting Him for who He is, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

"Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms" (Psa. 95:2). The word thanksgiving (todah), according to Strong's No. 8426, is derived from the verb yadah (Strong's H3034). It means to hold out the hand, an extension of the hand, especially to revere or worship with extended hands. It is to thank and praise God with one's hands extended.

Throughout the Bible it shows us scriptures of the strength and power that comes through our fingers, hands and arms.

Fingers: Our fingers are a symbol of strength and power in our prayer, praise and worship. Look at what God did with His fingers. "Then the Lord delivered to me two tablets of stone written with the finger of God, and on them were all the words which the Lord had spoken to you on the mountain from the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly" (Deut. 9:10). God wrote on a stone tablet with His fingers.

"This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear." Here, in John 8:6, Jesus used His finger to convict people of their sin and set a woman free from her sin.

"When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained" (Psalm 8:3).

"Bind them on your fingers; Write them on the tablet of your heart" (Prov. 7:3).

When you are raising your hands you are also stretching out your fingers. God gave us commandments through His fingers. What are you releasing into the spiritual atmosphere by raising your hands and extending your fingers?

Hands: Hands are a very important tool in our Christian walk. We fold them or open them up while we pray. We lay hands on others to heal the sick and we extend them for a handshake or hug as a Christian greeting. God also used His hands. "Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, measured heaven with a span and calculated the dust of the earth in a measure? Weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance?" (Is. 40:12).

We know that God used His hands to create. "Blessed be the Lord my Rock, Who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for

battle" (Ps. 144:1). Right here God is training our hands for war and our fingers for battle. Raising our hands is warfare worship.

What if by raising our hands in praise to the Lord we are binding the enemy and releasing the praise to combat the attacks? What if by raising your hand you could lift those burdens and heaviness and enter into the presence of God Almighty? Well you can! That is what raising our hands does; it lifts burdens, releases His glory into the atmosphere to combat demonic attacks and helps us enter into His presence.

In Isaiah 19:16, it also shows us the strength of His hand. "In that day Egypt will be like women, and will be afraid and fear because of the waving of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which He waves over it." The enemy cowers in fear because of an upraised hand of the Lord. So, if the enemy cowers in fear beneath the upraised hand of the Lord, then he has to cower in fear beneath our upraised hand because Jesus Christ lives in me and He lives in YOU!

Moses' hands were used to win a war in Exodus 17:11. "And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands became heavy; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun." I love this verse. Moses' hands were used to combat physical war and spiritual war. We can be victorious by lifting our hands and arms in worship!

Arms: As we raise our fingers and hands we are also lifting our arms. God designed everything to work together, and even our arms have significance when we raise them in praise to the Lord. Regarding Samson, Judges 15:14 says, "When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting against him. Then the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him; and the ropes that

were on his arms became like flax that is burned with fire, and his bonds broke loose from his hands." Here the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him.

Isaiah 11:2 states that, "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon you." I want the Spirit of the Lord to rest upon me and rest upon you!

Jesus took the children up in His arms and blessed them. "And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them" (Mark 10:16). Jesus used every part of Himself to bless the children, His physical body to hold Him, and His Spirit and Soul, His emotions and the authority of His words to bless them.

Clapping: Clapping is applauding and pleasing to God and biblical. It is praising our God for who He is and what He has done. If we can clap, jump, shout and cheer at a football stadium, concert, or performance, then we should do it for the Lord above, the Creator of the universe.

Psalms 47:1 tell us to clap. "Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph!" Clap! Shout! Get excited! Strong's No. 8628 defines clap (taqa') as; to clatter, clang, sound, blow, clap or strike. Here it appears, when they define clap, that heaven is going to be noisy! If you think heaven is going to be boring and somber you are wrong. The angels are singing all day long: Holy Holy Holy! That doesn't sound boring or somber! They are doing it in praise and adoration to our Father. Hallelujah!

We continue to have clapping and joy in Isaiah 55:12. "For you shall go out with joy, and be led out with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing before you, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." The Bible is instructing us here how to worship. We shall go out with joy. Raising our hands, clapping and singing praise to our Lord gives us joy. How can you stay sad or depressed

when you are singing, dancing, clapping and exalting the King of Kings and Lord of Lords?

