

LEADER'S GUIDE

PART TWO

The
Challenge
to
TRUST
on the
Path to Peace

The Challenge to Trust on the Path to Peace

LEADER'S GUIDE – WEEK FOUR



WEEK FOUR – MY TRUST ROADBLOCKS

DAY 8 A HABIT OF DISTRUST

DAY 9 THE PAIN OF BROKEN TRUST

DAY 10 THE LIES OF LONELINESS

DAY 11 PRIDE AND INSECURITY

FOR THE LEADER

Pray for God to open the eyes of each group member to the roadblocks which interfere with their ability to trust Him more deeply. Pray that, although the issues presented in the next few weeks may be difficult to discuss, each person would be willing to speak openly and honestly. Pray for wisdom and discernment and for God to speak through you as you lead the group this week.

WELCOME & OPEN WITH PRAYER

Begin your time together in prayer. Encourage members of the group to share their prayer requests. Provide the group an opportunity to pray for one another, or you may choose to pray for the group. Also commit to praying for each other throughout the week.

DAY 8 A HABIT OF DISTRUST (15 MIN)

PAGE 55

Read aloud the following introduction from Cindy for the discussion for Day 8:

There are a lot of things that can keep us chained to the habit of distrust—including fear, selfishness, pride, insecurities, or even people. The problem with habits is they usually develop slowly over time and escape our recognition because they become ingrained into our personalities and daily lives, but God wants to constantly renew our minds (Romans 12:2) and our spirits (Psalm 51:10). We must be careful not to justify our habits with our past experiences, our age, or our stubbornness. None are a valid reason to live in disobedience to God's commands to trust Him. If you have found success establishing new routines or breaking unhealthy old ones, apply that same strategy to trusting God and share with others what helps you because it will likely be helpful to someone else.

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Challenge Questions (Page 59)

- What are some of your patterns which indicate a habit of not trusting God in certain areas of your life?
- Why do you think you have been resistant to trusting God more fully in those areas?
- What is a habit or pattern you have successfully changed in the past and how did you accomplish that?
- Is there someone or something in your life who fosters worry and fretfulness? How can you set healthy boundaries with that person or those things?

In the Word (Page 60)

What can you learn from the following verses about breaking an unhealthy habit and ushering needed change into your life?

- Romans 12:2
- Proverbs 19:20
- Ezekiel 36:26

Practicing Trust (Page 60)

Read Proverbs 18:10. Because God is your strong tower, what is something you can trust Him with today?

DAY 9 THE PAIN OF BROKEN TRUST (15 MIN)

PAGE 63

Read aloud the following introduction from Cindy for the discussion for Day 9:

If you have experienced deep hurt and have had difficulty finding healing, I want you to know first and foremost, God sees you and God sees your pain. What you have done or has been done to you does not change the character of God and the depth of His love for you. I also want you to know there is help available when you are ready to reach out for it. Nothing in the Pages of this book are intended to minimize the trauma of your pain or your experience, but hopefully it can encourage you to seek the help you need. Past experiences with broken trust can have a tremendous impact on our willingness to trust God in our lives today. I recently faced a very difficult situation with a person who has deeply and repeatedly hurt me. That person knows how words have held power over me in the past, and many times that is exactly what was intended. But this time was different. When I recognized the anxiousness

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and insecurity welling up inside me, I remembered what we are studying. I remembered that God can take what a person intends for harm and use it for good. I remembered God is my defender and will go before me in every single battle—including emotional battles and wars of words. I reminded myself God is my judge—not a person—and He knows what is true about those circumstances and what is true about me. And, for the first time in many years, I deescalated the emotional eruption that had begun inside of me. I felt a peace overcome me and God's presence fill me. It was very powerful for me to realize with intentionality and effort, I could learn to trust God right in the middle of what had the potential to be overwhelming circumstances with a person who had broken my trust so many times before. Not only did I witness God redeeming the residual effects of a broken trust, but I truly believe I have initiated a new response to similar situations I will face in the future—hopefully breaking at least one of my habits of distrust.

