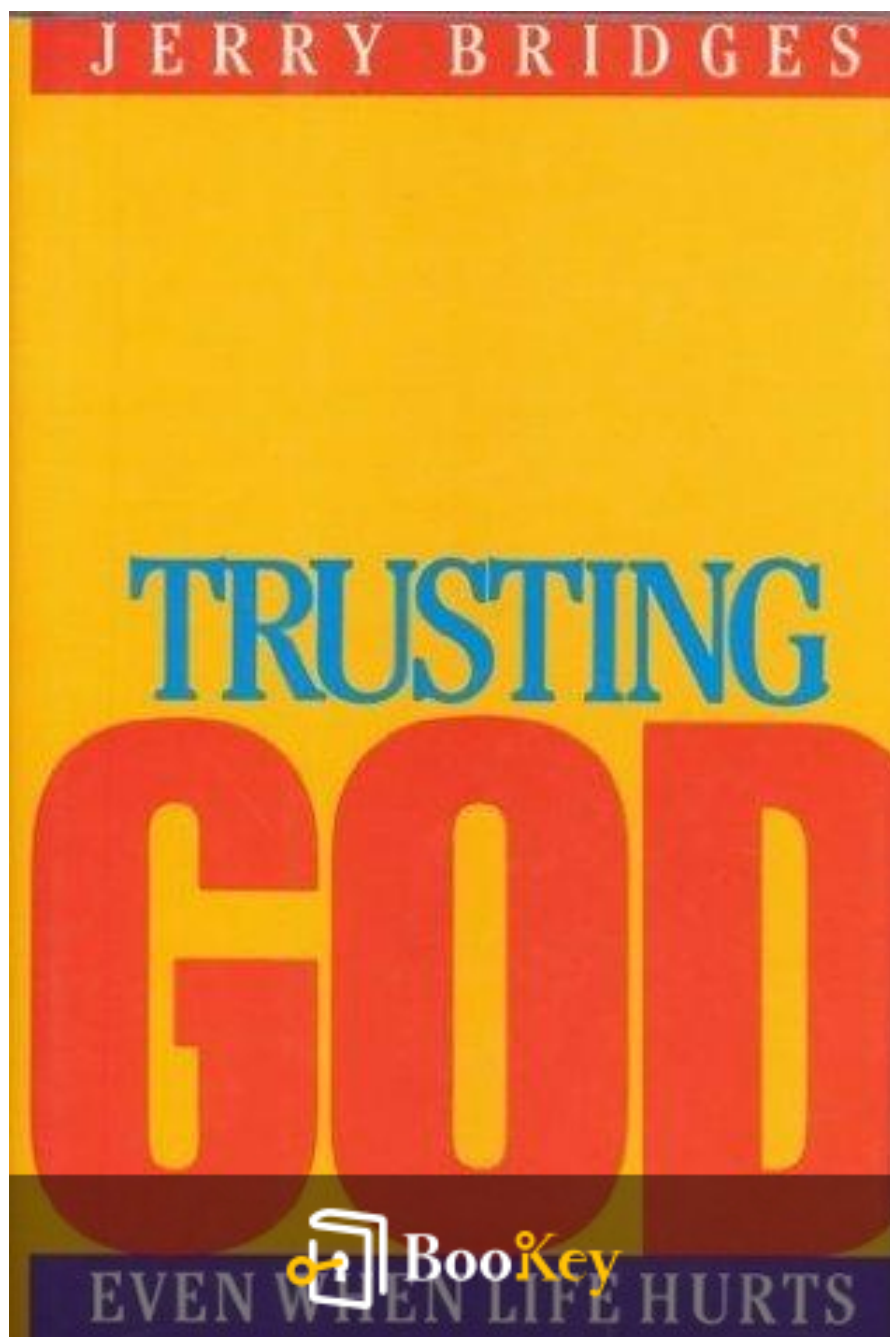


Trusting God PDF (Limited Copy)

Jerry Bridges



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Trusting God Summary

Finding peace through faith in God's sovereignty.

