



# WITHIN: GOD'S STORY OF SAVING OUR SOULS

## Lesson 6: How Does Trust Protect Our Relationships with God and People?

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### Objective

Students will understand that trust is the foundation that holds their lives steady and that true stability comes from placing the full weight of their lives on Jesus, the solid Rock. Through Peter's story and Jesus' teaching in Matthew 7:24–26, students will reflect on their own trust struggles, recognize how fear can shake their foundation, and discover that trust can be rebuilt through relationship with Christ—not performance. **(You can choose to spell the capital words throughout the text for additional practice.)**

### Featured Scripture

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. **Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting rock.** Isaiah 26:3-4 ESV

### Lesson

We all deal with TRUST issues at some point, and that's unsettling. Maybe it's trusting a teacher to really see you—not just your performance, your behavior, or your struggles—but your effort and your heart. Maybe it's trusting a parent to actually understand what you're feeling instead of just managing what they see on the outside.

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Maybe it's trusting a friend not to turn on you when it's inconvenient. Or maybe it's trusting God when life feels confusing, UNFAIR, or nothing like you thought it would be.

So what is trust, really?

Trust is that settled confidence that someone will be consistent, keep their promises, and actually come through. It's the feeling that something will hold when you put your weight on it. Trust is foundational and reliable. It's built way beneath the visible parts of your life—beneath your choices, your relationships, your confidence. When trust is STRONG, you feel stable. When it's shaky, everything feels uncertain.

When Jesus stepped into history 2,000 years ago, He walked into a world full of skeptical, beat-down people who were always bracing for the next bad thing. And what did He do? He started rebuilding trust. Over and over, His message was simple: Your Father in Heaven cares. You can trust Him with your whole life.

Philippians 2:6–8 says that Jesus, though He existed in the form of God, emptied Himself and became HUMAN. He stepped into vulnerability. Into pressure. Into temptation. He knows what it feels like to be misunderstood, stressed, and exhausted. Yet He trusted the Father completely and obeyed Him. He didn't just tell us to trust—He MODELED it.

Jesus often used PARABLES—earthly, everyday stories with heavenly meanings—to reveal truth to those who would want to understand it. He talked about things like dirt, rivers, trees, and rocks to paint a picture of His Kingdom ways. At one point Jesus said, “Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock” (Matthew 7:24, NLT). And that image wasn't random. Before His ministry, Jesus likely worked as a carpenter, but more so like a builder of stone structures. Not just a guy sanding wood in a shop—but someone shaping and laying heavy stones to build houses that could last for generations.

He continues, “Anyone who hears my teaching and doesn't OBEY it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand” (Matthew 7:26, NLT). Same storm. Same rain. Different foundation.

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So here's a question for you: when pressure hits your life—drama, disappointment, anxiety, inadequacy—what are you standing on? What actually holds you steady?

### SPELLER QUESTIONS:

1. What is it called when you feel confident that something or someone is reliable?

**Answer:** Trust

2. What is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning called? **Answer:** Parable

3. What is the difference between rock and sand in Jesus' example of building a house?

**Answer:** Rock is stable, sand is shifting

4. What does it take for you to know you can trust someone? **Answer:** (Student reflection; e.g. They keep their promises, and they make me feel understood. )

5. What storm feels most real in your life right now? **Answer:** (Student reflection e.g. A personal trial.)

Now enter Peter.

PETER was one of Jesus' closest friends and disciples. His original name was Simon (Shimon), which comes from the word *shema*, meaning "to hear" or "to listen." (Sound familiar? The **Shema prayer** is one we have been referencing throughout this series, and it is all about **loving God with your heart, soul, mind, and strength.**) But Jesus gives Simon a new name that moves him from a posture of curiosity to a holding a SOLID stance: "Peter"—which means "ROCK" or "stone."

Here's the interesting part: Peter was anything but steady at first. He was passionate but impulsive. Bold but stubborn. Deeply sincere but constantly wrestling with doubt. He wasn't even sure that Jesus was fully able to be trusted. Jesus didn't rename him based on who he was in that moment. He named him based on who he was BECOMING.

Have you ever thought about that? That Jesus might see something in you that you haven't grown into yet?

Trusting Jesus isn't just agreeing with Him. It's putting the full weight of your life on Him. And Peter had to learn that the hard way.