Challenge Questions (Page 66)

- List some examples of pain from broken trust you have experienced.
- Why do you think you continue to be impacted by those past experiences?
- How has God used those experiences for good in your life or can you envision Him doing so?
- What actions do you need to take to move toward healing from those painful experiences?

In the Word (Page 67)

How do the following verses help encourage you as you heal from past experiences of broken trust?

- Psalm 147:3
- Psalm 73:26
- Psalm 71:20

Practicing Trust (Page 67)

- Read Exodus 15:26. Because God is healer, what is something you can trust Him with today?

DAY 10 TO THE LIES OF LONELINESS (15 MIN)	PAGE 69
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Read aloud the following introduction from Cindy for the discussion for Day 10:

The lies of loneliness not only obstruct our trust in God but also prevent us from receiving the love and support of others. One of the ways God extends His help to us is through our relationships with others.

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Galatians 6:2 says “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” One of the most vivid illustrations of this verse is from when I was diagnosed with breast cancer. I was just 37 years old with three young kids at home. I had no family history of any form of cancer and no risk factors. It descended upon my life suddenly and violently. And yet, I wondered at times how I experienced such a strong peace through those difficult months, but then God reminded me of the multitudes of prayers being presented to Him on my behalf. You see, there were people, some of whom I didn’t even know, who were helping shoulder my burden with their love and their prayers. God gave me this picture of them each taking a piece, just a piece, and lifting it from my shoulders. It was an incredible image of God’s provision and love extended to me and my family though others. At times I would feel so alone, but then God would remind me of His presence and the love and support of the people who cared so deeply for me. There are many reasons we fail to see how God uses others in our lives, but God wants to remind us. Ask God to reveal to you what lies are holding you in your loneliness and shielding you from seeing the truth of those who care about you. Tell God you are ready and willing to fight those lies and re-engage with Him and with others. Although our past hurts or rejection may be based on reality, self-pity perpetuates and cultivates those feeling, and once they take root, they can be very difficult to uproot. Allow God to speak His truth into your loneliness today.

Challenge Questions (Page 74)

- Have you intentionally or unintentionally pulled away from friends or community, and why do you think that has happened?
- How has isolation and loneliness impaired your ability to trust God more fully?
- What lies has Satan spoken to you about your loneliness?
- How has God encouraged you through your encounters or relationships with others?
- How has your own isolation kept you from encouraging others?
- Name at least one person who cares about you and with whom you can reestablish a relationship as you move out of isolation. What can you do to reach out to that person?

In the Word (Page 75)

How do the following promises from Scripture offer you comfort in times of loneliness?

- John 14:17
- Psalm 139:7–12
- Psalm 27:10

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Practicing Trust (Page 75)

- Read Isaiah 41:10. Because God is with you, what is something you can trust Him with today?

DAY 11 PRIDE AND INSECURITY (15 MIN)	PAGE 77
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Read aloud the following introduction from Cindy for the discussion for Day 11:

Two more roadblocks which can interfere with trusting God and also contribute to our loneliness are pride and insecurity. Pride is when you feel you don't need the help or companionship of others or the belief that others are not as skilled or knowledgeable and, therefore, not useful. Pride can also keep you from acknowledging to others you are lonely or you that you want help or companionship. It can also prevent you from accepting those very things from God as well. Similarly, insecurity can keep you isolated. You may feel no one would care or help anyway. Maybe you have tried to be part of a community or friend group and were unsuccessful, reinforcing your fears that you aren't good enough or welcome. One of the phrases I have learned to repeat in my head over and over again is: "It's not about me. It's not about me. It's not about me." It's not about what I want and how right I am, and it's also not about how little I know and how ill-equipped I may be. When we ask God to speak truth to us about who we are in relation to Him, we will gain a trustworthy perspective. Compared to Him, we are in touch with our sinfulness and frailty. Likewise, when we see our reflection in Him through Christ, we are reminded we are strong and capable to doing all things He has put before us. A correct and true perspective of ourselves is only seen through the eyes of God and is imperative when we are striving to place our trust in Him.