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About the book

In "Trusting God," Jerry Bridges invites readers to explore the profound and transformative power of faith in the face of life's uncertainties and hardships. With a blend of theological insight and practical wisdom, Bridges encourages us to relinquish our need for control and to surrender our worries to God's perfect sovereignty. By weaving together personal anecdotes and scriptural truths, he illustrates how trusting in God's character and promises can anchor our souls, offering hope and peace amidst life's storms. As you delve into this compelling book, you will discover not just the reasons to trust God, but also the incredible freedom and joy that come from fully embracing Him as the ultimate authority in every aspect of your life.

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About the author

Jerry Bridges was an esteemed American Christian author and speaker, best known for his insightful writings on the nature of God's grace and the importance of trusting Him in all aspects of life. Born on December 4, 1929, Bridges served for over 50 years with The Navigators, a Christian organization that emphasizes spiritual growth and discipleship. His commitment to deepening the understanding of God's character and the believer's relationship with Him is evident in his numerous works, including the widely-read book "Trusting God", where he explores the foundational principles of faith, sovereignty, and divine purpose. Throughout his career, Bridges combined theological depth with practical application, making complex concepts accessible to a wide audience and encouraging countless individuals to develop a more profound trust in God's plan.

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Chapter 1 Summary: Can You Trust God?

In the first chapter of "Trusting God," Jerry Bridges presents a profound exploration of the human struggle to trust God amidst adversity and personal suffering. He begins by highlighting how tragic events, such as the aftermath of 9/11 and natural disasters like the South Asian tsunami, often lead individuals to profoundly question God's existence and His goodness. The reactions to these calamities reveal a spectrum of belief and disbelief, with many grappling with anger towards God rather than solace in faith.

1. Life's Difficulties: Bridges identifies that adversity comes in many forms, from personal pain to broader societal injustices. Everyone faces challenges, whether from illness, relationship struggles, job loss, or even minor everyday frustrations that can disrupt our peace of mind. He makes it clear that while major tragedies are grievous, even seemingly minor setbacks can cause anxiety and tempt us to ask if we can really trust God.

2. The Question of God's Presence: In moments of personal or collective suffering, believers often question God's care and presence. This inquiry is not limited to significant disasters; it extends to the common struggles of daily life. Bridges encourages readers to acknowledge these feelings but also to evaluate them through the lens of faith.

3. Trust Amidst Adversity: The chapter emphasizes that trust in God is a



critical aspect of the Christian faith, particularly in times of pain. It is suggested that trusting God is often more challenging than straightforward obedience. While the moral directives of God appear clear and rational, trusting God's sovereignty in unclear and painful situations can seem irrational and daunting. The author stresses the necessity of faith, not just obedience, as essential in navigating life's uncertainties.

4. Understanding God's Sovereignty, Wisdom, and Love: Bridges posits that to truly trust God amidst adversity, one must grasp three core truths about His nature: His sovereignty, His infinite wisdom, and His perfect love. He articulates that God is always in control, knows what is best, and desires what is best for us. These attributes should provide comfort, assuring believers that even calamities serve a purpose in the grand tapestry of God's plan.

5. Encouragement through Scripture: The author reinforces that faith comes through the Word of God and understanding biblical truths about God's character is crucial for fostering trust. He points out that genuine knowledge of God leads to a deeper personal relationship, which is vital in times of trouble.

6. A Personal Relationship with God: Ultimately, the chapter concludes by emphasizing the necessity of knowing God intimately. Understanding His name goes beyond mere facts; it involves seeking Him in our pain and



discovering His trustworthiness. This intimate knowledge is foundational for sustaining faith during turbulent times.

Bridges encourages readers to reflect on their personal circumstances that might challenge their faith, prompting self-examination of areas where they struggle to trust God. He invites engagement with the text through journaling, urging readers to recognize God's active guidance in their lives, thus building a stronger foundation for trust.

