

Trusting God: Chapter 4
God's Sovereignty over People

Central Idea

Developing Trust

1. Examine the following Scriptures for evidence of God's work in the hearts of believers and unbelievers. Record the key word used to describe His working.

KJV Ezra 1:1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying,

KJV Ezra 1:5 Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all *them* whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the LORD which *is* in Jerusalem.

KJV Ezra 6:22 And kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for the LORD had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel

KJV Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, *as* the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

KJV Daniel 1:9 Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

KJV 2 Corinthians 8:16 But thanks *be* to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. 17 For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you.

KJV Deuteronomy 2:30 But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him: for the LORD thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand, as *appeareth* this day.

KJV Joshua 11:20 For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, *and* that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them, as the LORD commanded Moses.

2. Read Exodus 4:21 and 8:15?

a. Who is given the responsibility for Pharaoh's hard heart in each of these verses?

b. How do these verses, taken side by side, help us see the relationship between man's responsibility and God's work in our hearts?

3. God's restraining influence on people's actions and decisions is seen in the following verses. Complete the chart.

Scripture	What action did God prevent?	What emotion did God influence?
Gen. 20:1-7		
Gen. 35:5		
Ex. 34:23-24		

4. According to the following verses, how do the sinful actions of man affect God's purposes?

KJV Genesis 50:20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; *but* God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as *it is* this day, to save much people alive.

KJV Acts 4:27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, 28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

KJV Revelation 17:15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. 16 And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. 17 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. 18 And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

5. Do you agree that a finite mind cannot comprehend an infinite Being beyond what He has expressly revealed? Why or why not?

6. a. God can and does work in the minds and hearts of people to accomplish His will. How should that truth affect your attitude?

- b. How should that truth affect the way you pray about your job or other concerns?

7. Why should confidence in God's sovereignty in the lives of people keep us from becoming resentful and bitter when we are treated unjustly or maliciously by others?

8. a. Describe a time when you were treated unfairly.

- b. How did you react?
 - c. To what extent did your reaction show trust in God?
 - d. Would you like your response to be different next time? If so, how?
 - e. What was the end result of the situation?
 - f. What good, if any, came from this situation?
9. What are some specific things you can pray for in your own life this week, knowing that God can work in people's hearts?
10. a. Describe a time recently when you were affected by someone else's decision or action.
- b. At the time how did you feel about the situation?
 - c. How do you feel now about the outcome of the situation?
 - d. Does your study of God's sovereignty in the hearts of people affect your perspective on what happened? How?

Trust in Action

Choose one to do this week.

- 1. Memorize Deuteronomy 29:29 or Proverbs 21:1

2. Think of three people you know who need to turn to the Lord. Ask the Lord to work in their hearts.

3. Are there people who have treated you unfairly whom you have not forgiven? Spend some time with the Lord, asking Him to cleanse you of all bitterness toward others. Pray Psalm 51:10.