Challenge Questions (Page 81)

- In what areas of your life do you struggle with pride, and how do you see it interfering with your ability or willingness to trust God?
- In what area(s) of our life do you struggle with insecurity, and how has it interfered with your ability or willingness to trust God?
- How do your own struggles fluctuate between pride and insecurity?
- Why do you think you struggle with these issues in some areas of your life and not others?
- What do you think God wants you to do with your pride and/or insecurity?

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In the Word (Page 82)

What can you learn from the following verses that can help you battle the self-focus of pride and insecurity?

- Romans 12:3
- Proverbs 29:25
- Jeremiah 24:7

Practicing Trust (Page 83)

- Read Leviticus 18:2. Because God is Lord, what is something you can trust Him with today?

WRAP IT UP

Read aloud these concluding thoughts on Week Four from Cindy:

This week we began to reflect on the roadblocks interfering with our ability to trust God more fully. Whether we have cultivated a habit of distrust or are held captive by the chains of broken trust, we can find freedom and hope in the promises God makes to us as our Healer and Redeemer. A friend once said that we often rush past the mirror in the hallway because to sit and look intently at ourselves for too long can be uncomfortable. Perhaps this is our mirror, and we need to stop and gaze and ask God to open our eyes to what is true about us and whether or not we are blinded to our pride or our insecurity. Seeing and recognizing the need for change is the beginning of God's refining. May God bless you and lead you as you continue on this journey.

FOR NEXT WEEK

Remind everyone to read Days 12-15 and take time to complete the *Challenge Questions*, reflect on the verses *In the Word*, and identify how they are *Practicing Trust*. Encourage them to be ready to share their answers and the insights God has shown them.

CLOSE WITH PRAYER

Ask one of the group members to close your time with a prayer.



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LEADER'S GUIDE – WEEK FIVE



WEEK FIVE – MY TRUST ROADBLOCKS

DAY 12 UNMET EXPECTATIONS

DAY 13 LONG-TERM SUFFERING

DAY 14 THE FOG OF FEAR

DAY 15 UNRESOLVED ANGER

FOR THE LEADER

Pray for the health of each person in your group and pray for God to open their minds and prepare their hearts for His teaching. As we continue to explore topics that can be especially difficult and deeply personal, pray each person feels safe and respected as they share what God places on their heart. Continue to Pray for wisdom and discernment and for God to speak through you as you lead the group this week.

WELCOME & OPEN WITH PRAYER

Begin your time together in prayer. Encourage members of the group to share their prayer requests. Provide the group an opportunity to pray for one another, or you may choose to pray for the group. Also commit to praying for each other throughout the week.

DAY 12 UNMET EXPECTATIONS (15 MIN)

PAGE 85

Read aloud the following introduction from Cindy for the discussion for Day 12:

We all have expectations—whether or not we are aware of them—for ourselves, our families, and our futures. We have hopes or plans for school, jobs, relationships, vacations, finances, our nation, and even the world. Because we are made in the image of our Heavenly Father, we are creative, intelligent, and hopeful—all of which are blessings. And yet, we have also experienced the disappointment that can accompany the unexpected. Some of the unmet expectations have happened to us personally, but we also watch them unfold in the lives of those we love. Some have been less significant, and some have been life-altering. There is nothing wrong with having hopes and dreams, but the danger comes when

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we are unwilling to accept God's reality for our lives when they conflict with our plans. Some of us have faced trials or heartache we will never fully understand in this lifetime, and that can be very difficult to endure. This week we looked at several examples in Scripture of those who deeply loved God yet struggled when life took unexpected turns. Hopefully their stories also reminded us of how God helped them accept the reality of their circumstances and re-place their trust in Him, just as He wants to do for each of us today.

Challenge Questions (Page 88)

- What expectations in your life have gone unmet?
- How has that made it more difficult for you to trust God?
- What do you fear will happen if you adjust your expectations to align with the reality of your life?
- How can you adjust your expectations and yet still remain hopeful for change?
- How have you seen God unfold His plan in your life in a way which actually turned out better than what you envisioned?