Jesus once took His disciples to Caesarea Philippi—a place filled with pagan worship, idols carved into a massive rock cliff, and a deep cave people called the “Gates of Hell.” [Read Matthew 16:13-20]. It was not the kind of place devoted Jewish religious people should hang out at. And right there, in front of that giant rock face and all those false gods and worship and sacrifices being offered up to them, Jesus asked, **“Who do YOU say that I am?”**



Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” This was a throw down in front of all these other gods who were really demons. He is God, and not them. Jesus IS God and He will defeat all that is bringing spiritual death to humanity.

And Jesus responds by affirming Peter's name and Jesus' claim: on this “rock”—this CONFESSIO*N* of who Jesus is—He would build His church, and even the gates of death and hell would not overcome it.

The setting matters. In front of literal rock and symbolic darkness, Jesus announces an unshakable Kingdom. And Peter is called “Rock” before he ever proves he deserves it.

But not long after that bold moment, everything falls apart. Jesus is arrested. Chaos erupts. Peter panics. The same guy who just publicly declared Jesus as Messiah DENIES even knowing Him. Three times.

Have you ever had a moment where your fear overpowered your faith? Where you believed one thing in theory—but acted differently when pressure hit?

Peter's trust fractures. He doesn't just lose trust in the situation. He likely loses trust in himself. Shame sets in. And here's what we learn: being called a rock does not mean

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being unbreakable. It means being tested. Trust is often most fragile when we are afraid.

But the story doesn't end there.

After the resurrection, Jesus meets Peter again. Three times He asks, **"Do you love me?"**—mirroring the three denials. It's not a pop quiz. It's HEALING. Each question gently restores what fear had broken. And only after restoring relationship does Jesus say, **"Feed my sheep."** Jesus wants Peter to shepherd and disciple others in His Name. Can you imagine how it would have felt to know that Jesus still trusted in *you*?

Notice this: Peter is rebuilt through love, not performance. Jesus doesn't say, "Prove yourself." He says, "Stay connected to me. Build on Me."

Peter goes on to lead courageously for decades. The impulsive fisherman becomes a STEADY leader. Eventually he writes in 1 Peter 2:4–6 (TPT):

***"So keep coming to him who is the Living Stone—though he was rejected and discarded by men but chosen by God and is priceless in God's sight. Come and be his 'living stones'... And whoever believes in him will certainly not be disappointed."***

Peter learned something powerful: the only way to become steady is to stay connected to the true Rock. And you can trust you won't be disappointed.

So what does this mean for you?

### **SPELLER QUESTIONS:**

1. What was Peter's original name? **Answer:** Simon
2. What does the name "Peter" mean? **Answer:** Rock/Stone
3. What does it mean to "put the full weight of your life" on Jesus? **Answer:** Trust in Him, rely on His solid foundation.

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4. How do you feel that Jesus sees you as being more than you are today? **Answer:** (Student reflection; e.g. He calls me strong when I feel weak.)

5. These days, do you relate more to Simon (learning to listen) or Peter (trying to be strong and stable in your convictions)? **Why? Answer:** (Student reflection e.g. “I am more like Simon right now, learning to listen and understand.”)

## Context Clues

### NAME MEANINGS AND NAME CHANGES

In the Bible, having your name changed was a really big deal. It wasn't just about picking a new label—it showed a new identity, a new purpose, or a change in the way God wanted you to live. Names in Hebrew culture carried meaning. They weren't just what people called you; your name often reflected your character, your life story, or even the way your life would unfold.

For example:

- **Abram** → **Abraham**: Abram meant “Exalted Father,” but God renamed him Abraham, which means “Father of Many Peoples.” This change came when God promised Abraham a son and a family line that would become many nations. His identity shifted because of God's promise and plan.
- **Sarai** → **Sarah**: Sarai's name changed to Sarah, meaning “Princess,” when God promised she would be the mother of nations. Her new name reflected her new role and the blessing God gave her.
- **Jacob** → **Israel**: Jacob originally meant “Heel Grabber” or “Deceiver” because he had tricked his brother Esau to get ahead. But after wrestling with an angel (Genesis 32:22–32) and learning about God's blessing, his name was changed to Israel, meaning “He Fights with God.” His new name reminded him that he could live differently—by God's power, not by his own schemes.
- **Simon** → **Peter**: In the New Testament, Jesus renamed Simon “Peter,” which means “Rock” (Matthew 16:15–19). This wasn't because Simon was perfect—he was impulsive, bold, and sometimes stubborn—but because God saw who he

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could become. Peter's new name symbolized the strong, steady leader he would grow into, and it was tied to his confession that Jesus is the Messiah.

