

**With All Your Heart**

## Who Can You Trust?

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Week 7

Deuteronomy 13:1-5, 17:14-20, 18:18-22

**1. Who are some of the people that you trust? Why do you trust them?**

At times, we all have to trust people. You trust banks with your money, babysitters with your kids, and pilots to fly planes. You trust doctors, nurses, and surgeons with your health, and mechanics to fix your car. But do you trust politicians and government leaders? News reports? Social media? Artificial Intelligence (AI)? We can't trust everyone--some ideas, and some people, are very dangerous. We're constantly being lied to. But we crave truth. Deep down, we're thinking, "Would someone just be honest with me and tell me what's real?"

So how does the book of Deuteronomy answer the question "Who Can You Trust?" Read Deuteronomy 18:21-22.

If someone predicted the future, the test of a true prophet was 100% accuracy. Not 50% or even 90%. If a prediction was truly from God, it was never wrong. Some fortune-tellers work in little backroom shops. But if their predictions were always accurate, they would have offices on Wall Street predicting stock futures, or in Las Vegas telling people how to bet. According to Deuteronomy 18, if someone's predictions didn't come true all the time, they were false prophets.

**2. How would you respond if someone was claiming to predict the future? Would you quickly dismiss it, quickly believe it, or test it to see if it might be true?**

And earlier in that same chapter, Moses gives another test. What is the source of their information? Did this message come from God, or from an evil source? Read Deuteronomy 18:10-12.

If someone claims to speak for God and make predictions about the future, ask . . . Are their words 100% accurate? Did this information come from God, or from the evil one? We're in a spiritual battle with real forces of evil. [Ephesians 6:11-12](#).

In Deuteronomy chapter 13, we find a third test. What are they telling you to do with this information? Do they draw you closer to God, or pull you away from him? Read Deuteronomy 13:1-2.

The sign or wonder takes place. The thing they predicted actually happens. But they use that sign or wonder to say, "Follow other gods." Don't believe them. Jesus warned that false prophets are like wolves in sheep's clothing.

**3. When have you encountered false prophets or false teachers? What was their method or "sign or wonder" to convince people they speak truth? What was the test that helped you know that they were false and to not believe them?**

You can't trust everyone, but you can trust what God says in Scripture. There are many reasons to believe the Bible is true.

- [The people in the Bible are real](#). In Israel, you can see the remains of the palace and fortifications built by King Herod at Masada and Herodium. In Egypt, you can visit the pyramids built by the Pharaohs. In Greece, you can stand on the Areopagus, and at the base of the Acropolis you can look up at the Parthenon. Think about the courage it took for the apostle Paul to stand there and say, "The God who made heaven and earth doesn't live in temples built by human hands" (Acts 17:34).
- [The problems in the Bible are relatable](#). People faced problems we can relate to. Noah got drunk. Abraham lied. Moses was quick-tempered. So were James and John. Peter was impulsive. Naomi and Ruth grieved the loss of their husbands. David caved in to sexual temptation. Leaders in the early church had personality clashes.

Israel's leaders—especially their kings—messed up over and over again. Many of them were not worthy of trust. Deuteronomy 17 warned what would happen when Israel had a king . . .

*The king, moreover, must not acquire great numbers of horses for himself . . . He must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray. He must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold. (Deuteronomy 17:16-17, NIV)*

These are the very mistakes King Solomon made years later. He married 700 wives. He acquired lots of horses, and silver and gold. So if even a capable king like Solomon messed up, should we just throw up our hands and give up? Can we trust no one? Look what else Moses said Israel's king should do.

*When he takes the throne of his kingdom, he is to write for himself on a scroll a copy of this law, taken from that of the Levitical priests. It is to be with him, and he is to read it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the Lord his God and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees and not consider himself better than his fellow Israelites and turn from the law to the right or to the left. (Deuteronomy 17:18-20)*

- The principles in the Bible are practical.

Take the Ten Commandments as an example. God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses back in Exodus 20. But when Moses came down from Mt. Sinai, the people were already breaking the commandments and worshiping idols. Moses was so angry, he threw down the stone tablets and broke them. So, he went back up the mountain, and God gave him another set of the same laws.

Remember, “Deuteronomy” means “second law” or “repetition of the law.” Sometimes the Lord has to say things over and over again to get our attention. 38 years after God gave the 10 commandments, Moses repeated them again in Deuteronomy 5.

But the Bible is more than a rule book. The main reason we can trust God's written Word is because of its central character, the Living Word.

- You can trust Jesus Christ

This year, our E91 church staff read and discussed a book by Dr. Henry Cloud called *Trust*. We want to be faithful, trustworthy leaders. None of us are perfect. But we serve a perfect Lord.

Dr. Cloud says there are 5 essentials of trust:

- (1) Understanding . . . Does the person really “get” you and your needs?
- (2) Motive or intent . . . Are they for you—acting in your best interests, not just their own?
- (3) Ability . . . Can they deliver what they promise?
- (4) Character . . . Are they honest, reliable, and consistent?
- (5) Track record . . . Have they demonstrated these qualities over time through their actions?

You can find all 5 of these qualities in Jesus Christ.

**4. Do you believe the Bible is trustworthy? Why or why not?**

**5. Which of the 5 Essentials of Trust challenges you the most, and how might growing in that area help you trust Jesus more?**

Back in Deuteronomy chapter 18 there's a Messianic prophecy that tells about a prophet like Moses—actually, someone far greater than Moses. Read Deuteronomy 18:15, 18-19.

For centuries, the Jewish people looked for the Messiah—this “Prophet like Moses” who would speak God’s truth.

When Jesus taught, John’s Gospel says . . . “On hearing his words, some of the people said, ‘Surely this man is the Prophet’” (John 7:40, NIV). In the book of Acts, Peter and Stephen specifically applied Deuteronomy 18 to Jesus Christ. The writer of Hebrews said . . . “Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses” (Hebrews 3:3, NIV).

You can trust Jesus Christ. He doesn’t just tell you the truth, He IS the truth. Other religious leaders say, “This is the truth as far as I perceive it.” But Jesus says, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. Follow me.” He said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31-32).

**6. When competing voices offer different version of truth, what helps you remain anchored in Jesus?**

Ways that you can apply the lessons from Deuteronomy:

- Ask the Lord to heal your “trust wounds.” Maybe you have been hurt by someone you trusted. A spouse, a parent, a boss, a friend. Ask the Lord to heal you and help you grow. Don’t be bitter but be discerning.
- Ask the Lord to help you be discerning and trustworthy. Don’t be naïve. Be careful what you believe and who you believe. Be like a sponge (soak up good teaching) but also be like a filter (filter out the bad stuff). The apostle Paul said . . . “Do not quench the Spirit. Do not treat prophecies with contempt but test them all; hold on to what is good, reject every kind of evil” (1 Thessalonians 5:19-22, NIV).

- Be a person others can count on. Keep your promises. Be a faithful friend, a reliable employee, a trustworthy son or daughter, a faithful spouse. And don't be afraid to admit it when you mess up. Trust actually increases when we admit our mistakes.
- Learn to lean. We all need to lean on something. Don't lean on a broken cane (politics, economics, manmade ideology). Don't just trust yourself! It's physically impossible to lean on yourself. Lean on the Lord. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5, NIV).

**7. What next step will you take to put your trust in Jesus and become more careful about where and who you place your trust?**