In the Word (Page 88)

How can the following verses help you as you struggle to adjust your expectations and release them to God?

- Proverbs 16:9
- Psalm 127:1
- Luke 22:39–42

Practicing Trust (Page 89)

- Read Psalm 18:2. Because God is your deliverer, what is something you can trust Him with today?

DAY 13 LONG-TERM SUFFERING (15 MIN)

PAGE 91

Read aloud the following introduction from Cindy for the discussion for Day 13:

Suffering looks different for each of us. You may experience periods of physical suffering and chronic pain while others are experiencing a broken heart that has yet to mend. While some may suffer from repeated episodes of anxiety or depression, others are suffering from the devastation of a broken relationship, marriage, or family. There are often no answers or cures for what pains us, and that can

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be discouraging and frustrating. We may not always recognize their impact on our willingness to trust God, but some life experiences yield questions about His goodness and sovereignty and why He would allow such pain, and that is where our suffering can impede our trust. Just as our suffering differs so does its impact on our trust relationship with God.

Challenge Questions (Page 96)

- Is there someone you know who has continued to pursue God in the midst of long-term suffering? Why do you think he/she has been able to do that?
- How has your own suffering impacted your relationship with God and your willingness to trust Him?
- How has your lack of control over your suffering caused you to set unrealistic standards for yourself or for those around you?
- What questions do you have for God regarding His goodness and your suffering?
- What does God want you to understand about Him and His love for you as you continue to suffer?

In the Word (Page 97)

How can the following verses offer you hope and strength in your times of suffering?

- Psalm 69:13–15
- 2 Corinthians 1:3–4
- Psalm 39:7

Practicing Trust (Page 97)

- Read Isaiah 51:12. Because God is your comforter, what is something you can trust Him with today?

DAY 14 THE FOG OF FEAR (15 MIN)	PAGE 99
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Read aloud the following introduction from Cindy for the discussion for Day 14:

This world is filled with real, statistic-bearing risks and dangers, and it is our human nature to try to avoid pain and suffering. And yet, the Bible promises we will face trials and sorrows (John 16:33). Choosing to trust God in the face of our fears is incredibly challenging, and yet that is what we are commanded to do. Joshua 1:9 instructs: “Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened and do not be

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dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." The Bible not only tells us to be strong and courageous and not to fear, but it also tells us why that is possible: God is with us. When we focus on our fears, we are not focusing on our God. When we allow our thoughts to go unchecked into the wells of what-ifs, our minds are no longer entertaining the absolute truths of who God is and what He is able to accomplish. Over and over and over again, we must choose to trust in the face of fear.

Challenge Questions (Page 103)

- What do you fear right now?
- What does your life look like when fear has a hold on you?
- How does fear interfere with your willingness or ability to trust God?
- What can you do to guard your heart and mind against the fear Satan uses as a weapon against your peace of mind?
- What do you think God wants you to remember about Him in times of fear and worry?

In the Word (Page 104)

What do the following verses encourage you to do when you are fearful?

- Joshua 1:9
- Psalm 34:4
- Psalm 56:3

Practicing Trust (Page 104)

- Read Psalm 32:20. Because God is your shield, what is something you can trust Him with today?

DAY 15 UNRESOLVED ANGER (15 MIN)	PAGE 107
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Read aloud the following introduction from Cindy for the discussion for Day 15:

Just as suffering looks different for each of us, so does anger. You may react to anger with a fighting spirit, or you may be someone who retreats into their shell and shuts out the world. You may express your anger toward a person who hurt you or turn it inward toward yourself. When we have been hurt or wronged by someone, our first instinct is to go into protective mode—not to trust—and that includes when we are angry at God. What we often fail to realize is unresolved anger is more harmful to ourselves than the person to whom it is directed. To begin the process of unraveling our anger, we must first

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recognize what anger looks like in our lives. There are plenty of examples in Scripture of those who deeply loved God and yet were also angry at Him. Perhaps it is time to be set free from the underlying pains of your anger and begin to heal.