In summary, this chapter lays the groundwork for exploring the belief that trusting God, particularly in adversity, is not only necessary but transformative, framing it as a key tenet of a resilient faith journey.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Trust Amidst Adversity

Critical Interpretation: Consider the times you've faced hardships, when the world felt heavy, and hope seemed distant. In those moments, think about how difficult it can be to trust in a higher power—especially when life throws curveballs you never anticipated. But imagine if, instead of succumbing to doubt, you chose to lean into your faith, anchoring yourself in the belief that God's sovereignty, wisdom, and love are ever-present, even in pain. Recognizing that each trial serves a purpose in a divine plan can transform your struggle into an opportunity for growth and deeper connection with God. As you reflect on your journey, allow the conviction that true trust arises not from the absence of adversity but through its presence to inspire a resilient spirit within you.

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Chapter 2 Summary: Is God Really in Control?

In Chapter 2 of "Trusting God" by Jerry Bridges, the author delves into the pressing question of whether God is genuinely in control of our lives and the universe. This inquiry becomes particularly poignant when we consider the realities of suffering, tragedy, and the seemingly random nature of events in the world. The chapter aims to affirm the biblical teaching of God's sovereignty, contrasting it with common secular beliefs that diminish His power and authority.

Firstly, Bridges references the perspectives offered by Rabbi Harold Kushner in his widely read book, "When Bad Things Happen to Good People," where Kushner proposes a God who, while good, is not all-powerful. This duality suggests a struggle where God cannot prevent suffering. However, Bridges resolutely counters this view, advocating for the traditional Christian belief in the providence of God—a doctrine that emphasizes His supreme power and His benevolent governance over all creation.

1. God's Sovereignty and Goodness: The author asserts that contrary to popular beliefs that question God's omnipotence and goodness, the Bible consistently upholds that God is both sovereign and benevolent. He presents a succinct definition of God's providence as His unceasing care and absolute rule over creation for His glory and the good of His people. This providence



operates continuously, and nothing, not even the smallest details, escapes God's attention or control.

2. The Nature of God's Action: Bridges elaborates that God's providence is evident not only in His governance of the universe but also in His sustaining power. He relates scripture that emphasizes how all things are sustained by God's will, including the nature around us and every aspect of human life. This means that God is actively involved in all events, big or small, continuously providing for us and governing circumstances each moment.

3. Historical and Scriptural Examples: He cites key biblical figures, such as Paul and David, to illustrate that God's sovereignty extends even to the events of our lives in an intimate and personal way, from our conception to our daily experiences. The will of God shapes our lives beyond mere chance or randomness, reinforcing the belief that there are no accidents in the divine plan.

4. Human Responsibility and Divine Sovereignty: Bridges clarifies that God's control does not negate our human freedom. Though humans exercise free will, their actions do not overpower God's sovereign will. Proverbs and Lamentations highlight that while humans may plan their ways, ultimately, it is God's purpose that prevails, reinforcing the idea that divine sovereignty remains intact amidst human decisions.



5. Suffering and Sovereignty: The author acknowledges the pain and heartache that exist in the world and within individual lives, and he does not dismiss these experiences. Instead, he emphasizes that while suffering is real and often deeply painful, it is also encompassed within God's sovereign plan—where both His glory and our good are interwoven. This comprehensive view reminds believers that even in trials, there is purpose and divine oversight.

Bridges concludes by confronting the challenge of recognizing God's sovereignty when we encounter suffering. While it may be difficult to reconcile painful experiences with the belief in an all-good and all-powerful God, he insists that trust in God must be rooted in scripture rather than our circumstances. The author argues that divine providence assures us that God is unwaveringly present in both times of joy and sorrow, guiding us toward His glorious purpose without frustrations or limitations.

In summary, this chapter offers a robust affirmation of God's sovereign control over all creation, challenging the notion of randomness in life events. Bridges encourages readers to embrace the truth that God's providence incorporates both His governance and sustenance, assuring that even through suffering, His love and purpose remain at work. Trust in God's providential care is paramount, as it allows believers to navigate the complexities of life with hope and confidence.



Critical Thinking

Key Point: The Assurance of God's Sovereignty

Critical Interpretation: Imagine facing a moment in your life where everything feels overwhelmingly chaotic and uncertain. In such times, remember that God's sovereignty is a steadfast anchor—He is not a distant observer but an actively involved sovereign who governs the intricacies of your life. This realization can inspire you to trust deeply in His benevolent oversight, knowing that nothing escapes His attention, even when circumstances seem daunting. Embracing the truth that your struggles are woven into His divine plan can foster a sense of peace and purpose, prompting you to lean into your faith rather than succumb to despair. By acknowledging God's unwavering control, you empower yourself to move forward with hope, knowing that every twist and turn is purposeful under His watchful eye.



