

“Healthy Relationships” series

Week 6: Trustworthiness

July 5, 2026

Genesis 41:37 The plan seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his officials. 38 So Pharaoh asked them, “Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God ?” 39 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. 40 You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you.” 41 So Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.” 42 Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph’s finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. 43 He had him ride in a chariot as his second-in-command, and people shouted before him, “Make way !” Thus he put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt. 44 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I am Pharaoh, but without your word no one will lift hand or foot in all Egypt.”

Introduction

- We are in a series called “Healthy relationships – God’s design for living alongside others.”
- We all have relationships and since God designed us for relationships to bless us and others we want to explore what it looks like to build and maintain healthy relationships. Not perfect relationships but relationships that can lead us towards fullness and joy.
- So far in this series, we have examined several things that characterize healthy relationships.
- One, in healthy relationships, people begin with themselves. They want to know and understand their own thoughts, personalities, sin patterns and more. They are listening to the Holy Spirit who counsels them on what needs to change in them.
- Two, in healthy relationships, each person lives as a servant. They look for ways to leverage themselves for the benefit of the other person.
- Three, in healthy relationships, each party intentionally sacrifices for the other person. They prioritize setting aside their own rights and preferences for the benefit of the other person.
- Four, in healthy relationships, people strive for redemptive communication, where they prioritize listening to the other person, and speaking with grace and truth.
- We have two more that we will be covering before we wrap up this series. Today, we are going to discuss trust.
- I want you to think of someone you consider trustworthy. Someone that you feel comfortable that if you had to rely on them, you could. You trust them.
- Why? What makes you trust them?
- Now I want you to pick someone you don’t trust. You might even like them, but you do not trust them.
- Again, why? What wouldn’t you trust them?
- Trust matters in any relationship. In the most healthy relationships both parties trust each other. They believe in the other person, in their motives, in their decisions. They don’t expect perfection but they don’t expect them to act contrary to the best interests of the relationship. Most of us would agree with this.
- But if I showed up here this morning and told you that in order to have a healthy relationship you need to practice trusting others, you might object, and rightly so.
- “They have broken trust.”
- “They don’t deserve my trust.”
- “You don’t know what they did to me in the past.”
- “I trust them in some areas, but not in others.”

- Trust can be broken. It can take time and effort to repair or develop. That's a whole lot learning, counseling and practice if that is the case. So that's not our focus.
- Let's go back to what we said at the beginning. In any relationship, what do we control? That's right, ourselves. We let God work on what's in our little circle. In healthy relationships there is trust, but the actions of others can affect trusting others can be difficult, we're going to keep our focus in the circle. That means I need to **live in a trustworthy manner**.
- Since the only one we control is us, we need to practice being people worthy of the trust of others.
- Maybe I would say it this way: **Is the behavior or words or actions or attitude or heart that I expect from them reflecting in me?**
- I want to focus this morning on a well-known person from Scripture to help us examine this idea of living as trustworthy. A person who learned to be trustworthy, and did not give up on it, even when it did not immediately help him.