Challenge Questions (Page 112)

- Are you angry at God? If so, why has it been difficult to express that to Him?
- Are you harboring anger or resentment toward someone else? Why does that continue to be a struggle for you?
- If you are angry at yourself, why do you continue to hold on to that anger?
- How has your anger interfered with your relationship with God and your ability or willingness to trust Him more fully?
- What do you believe God is calling you to do with that anger?

In the Word (Page 113)

According to the following verses, what are some of the potential dangers of our anger?

- Psalm 37:8
- Ephesians 4:26–27
- James 1:12

Practicing Trust (Page 114)

- Read Psalm 145:9. Because God is compassionate, what is something you can trust Him with today?

WRAP IT UP

Read aloud these concluding thoughts on Week Five from Cindy:

Exploring our roadblocks to trust can be difficult but is necessary. When we talk of the disappointments we continue to experience in life and the agony of long-term suffering, there are no easy answers or simple comforts. And when you are engulfed in the fog of fear or held captive by unresolved anger, finding peace can seem an insurmountable feat. I encourage you to keep seeking and continue learning, remaining open to what God wants to teach you even when it becomes difficult. We have all formed habits of distrust over the years or even decades, so we must continue to be patient and deliberate in

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our efforts to trust God more fully as we search for peace. Pray for strength, determination, and discernment as you continue to seek the wisdom of God. May God bless you and lead you as you continue on this journey.

FOR NEXT WEEK

Remind everyone to read Days 16-19 and take time to complete the *Challenge Questions*, reflect on the verses *In the Word*, and identify how they are *Practicing Trust*. Encourage them to be ready to share their answers and the insights God has shown them.

CLOSE WITH PRAYER

Ask one of the group members to close your time with a prayer.



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LEADER'S GUIDE – WEEK SIX



WEEK SIX – MY TRUST ROADBLOCKS

DAY 16 UNFORGIVENESS

DAY 17 BATTLE OF THE MIND

DAY 18 A WEARY SOUL

DAY 19 THE GREATEST ROADBLOCK

FOR THE LEADER

Pray for your group as they continue to learn about anything that interferes with their willingness or ability to trust God more fully. Ask God to show you who might need additional encouragement and prayer as they continue to study these challenging subjects. Also continue to pray for wisdom and discernment and for God to speak through you as you lead the group this week.

WELCOME & OPEN WITH PRAYER

Begin your time together in prayer. Encourage members of the group to share their prayer requests. Provide the group an opportunity to pray for one another, or you may choose to pray for the group. Also commit to praying for each other throughout the week.

DAY 16 UNFORGIVENESS (15 MIN)

PAGE 115

Read aloud the following introduction from Cindy for the discussion for Day 16:

Last week we discussed how destructive unresolved anger can be, and today we hope to gain some insight into what exactly to do with that anger. God's answer to anger is forgiveness. However, I think as Christians we can misunderstand what exactly that means for us and for our relationships. First of all, forgiving is not forgetting. Forgiveness is also not reengaging in an unhealthy relationship. There is no one-size-fits-all process to forgiveness. Forgiveness does require that we trust God to dispense His perfect justice. That has never been our job. It has always been His, and the Bible promises He will do just that. God doesn't instruct us to forgive others to benefit Him but, instead, to help us. We were not created to carry the weight of unforgiveness, and parts of our heart will eventually crumble under its

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weight. There will always be situations which will tempt us to become bitter and resentful. There will also be people we allow to take captive more of our thoughts than they deserve. The bitterness that takes root from these things drowns out the joy and peace God desires for us. Forgiveness begins with recognizing the presence of resentment and confessing it to God and asking Him to show us the path forward. There are times we believe we are waiting on God to move and change our hearts when God is actually waiting on us to be ready for that change. Are you ready to walk a road to forgiveness?