Chapter 3: God's Sovereignty over People

In this chapter, Jerry Bridges delves into the profound theme of God's sovereignty over all humanity, illustrating how God orchestrates events and influences the hearts of individuals both positively and negatively to fulfill His divine purposes. This exploration is both theological and practical, providing insights into how believers can trust in God's sovereignty amidst the uncertainties of life.

1. The Narrative of Liberation: Bridges begins by presenting a hypothetical yet poignant scenario of oppression, drawing parallels to the Biblical narrative of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. This serves as a backdrop to illustrate God's foresight and provision. When the Israelites were liberated from their harsh circumstances, God ensured they would not depart empty-handed. He caused the Egyptians to be favorable towards them, enabling the Israelites to leave with ample resources despite their previous state of poverty.

2. The Mysterious Action of God: The chapter discusses the divine

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Chapter 4 Summary: God's Power over Nature

In exploring God's dominion over nature, we are confronted with the profound truth that everything in creation, including weather patterns and natural disasters, falls under His sovereign authority. Despite our daily encounters with the forces of nature—be it a simple rainstorm or a catastrophic earthquake—we often perceive these as mere occurrences governed by impersonal natural laws. This outlook diminishes God's role in the world around us. Instead, the Scriptures remind us that it is God, not chance, who orchestrates these events.

1. God's Control Over Nature: The Bible presents God as the ultimate authority over all elements of creation. Verses from Job and Psalms illustrate that weather—whether beneficial or harmful—is intricately connected to God's will. This understanding counters the deistic view of a God who merely set the universe in motion and then stepped back. Instead, God continually governs the universe, regulating its natural laws in accordance with His sovereign plan.

2. Responding to Weather: Our common inclination is to complain about unfavorable weather conditions, which in essence is a complaint against God Himself. This attitude can rob us of peace, which comes from recognizing God's hand in every situation. Embracing our circumstances, whether they are pleasant or challenging, invites us to see God's providential care. Rather



than grumbling, we should cultivate a spirit of gratitude, understanding that God's provisions are meant to serve and sustain all of creation.

3. Understanding Natural Disasters: The occurrence of natural disasters raises difficult questions about God's sovereignty and goodness. While it is natural to wrestle with the suffering these events cause, we should do so with humility, recognizing that God bears responsibility for all circumstances, both good and bad. Despite the tragedies that surface during these times, like during earthquakes or famines, we are reminded in Scripture that God allows such events to fulfill His ultimate purposes.

4. The Nature of Illness: Physical afflictions, such as illness or congenital disabilities, also challenge our understanding of God's sovereignty. Scripture teaches us that God is the source of every affliction, yet this does not mean He delights in our suffering. Rather, these events underscore God's control over our physical bodies and serve purposes beyond our understanding. Trusting God in our struggles means acknowledging His sovereignty while simultaneously grappling with the reality of pain and suffering in a fallen world.

5. The Challenge of Childlessness: The aspect of childlessness continues to be a source of heartache for many couples. The Bible explicitly discusses God's role in conception and fertility, reaffirming that He controls the womb. Understanding this can bring both solace and frustration; our desire

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for children must be balanced with trust in God's loving timing and purposes.

6. Acceptance of God's Will: Trusting God amid adversity involves a deep acceptance of His will. This acceptance is not resignation but a deliberate choice to embrace our circumstances while continuing to seek God in prayer. While we should pray for healing and intervention, we must also recognize that God's plans may not align with our immediate desires. The prophet Habakkuk exemplifies this trust, ultimately submitting to God's greater wisdom even when circumstances appear dire.