Main Sermon Text

- Our story begins in Genesis 37.
Genesis 37:2 This is the account of Jacob's family line. Joseph, a young man of seventeen, was tending the flocks with his brothers, the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives, and he brought their father a bad report about them. 3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe for him. 4 When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him.
- Joseph was the 11th of 12 brothers. That means he was a lot younger than many of his brothers. At 17, his brothers probably ranged from early twenties to thirties or even forties.
- Joseph was the favorite. And because of it, he kind of became his father's snitch. He told his dad the bad stuff his brothers did. Their mistrust of him grew into hatred. To make it worse, he had dreams about how his brothers and even his father would bow down to him and gladly shared this, which did little to endear him to his family. He was kind of arrogant.
- If you know the story, you know this did not end well.
- One day when Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers:
37:18 But they saw him in the distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him. 19 "Here comes that dreamer!" they said to each other. 20 "Come now, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns and say that a ferocious animal devoured him. Then we'll see what comes of his dreams."
- They are ready to kill him, but his oldest brother Reuben was able to talk them out of killing Joseph, and instead they found a Midianite caravan traveling to Egypt and sold Joseph to them. Out of their hair. Gone for good.
- Joseph's behavior has, justly or unjustly, landed him in another country, as a slave.
- Here, God shaped Joseph and his character. We see a pattern develop that characterized the rest of Joseph's life. Joseph worked hard in Potiphar's house. He worked with honesty and integrity and excellence.
39:6 So Potiphar left everything he had in Joseph's care; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate.
- Potiphar basically checked out. He allowed Joseph to run everything. He trusted him, a foreigner, to run his household. To manage people, not bankrupt his finances, to keep his affairs in order.
- Potiphar's wife made a play for Joseph. She tried to get him to sleep with her. To cheat on her husband. Joseph refused and it did not end well. She was so angry, she created a scene and manipulated events to lie to her husband that Joseph had come on to her.

39:20 Joseph's master took him and put him in prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined.

- He had acted rightly. He had not violated Potiphar's trust. He had made good choices. In other words, he lived a trustworthy life and it got him thrown in prison. With even fewer options than before. He was there for the rest of his life or until someone intervened.
- But Joseph's character was still being refined.

39:22 So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. 23 The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.

- Once again, Joseph worked hard, with excellence, and the warden noticed and ended up trusting Joseph enough to put him in charge of much of the prison. Despite his actions, he languished in jail for years.
- Eventually, Joseph got the opportunity to go in front of Pharaoh because the Pharaoh had dreams and the cupbearer remembered Joseph had interpreted his dreams in prison. He is literally rushed from the jail, with a quick shave, shower and change of clothes.
- After Joseph interpreted the dreams, he made recommendations for how to handle it and Pharaoh was so impressed, he put Joseph in charge of the country and all its resources to handle the upcoming seven-year famine.

41:41 So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt."

- Through all the ups and downs of Joseph's life, he lived the life of someone who was trustworthy. Time after time in his relationships and work, people came to trust him. They gave him responsibility. They let him do things without detailed oversight because they knew he would not take advantage of them or leverage his privileges for his own benefit.
- I notice a few things in this story that can help direct our own pursuit of living and being trustworthy in our relationships.

I. Trustworthiness begins with integrity.

- A person with no integrity is not someone we trust.
- Remember, this about healthy relationships. The healthiest relationships have a broad base of trust. It's not trusting someone in certain situations or areas, but not as a whole.
- There are two parts to integrity as it comes to trustworthiness.

A. Living undivided

- The word "Integrity" comes from a Latin root meaning "wholeness" or "completeness." This means that a person with integrity is not divided, compromised, or internally inconsistent.
- This means living life in a manner consistent with what we say we believe.
- Many (the majority of) people change their beliefs to match their behavior. They want to do certain things or live a certain way and so they justify their behavior by what they believe.
- "I am loyal but not when they treat me that way."
- "Oh, I wouldn't cheat on my partner, but looking ain't cheating."
- "When the government starts taxing us properly, then I'll report all my income."
- "Sexual purity is an old fashioned thing – God just wants me to be happy."
- "I probably shouldn't be telling you this, but . . ."
- Integrity says, "I know what is right and true, and I will endeavor to live according to what I know."
- Consider Joseph's actions when he had the opportunity to compromise his integrity and trustworthiness with Potiphar's wife.

39:8 But he refused. "With me in charge," he told her, "my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. 9 No one is greater in

this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?"

- Joseph's actions were driven by his belief in and relationship with God.
- It is not enough to just be undivided. Some people live consistently evil. They can be counted on to look out for themselves first. Someone who can be trusted to do the wrong thing is NOT trustworthy. That's why it also involves:

B. Living unselfishly.

- We trust people who have our best interests at heart. They keep to their commitments, even when it's not convenient. They show up when they said they would. Do the things they committed to.
- Consider what we've learned these past weeks.
- Live as a servant.
- Make sacrifices for others.
- Communicate redemptively.
- These are all focused on others.
- To be trustworthy in a relationship begins with integrity, and then extends that integrity over time.