Challenge Questions (Page 120)

- Who do you need to forgive in order to experience greater peace?
- How has your unforgiveness interfered with experiencing the peace God desires for you?
- How can your unforgiveness reflect a lack of trust in God?
- What have you learned about God and yourself which can help you in your efforts to forgive someone?
- What do you believe God is calling you to do regarding any unforgiveness in your life?

In the Word (Page 121)

What can you learn from the following verses about resolving conflict and unforgiveness?

- Romans 12:18–19
- Matthew 7:3–5
- Matthew 18:15

Practicing Trust (Page 122)

- Read Psalm 69:16. Because God is merciful, what is something you can trust Him with today?

DAY 17 BATTLE OF THE MIND (15 MIN)

PAGE 123

Read aloud the following introduction from Cindy for the discussion for Day 17:

As with everything else, the battle of the mind looks different for each of us but be assured the battle is real. The mind is where the seeds of doubt are sown and the seeds of pride are nurtured. It is where the lies about ourselves and our God are planted, and it is where the stalks of judgment mature unchecked. If the lies were written on paper, we could see them and examine them and declare their validity—or invalidity. However, our thoughts can be difficult to identify as they evade our capture and continue to

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haunt us. In order to weed out the untruths in your mind, you must first recognize their hold on you. Stop and think about what you are thinking about. I was on a trip with a very cynical tour guide recently who kept asking questions about the town I am from. For each criticism he offered, I offered a different perspective. He finally said: Who are you? The group optimist? Actually, I usually am. I am definitely a glass-half-full gal. I have been accused of being naive, gullible, and overly optimistic. However, I believe that if the worst outcome is going to happen, my predicting it is not going to deter it but only detract from the moments leading up to it which still have the potential to bring joy. I just wish my private thoughts about myself and what others think of me were as optimistic as my opinion of other things in my life. As with all the things we have discussed, I am able to apply some things well in parts of my life and yet do so much less successfully in others. When we ask and are willing to hear and see them, God will reveal to us the thoughts that continue to hold us captive. This battle is one we all need to continue to fight!

Challenge Questions (Page 127)

- What makes it difficult to take your thoughts captive?
- What areas of your life cause you to ruminate tirelessly, leading to anxiousness and worry?
- How do your thoughts sometimes reflect your lack of trust in God?
- Using Rick Warren's four principles for taking thoughts captive, how could you apply each of them to a particular circumstance you are currently facing?
 1. Don't believe everything you think.
 2. Guard your mind from garbage.
 3. Never let up on learning.
 4. Let God stretch your imagination.

In the Word (Page 128)

According to the following verses, why is it important to take your thoughts captive, and why can it be so difficult?

- Proverbs 4:23
- Romans 12:1–2
- Romans 8:5–8

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Practicing Trust (Page 128)

- Read Jeremiah 33:3. Because God is knowledge, what is something you can trust Him with today?

DAY 18: A WEARY SOUL (15 MIN)

PAGE 131

Read aloud the following introduction from Cindy for the discussion for Day 18:

Sometimes we just get tired of trying. Tired of trying to continually forgive someone or feeling hurt, or exhausted from fighting the thoughts in our head, being alone or afraid. We fatigued from trying to stay faithful to what God has called us to do and from making progress but then feeling we are once again defeated. Sometimes we are just weary. There are times we want it to all come more easily. We feel like we have done so much of the work and yet still have so far to go. Yet we fail to recognize the progress we have made or see the hope God desires for us. When we think we can't fight anymore, we need to remember God has already gone before us and is victorious. Over and over in the Old Testament, God would tell His people to trust Him as they went into battle, and when they did, they were victorious—not because of their power and strength but because of God's. When you find yourself struggling to stay strong, remind yourself you don't have to because God is. Remember, you were never asked or expected by God to do it apart from Him. He can give you the words, and He can show you the way. He will give you everything you need to endure your current circumstances and fight the battle at hand, but you have to believe His promise to do just that. God wants you to reach out and take hold of His promise to carry you in your weariness.