I am not suggesting you go and do all these hand movements and gestures and remember this list. I am encouraging you to step out of your comfort zone and enjoy your worship time with the Lord. Don't be afraid to open your hands and let the Holy Spirit move through them. Let it happen naturally.

I remember the first time the Holy Spirit called me to raise my hands. I was in a charismatic church where everyone was doing it. I kind of felt this tugging inside me like I should, but I was afraid. Did I do it? Yes, and I have never turned back. The feeling of love, honor and respect, and intimate feeling I have with the Lord is indescribable.

Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and try something different in worship, after all we are created to worship Him. Everyone enters into worship differently, but why not be open to the Spirit's leading in case He calls you to do something different.

*This article excerpted from **Kathy DeGraw's** book *A Worship Woven Life: Learning to Live a Life of Praise*.*

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Discerning the Difference Between Holy Spirit Conviction and Demonic Condemnation

In order to bind our flesh, thoughts, feelings and confusion when hearing directions in our mind; we need to define the difference between Holy Spirit conviction and condemnation which comes from the enemy or our flesh. If you search inside yourself, you can feel your spirit man.

When the Holy Spirit starts to manifest you can feel an overwhelming joy or it can be similar to when we feel the presence of the Lord upon us.

The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin or when we are heading in the wrong direction. When the Holy Spirit convicts us, we might feel slightly grieved or disappointed. When He is convicting you, pay attention!

Be aware of what the Spirit of the Lord is trying to teach you. Be open to receiving His correction and what He is showing you that you need to repent of and change in your life. The word repent means to turn around. When the Holy Spirit convicts us, we need to turn around, change the way we did something or the direction we are thinking of proceeding.

When the Holy Spirit corrects or convicts us, I like to describe it as the "get in-get out" theory. He is going to correct and discipline us and show us what we did wrong. He is going to get in and get out. He is not going to badger us or nag at us about the same thing. He is going to show us the mistake, lay it upon our heart to repent and ask for forgiveness and then He is going to expect us to move on. He will keep convicting us until we do something about it.

However, He won't make us feel depressed, guilty or ashamed like the enemy will. As we grow in our walk with the Lord we will be able to more quickly identify when it is conviction from the Holy Spirit or condemnation from the enemy.

When we receive condemnation from the enemy, it is different. He wants us to stew on what we did wrong and let it build up inside us. He is hoping we will take on the emotions of guilt, regret, blame and shame. He wants these emotions to plant a seed inside us; telling us that we are no good, that we will do it again and nobody is going to forgive us for our mistakes.

These are a few of the lies that the "father of lies" will plant in our mind. The key to our victory is to remember they are just lies. Don't take the lies in; rebuke them (take authority over them) and refuse to think anything else then what the Word of God says about you.

The enemy is going to attempt to twist and turn our thoughts. He wants to make it hard for us to accept the forgiveness that Christ offers. He wants us to be mad at all the people involved. He will try to plant thoughts in our mind that we should be mad at God because, "*A good God could have prevented it from happening.*"

He is going to repeat old lies to us and have us go to an emotional place we don't care to visit again. He wants us to wallow in our self-pity. He will take the low self-esteem that we may have struggled with in the past and will attack us again with those feelings of self worth and doubt. Don't listen; don't take it in! We are more then conquerors, bought with the blood of Christ, wanted and accepted by the Father! Meditate on the scriptures and fill your mind with those thoughts and truths!

An easy way to discern between Holy Spirit conviction and condemnation from the enemy is that the Holy Spirit does it

quickly. He comes in and disciplines, convicts, correct and than loves on us. Once it is over, we might think about it for a few minutes and then we move on. It's done, it's handled, we feel released and we have given it back to the Lord to never pick it up again!

The enemy wants us to stew on our situation and stay mad at the person or ourselves. Before we lived as Christians extending the grace He gave to us to others when we would get mad at someone it would take us 3 days to get over it. I think the enemy still uses that today. When we let guilt, regret, blame and shame in, it still takes us 3 days to get over it. When the enemy condemns us it usually takes 3 days to make a turn around.

