

LEARNING TO TRUST

1 March 2026

SUMMARY

This Lenten message explores the profound spiritual discipline of daily dependence on God, using the Israelites' experience with manna in the wilderness as the central metaphor. The message challenges believers to move beyond merely wanting change to actually living in the freedom Christ offers. It addresses how people often remain in psychological and spiritual bondage even after physical deliverance, choosing the familiar pain of captivity over the uncertain freedom God provides. The message emphasizes that true spiritual maturity comes not from stored certainty or accumulated security, but from daily reliance on God's provision for our emotional, psychological, and spiritual needs. Lent is presented not as a season of performance or intensity, but as a time of deep internal surgery where believers examine what from their past—whether abuse, mistakes, or missed opportunities—continues to hold them captive, preventing them from living fully alive in Christ's freedom.

KEY POINTS

- Lent is about internal surgery at the deepest levels of who we are, not merely giving up coffee or sugar
- Wilderness challenges our appetite for what is truly important, not our theology
- Hunger has a way of making past slavery look stable and even bondage attractive
- Daily dependence is precisely what unsettles us because we want stored certainty, not trust
- Provision detached from dependence decays; security hoarded becomes corruption
- We must learn to live free from our past—whether abuse, mistakes, or missed opportunities—today, not tomorrow
- Trust doesn't satisfy the craving for permanence; it requires daily renewal
- Obedience doesn't come from stored certainty but from daily bread
- Formation happens one day at a time through dependence over time
- You can only be in public what you are in private; otherwise you're a hypocrite

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

- Exodus 16:2-21 (The provision of manna in the wilderness)
- Psalm 63:1 (Hungering and thirsting for God)
- Matthew 5:6 (Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness)
- Matthew 6:9-13 (The Lord's Prayer - "Give us this day our daily bread")
- Matthew 6:34 (Do not worry about tomorrow)
- John 10:10 (I came that they may have life and have it abundantly)

LEARNING TO TRUST

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

This guide is designed to help your small group dive deeper into the message.

OPENING PRAYER

Invite the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion and open hearts to God's transforming work during this Lenten season. Pray the IMPACTERS Community Prayer .

ICEBREAKER

Share a time when you had to trust God day-by-day rather than having everything figured out. How did that experience change you?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Section 1: Recognizing Our Bondage

1. What "Egypt" have you left behind, but find yourself still mentally or emotionally returning to? (This could be past hurts, old patterns, missed opportunities, or familiar ways of seeing yourself)
2. The message mentioned that "coping stabilizes us enough that we confuse it with life." Where in your life might you be just coping rather than truly living?
3. How does insecurity in your present make the bondage of your past look more appealing?

Section 2: The Challenge of Daily Dependence

4. Jesus taught us to pray "give us this day our daily bread." Why is it so hard for us to live with daily provision rather than stored security?
5. In what areas of your life are you trying to "store up manna" — attempting to secure tomorrow rather than trust God for today? (This could be emotional security, control, finances, relationships, etc.)
6. The sermon stated: "You can only be in the public what you are in private." How does this truth challenge you in your spiritual life?

Section 3: Living in Freedom

7. If you were to live the next 10 years the way you've lived the last seven days, would you be who God wants you to be? (Take time to reflect honestly)
8. What would it look like for you to "live fully alive" today—not tomorrow, but today?
9. The Israelites asked "What is it?" when they saw manna. What unfamiliar forms might God's provision be taking in your life that you haven't recognized?

Personal Reflection Exercise

Take 5-10 minutes of silence for personal reflection:

- What am I allowing from my yesterday to make my life less than God intends?
- Where am I not living in the freedom Christ died to give me?
- What does "daily bread" look like for me today—emotionally, spiritually, psychologically?

Optional: Journal your thoughts or share one insight with the group.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

This Week's Challenge: Choose ONE

- 1. Daily Dependence Practice**
 - Each morning this week, before checking your phone or starting your day, pray: "Lord, give me today my daily bread—for my emotions, my mind, my spirit, my provision. Help me trust You just for today."
- 2. Release the Past**
 - Identify one thing from your past (hurt, mistake, missed opportunity) that you keep returning to mentally. Write it down, pray over it, and ceremonially release it—perhaps by tearing up the paper or burning it safely—as a symbol of letting it go.
- 3. Stop Hoarding Security**
 - Identify one area where you're trying to control or secure tomorrow. Practice daily surrender in that area this week. Each day, consciously give it back to God.
- 4. Live Fully Today**
 - Make a list of what "living fully alive" looks like for you. Each day this week, choose one thing from that list to practice—not for tomorrow, but for today.
- 5. Gratitude for Daily Provision**
 - Start a "daily bread journal." Each evening, write down how God provided for you that day—not just materially, but emotionally, spiritually, and relationally.

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray together for:

- Courage to live in daily dependence rather than stored security
- Freedom from the bondage of our past (abuse, mistakes, regrets)
- Trust when God's provision comes in unfamiliar forms
- The ministry's upcoming initiatives (youth ministry, new locations, mercy ministry, international expansion)
- Each person's specific area of daily dependence this week

LEADER NOTES

- *Be Sensitive: This sermon touches on deep issues - past abuse, broken relationships, personal failures. Create a safe space where people can be honest without judgment.*
- *Don't Rush: Some questions may need more time than others. It's better to go deep on fewer questions than to rush through all of them.*
- *Share Your Own Journey: As a leader, model vulnerability by sharing your own struggles with daily dependence and trust.*
- *Follow Up: Check in with group members during the week about their practical application. A simple text can make a big difference.*
- *Remember: The goal isn't perfection but progress—daily trust, daily dependence, daily bread.*