Challenge Questions (Page 135)

- What does your life look like when you are tired and weary and your heart is yearning for rest?
- When you are weary, how do you find rest for your mind, your body, and your soul?
- Knowing another one is coming, what are you doing to actively prepare for the battles in your life?
- How does remembering God's promises to love you, comfort you, and rescue you help to sustain you in times of trouble?
- What are some ways God has spoken His message of hope through circumstances or people in your life when you desperately needed it?

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In the Word (Page 136)

When you are weary, what encouragement and strength can you gain from the following verses?

- Lamentations 3:23–26
- Psalm 55:22
- Exodus 14:14

Practicing Trust (Page 136)

- Read Psalm 28:7. Because God is your strength, what is something you can trust Him with today?

DAY 19: THE GREATEST ROADBLOCK (15 MIN)

PAGE 139

Read aloud the following introduction from Cindy for the discussion for Day 19:

Our enemy is not a person. We don't fight people, but we do fight powers and principalities of darkness, and Satan himself is our greatest roadblock. Satan was Jesus' greatest roadblock in the wilderness and showed up again when Peter refused to believe what was to come for Jesus: "Get behind me Satan!" (Matthew 16:23). Jesus knew his battle was not with Peter's lack of belief but Satan's interference. Jesus' battle was also not with those who crucified him, and that is how He was able to intercede for God to forgive them (Luke 23:34). It may not be immediately apparent in your own life who is in your way of trusting God more fully, but you can be certain it is Satan himself. There is no one more delighted when we are wrought with worry or consumed with anger. There is no one more satisfied when we settle into our self-sufficiency or become blinded to our own faults and shortcomings. Satan is at work every moment of every day attempting to derail your journey to trust God, and it is vital that you recognize his deceitful and often subtle ways of doing just that. He knows your vulnerabilities. He knows if you are more susceptible to insecurity or pride. He knows how easily you can be enticed to blame others or condemn yourself. He knows how to use your pain and weariness to tempt you to give up. When we fully understand that our greatest roadblock is Satan, we can learn to redirect our energies to fight him instead of being at war with people or with ourselves. There is so much we can learn from Jesus's battle with Satan in the wilderness. You may feel that Jesus had an unfair advantage—after all, He is the Son of God. However, every weapon Jesus used against Satan is available to each of us today because of our relationship with Him. The armor of God is the most powerful and effective way to fight our battles, but we must choose to pick it up and use it.

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Challenge Questions (Page 143)

- What made Jesus especially vulnerable to Satan in the wilderness?
- What is your wilderness? When are you most susceptible to Satan's attacks?
- What can Satan accomplish by distracting you from trusting God?
- What can you do to better prepare yourself for Satan's attacks and his deceitful temptations to lure your trust from God?

In the Word (Page 144)

According to these verses, what is the condition of the human heart and what is the hope offered through Jesus?

- 1 John 1:8–2:2
- Romans 3:3
- 1 Peter 5:6–9

Practicing Trust (Page 144)

- Read Exodus 15:2. Because God is your defender, what is something you can trust Him with today?

WRAP IT UP

Read aloud these concluding thoughts on Week Six from Cindy:

The subjects we covered this week, in addition to the past several weeks, are only a few of the many ways Satan attempts to obstruct our trust in God. The battle we are waging is fierce and the thoughts which take root in our minds can feel like relentless attacks, but we must remember that we have a God who is sovereign and a Savior who has conquered it all and defeated the enemy! Satan wants us to believe that we are losing this battle when, in fact, the victory is ours, but we must claim it and declare it. As we move into the next part of our study, "In Whom Shall I Trust," we will learn why we can trust God in every circumstance and with every circumstance. May God bless you and lead you as you continue on this journey.

The Challenge to Trust on the Path to Peace

LEADER'S GUIDE – WEEK SIX

FOR NEXT WEEK

Remind everyone to read Days 20-23 and take time to complete the *Challenge Questions*, reflect on the verses *In the Word*, and identify how they are *Practicing Trust*. Encourage them to be ready to share their answers and the insights God has shown them.

CLOSE WITH PRAYER

Ask one of the group members to close your time with a prayer.