How did you react in the past when you received bad news or had a situation that did not have the outcome you expected? Did it take you 3 days to blow it off? He will steal your time by getting you depressed, so you sit on the couch and do nothing. We need to take time to get in the Word and overcome our thoughts, fears and condemnation! We should be binding our minds to the mind of Christ; instead of allowing unnecessary thoughts to come into our minds. The next time you can't blow something off, ask yourself, "Is this Holy Spirit conviction which only lasts a few minutes or enemy condemnation which lasts 3 days?"

"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?" (Luke 11:13).

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. God desires to give us good things if we ask" (Matt. 7:7).

God will give us good things if we ask. His Word states He will. We need to put ourselves in a position of hearing from God. God may be silent for a period of time while seeking Him

for an answer. When God makes us wait for the answer it doesn't mean He is ignoring us. We need to be careful when waiting to hear from the Lord. It is in the waiting, that the enemy will use that time to counterfeit in a wrong answer. The enemy will use our lack of patience, control and the things that make us act out of God's timing to get us out of God's will.

God's timing is perfect and in the waiting is when we grow and learn. In waiting we develop perseverance and learn how to stay on the path that He has set before us. When we are seeking an answer, we don't know why God makes us wait. Is it for our benefit such as; cleaning some junk out of our trunk or defining us to more effectively hear the voice of the Lord.

We might have to wait on someone to do something, so our answer can come to pass. It doesn't matter what we are waiting for or how long we are waiting, as long as, we are continually pressing in to get the direction God wants for us.

We need to make sure when God is silent we don't take on our old behavior patterns, thoughts and habits. We need to wait silently for God. Don't try to analyze and come up with your own answer. There is growth in waiting, intimacy in waiting and learning in the waiting. Guard your mind, thoughts and heart during the waiting. Then when you hear the answer there will be no flesh involved.

When the Holy Spirit is giving you conviction or a word of knowledge, it won't leave you until you act on it. The same word will keep coming to you. It is like a basic computer program that we used to write years ago. The program tells us what to do line by line, but we always have a "go to" line in the program. Therefore, no matter what we do, or in this case, what we try to avoid, He is always going to bring us back to the original instruction.

We can try to ignore it, but the Holy Spirit is going to keep

bringing it to us until the conviction becomes so uncomfortable that we must act on it. As soon as we act on it, we feel released by the Spirit of the Lord and know we have been obedient to what He has called us to do.

How do we know if it was your flesh? If it was your flesh you could have ignored it. Think about the times you thought you were suppose to apologize to someone and didn't. What about the time you "felt" you should call a friend and didn't? Many of you have been taught when you have a problem to "stuff" your feelings. These are examples of how our flesh can control our actions. When it is our flesh, we can ignore our feelings or what it makes sense to do in the natural. It is an emotional response that we can push aside.

God has given His people free will. He is a gentleman and doesn't force us to do anything, sometimes causing us to take an alternative route to what He wants. Suppose God sent your friend to witness to you and your friend was disobedient and didn't do it. Do you think He is going to sit there and give up on you or use someone else?

There are probably many instances that God had to use someone else to do something. What if the first person didn't hear clearly, didn't act on what they were supposed to, was scared to do it or wasn't sure if it was the voice of the Lord or their own feelings?

Our God is a God of second chances. Let's be obedient to act on what direction the Lord gives us. There will be times we make mistakes, act in our flesh, miss a God appointment or allow the enemy to condemn us. Thank God He gives us a lot of grace to get through those times when we make mistakes.

Spend some time in prayer. Reflect and think, "Are there times I was convicted versus condemned? How can I learn to hear the voice of the Lord faster?" Discern the next time you get a direction and ask yourself, "Where did it come from?" I pray

you will notice the difference between your flesh, Satan or God and conviction and condemnation. May the Holy Spirit increase your discernment!

Kathy DeGraw is the founder of DeGraw Ministries a prophetic healing ministry releasing the love and power of God, igniting people in the prophetic and releasing people from emotional bondage. She travels hosting conferences, teaching schools and evangelistic love tours. Kathy enjoys writing and is the author of several books that educate, empower and equip people, including *A Worship Woven Life*, *Time to Set the Captives Free*, and *Flesh, Satan or God*. Connect with Kathy at .