II. Trustworthiness requires consistency.

- Consistent application of those godly principles. Consider:
- When Joseph was a slave to Potiphar, he acted out of integrity – he got promoted to head of household.
- When Potiphar's wife tries to seduce him, he lived with integrity – and he got thrown in jail.
- When Joseph was in jail, he served with integrity – got promoted to position of influence in jail
- When Joseph was given care of prisoners, he acted with integrity – and he was forgotten.
- When Joseph was brought before Pharaoh – he responded with integrity – he got promoted to second in command in Egypt.
- When his brothers showed up to beg for food, he treated them with integrity – and God used him to save his family.
- If we want to live as trustworthy people, it means living out godly principles consistently:
- **In all circumstances** – our circumstances don't determine whether I respond rightly or wrongly. In jail or on the throne – should not change what I do.
- **In public and private** – whether governing the household or alone with Potiphar's wife. How I act at work should not be totally different from how I live at home. What I say to others should not be at odds with my private conversations.
- **Over time** – this is not a one-week act. It is repeated behavior over and over and over. This is particularly true if you are rebuilding broken trust. It is going to take time and repetition.
- Because doing these things consistently, in all circumstances, in public and private, over time, takes a great deal of effort.
- There is one more thing I see in Joseph's life.

III. Trustworthiness is anchored in trust of God.

- Joseph did not hide who he was from others.
- When confronted by Potiphar's wife, he was clear he would not sin because of his belief in God and his ways.
- When in jail and given dreams to interpret, Joseph is clear that it is only God who could give them the answer they desired.

40:8 "We both had dreams," they answered, "but there is no one to interpret them." Then Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me your dreams."

- In front of Pharaoh, he played down his own ability to point Pharaoh to God.

41:16 "I cannot do it," Joseph replied to Pharaoh, "but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires."

- Pharaoh took note of this transparency

41:38 So Pharaoh asked them, "Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?" 39 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you."

- Joseph was not trying to be someone who he wasn't. He knew God was in charge, and whether it led to favor for himself or not, that's how he lived his life.
- This is why repentance and confession are critical in building trust in healthy relationships.
- Someone who is proud, never admits their faults, sins or mistakes, is truly difficult to trust.
- People we trust are not perfect people, but humble and transparent people, and that only happens when we anchor ourselves in God.
- This all raises an interesting question: Can I be a trustworthy person even if I have difficulty trusting others? The answer is YES. Because of our heavenly Father.

Psalm 145:13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The LORD is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does.

- We trust God because of what he has said AND what he has done.
- He always keeps his promises. He does not change his mind
- He acts on our behalf and always has.
- Jesus is the ultimate expression of the trustworthiness of God.

Conclusion

- A relationship that is growing in health is growing in trust.
- And since the only one we can control in our relationship growth is us, we must **live in a trustworthy manner**.
- Be people of integrity
- Live this way consistently
- Anchored in a trust of God who is absolutely trustworthy
- I love the story of Joseph because what he lived was not easy. He had slavery and jail and ended up as ruler. But his ultimate test was when, eventually, his brothers, the very ones who sold him into slavery, separated him from his family, showed up to buy food.
- And in that moment, when he could have abandoned all those principles to seek retribution, and would have been justified in doing so, instead, offered grace.

45:8 "So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt."

- Being trustworthy is not for the faint of heart. It is not for wimps. It is a high calling.
- If we are going to build our own trustworthiness, we will need to do so when it is sometimes inconvenient to do so. When it costs us to live that way.
- How do we practice this during the weeks ahead?
- And as you interact in your relationships, ask:
- **Is the behavior or words or actions or attitude or heart that I expect from them reflecting in me?**
- Ask God to do that work in you.