Name changes in the Bible usually happen after a person meets God in a powerful way. It could be a promise, a challenge, or a moment of revelation that changes their character, purpose, or identity. When God meets a person, their life—and their story—changes forever.

## Then & Now

**Biblical archaeology** is a specialized field of archaeology focused on uncovering and studying the material remains of ancient civilizations in the lands and time periods described in the Bible—such as buildings, tools, inscriptions, pottery, and settlements—to better understand the historical and cultural context in which the biblical events took place. It seeks to recover and interpret evidence from the **Ancient Near East and Holy Land** that relates to the people, places, and practices mentioned in Scripture.

Biblical archaeology matters because it helps ground the stories of Scripture in **real places, real objects, and real human lives**, reminding us that the events of the Bible didn't happen in a vacuum but in space and time. By uncovering ancient homes, tools, and city remains, archaeology connects the biblical text with the **material world**—the actual contexts in which people like the disciples lived and worked, ate and fished, worshiped and traveled. Dr. Clifford Wilson, former director of the Australian Institute of Archaeology said, "I know of no finding in archaeology that's properly confirmed which is in opposition to the Scriptures. The Bible is the most accurate history textbook the world has ever seen."

Beyond mere facts, digging into the past makes the Bible come alive—engaging our curiosity, grounding our faith in history and geography, and even building fellowship among those who explore these ancient worlds together.

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## Memorize: Write this on your heart

“And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple.” 1 Peter 2:5a NLT

## Go Deeper (Optional)

- Watch Bible Project’s “The Two Houses” (2:59)  
<https://bibleproject.com/videos/matthew-7-24-27-two-houses/>
- Watch “Christ’s Kingdom Stands: Caesarea Philippi” (4:09)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEQyABNS6Cg>
- Listen to the hymn, “The Solid Rock” (4:53)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WoPcyr2oYhg&list=RDWoPcyr2oYhg&start\\_radio=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WoPcyr2oYhg&list=RDWoPcyr2oYhg&start_radio=1)
- Read the story behind the hymn “The Solid Rock”  
<https://www.staugustine.com/story/lifestyle/faith/2015/09/10/story-behind-song-solid-rock/16264474007/>
- Watch “The Importance of Biblical Archaeology (4:44)  
[https://youtu.be/Kiix\\_ih2B8U?si=YtnsRVvMkt3WVVZT](https://youtu.be/Kiix_ih2B8U?si=YtnsRVvMkt3WVVZT)

## Options for Expression (Assignment for Open Spellers)

Choose **one** (or more) of the following ways to demonstrate your understanding of trust:

- **WHAT’S IN A NAME?** To the Hebrews, names held distinct meaning. Look up the meaning of the name your parents gave to you and ask them why they chose that name. Write a report about how your name fits you, or if you think God wants to give you a second “spiritual” name that fits how He sees you. What would it be?
  - Look up your name on this website: <https://www.behindthename.com/>
- **Poem / Acrostic / Song Lyrics**

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- Write a poem or song about trust and rocks.
  
  - **What Holds Me Steady Writing Prompts. Make a list of what can build a solid foundation of trust:**
    - A person I trust
    - A promise from Scripture
    - A truth I come back to
    - A place I feel calm
    - A strength I have
    - A reminder I need when afraid

## Spelling Words to Practice This Week

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|-----------|----------------|
| 1. TRUST  | 11. FEAR       |
| 2. ROCK   | 12. FIRM       |
| 3. SAND   | 13. STRONG     |
| 4. STORM  | 14. STONE      |
| 5. PEACE  | 15. FOUNDATION |
| 6. FAITH  | 16. CONFESSION |
| 7. HOPE   | 17. MESSIAH    |
| 8. LOVE   | 18. DISCIPLE   |
| 9. BUILD  | 19. RESTORE    |
| 10. HOUSE | 20. PRESSURE   |