



## Sermon Title: TRUST: The Antidote of Fear

### Text: Genesis 15

*“Trusting God leads us to **faith** in our doubts, **obedience** in uncertainty, and **assurance** and **hope** in His faithfulness.”*

Genesis 15 marks a pivotal moment in the patriarch's life, shifting from silent obedience to a lively, conversational relationship with the Creator. It depicts Abram in a vulnerable period filled with tension—caught between memories of past victories and the burden of unmet promises. Despite his faithfulness, the heir God promised still feels distant, leading to a raw and honest encounter.

In this important chapter, we see several revolutionary changes in how God interacts with man.

- **A New Level of Intimacy:** For the first time, Abram not only listens but also responds. This exchange shifts their relationship from a series of commands to an ongoing conversation.
- **Divine Revelation:** The narrative introduces the distinctive phrase, *"The word of the Lord came to Abram,"* as God reveals Himself through a visionary experience and a formal self-identification.
- **The Blueprint of Faith:** God reveals detailed future events, going beyond vague reassurances to specific prophecy. As a result, Abram's faith is recorded in history.

This chapter serves as an example of the incredible outcomes that genuine trust can bring to a believer's life. When we decide to trust God during the waiting period, a transformation starts deep inside us.

### TRUST IN GOD WILL LEAD US TO FAITH (vv.1-6)

After a season of battle and sacrifice, Abram faces an internal crisis. God meets him with a powerful promise in v.1: *“Fear not... I am your shield; your reward shall be very great”*. Abram's fear was rooted in his reality. He was a stranger in a hostile land, vulnerable to enemies, and most significantly, still childless. He had rejected earthly riches for God's sake, yet the promise of an heir seemed to be slipping away.

God does not offer Abram a strategy; He offers Himself. He identifies as Abram's protector (Shield) and his ultimate treasure (Reward). To expand Abram's perspective, God leads him outside to look at the stars, illustrating a future beyond his current limitations.

Verse 6 marks a theological milestone: *“And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.”*

- **Faith over Works:** Abram is declared righteous not by his performance, but by his trust.
- **Commitment:** To “believe” here means treating God's Word as certain and committing to His will.

Faith grows when we lift our eyes from our limitations and focus on God's power. Like a bridge we did not build, we trust God to hold us even when we do not understand the engineering of His plan.

### TRUST IN GOD WILL LEAD US TO OBEDIENCE (vv.7-11)

God reaffirms His promise to Abram by reminding him of His past faithfulness in v.7: *“I am the Lord who brought you out from Ur... to give you this land”*. When Abram asks for a sign of assurance, God responds by commanding a specific, elaborate covenant ritual.

Abram is told to gather five specific animals, cut them in half, and set them up for a sacrifice. Although the process is clear and its full

meaning was not yet clear, Abram followed every step precisely. He does not just trust God's word; he acts on it. He even stays to guard the carcasses, shooing away birds of prey—protecting what God asked him to offer. Abram's actions illustrate a core biblical principle: to obey is better than sacrifice (1 Samuel 15:22).

- **The Contrast:** King Saul later attempted to justify his deliberate disobedience with “religious activity” (offering sacrifices).
- **The Heart Matter:** As Jesus noted in Matthew 15:8, it is possible to honor God with our lips while our hearts remain distant. True trust is shown through a heart that values God's instructions over empty ritual.

Trusting God means following His guidance even when it is not fully clear or the outcome is not obvious. Delayed promises do not excuse delaying obedience. If obeying becomes tough, it might be time to check if your faith is real. Are you waiting for perfect clarity before acting on what God's already shown you?


### TRUST IN GOD WILL LEAD US TO ASSURANCE AND HOPE (vv.12-21)


As the sun sets, a dreadful and great darkness falls upon Abram, and God reveals the future of his descendants. This prophecy includes 400 years of affliction in a foreign land but concludes with a promise of judgment on their oppressors and a return to the land with great possessions.


In the ancient Near East, a covenant was usually sealed by both parties walking between divided animals, symbolizing that if either party broke the agreement, they would suffer the same fate as the sacrificed animals. However, in this vision, a smoking firepot and a flaming torch, symbolizing the holy presence of God, pass alone between the pieces.

- **God's Sole Responsibility:** By passing through the pieces while Abram remained on the sidelines, God took full responsibility for the covenant.
- **Unconditional Assurance:** The promise was not based on Abram's performance, but entirely on God's unwavering faithfulness. God bound Himself to His word, ensuring the outcome was certain regardless of human frailty.

Our hope is secure because it does not rely on our perfection. God is the one who maintains the covenant. Even when the journey involves hardship or delays, God's promises stay intact. Trust gives us confidence that He who began a good work in us is faithful to complete it (Philippians 1:6).

 **Ponder:** Faith is not about your ability to hold onto God; it is about God's commitment to hold onto you. Just as God walked between the sacrifices alone, He takes full responsibility for the promises He has made to your life.

 **Practical Application:** Abram had to drive away the birds of prey that tried to consume his offering. Today, identify one bird of prey: a distraction, a doubt, or a negative influence that is trying to steal your peace or hinder your obedience, and intentionally remove it from your focus.

 **Prayer:** Lord, thank You for being my Shield and my Great Reward. Forgive me for looking at my limitations instead of Your power. Strengthen my heart to obey You even when the path is unclear and help me rest in the assurance that You are faithful to finish what You started. Amen