In conclusion, to fully trust in God's sovereignty over nature and our lives, we must embrace the biblical teaching that everything occurs under His purview. While we cannot always understand His reasons, we are called to trust in His sovereign goodness and infinite wisdom, knowing He always acts for our ultimate good and His glory.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: God's Control Over Nature

Critical Interpretation: Imagine standing in a rainstorm, feeling the drops on your skin and watching the sky's fury as lightning cracks across the horizon. In that moment, instead of seeing weather as a mere product of nature's whim, intuitively grasp the deeper reality—it's God Himself orchestrating each droplet, commanding the storm with authority. This perspective transforms your experience, shifting from frustration at a ruined picnic to awe at the magnitude of God's dominion. It inspires you to cultivate a heart of gratitude, recognizing that even the harshest weather is part of a purposeful plan crafted by a loving Creator. Embracing this truth instills peace in your soul, reminding you that in every circumstance, divine sovereignty governs, ultimately leading you to greater faith and trust in His perfect design.

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Chapter 5 Summary: God's Sovereignty and Our Responsibility

In exploring the interplay between God's sovereignty and human responsibility, it's essential to recognize the potential pitfalls of misinterpreting these doctrines. By examining the extremes to which some may drift—such as adopting a fatalistic view of sovereignty—it's crucial to understand that God's sovereignty does not absolve us of responsibility.

1. The first principle emphasizes that God's sovereign control should not lead us to a passive acceptance of fate. Several examples illustrate this. A student blaming God for a failed exam exemplifies the erroneous assumption that God's will negates personal responsibility. Similarly, a careless driver may excuse an accident by attributing it to divine sovereignty. Such attitudes fail to recognize that while God is sovereign, human actions and diligence significantly impact our circumstances.

2. The second principle relates sovereignty to prayer. The knowledge of God's control should motivate believers to pray rather than induce anxiety or complacency. For instance, in Acts 4, Peter and John exemplify reliance on God's power while taking action through prayer in face of threats. Prayer, as a form of expressing trust in God's ability to act, aligns with our acknowledgment of His sovereignty, and should not be considered secondary but foundational to our relationship with God.



3. The responsibility to act wisely is the third principle. Prudence requires us to take necessary precautions and make informed decisions while acknowledging that God ordains the outcomes. David's experiences while fleeing from Saul and Paul's prudent actions during the shipwreck on the way to Rome reflect this balance. Both figures displayed confidence in God's promises while actively taking measures to secure their safety and fulfill their missions.

4. Relatedly, the fourth principle illustrates that God's sovereignty does not negate our need for wise counsel and discernment. In the narrative of Nehemiah rebuilding Jerusalem's walls under threat, the combination of prayer and action—evident in his strategy to post guards while praying—highlights the necessity of combining divine reliance with practical steps.

5. The fifth principle asserts the importance of maintaining a posture of dependence on God across all circumstances. Both during dire situations and mundane activities, our reliance on God's providence is essential, as seen in the example of the Israelites in the desert, learning to trust in God for daily sustenance.

6. However, while we acknowledge our dependence on God, we are also called to act diligently. Scriptures affirm that laziness leads to failure, thus



emphasizing that God's sovereignty does not serve as a justification for negligence. Awareness of our responsibilities, as defined by divine instruction, must guide our actions.

7. Finally, in addressing our failures, it’s vital to understand that God's sovereign plan includes our errors. The story of Esther illustrates that although human actions can sometimes appear to derail plans, God's wisdom encompasses and transcends our shortcomings, ultimately fulfilling His purposes.

In conclusion, the relationship between God’s sovereignty and human responsibility is not at odds but rather a dynamic interaction that fosters both trust and action. By embracing our responsibility within the framework of divine sovereignty, we align ourselves with a biblical worldview that honors God's authority while empowering our agency. Emphasizing prayer, prudence, and accountability will enable a robust and fruitful faith practice, where both divine intervention and human efforts work harmoniously toward God’s purposes.

Principle	Description
1. Sovereignty vs. Passivity	God's sovereignty should not lead to a fatalistic acceptance of fate. Personal responsibility is required, as seen in examples of blaming God for personal failures.
2. Sovereignty and Prayer	Knowledge of God's control should motivate prayer and action. Prayer aligns with acknowledging God's sovereignty and is

Principle	Description
	foundational to our relationship with Him.
3. Wise Action	Believers should act wisely and take precautions while trusting God for outcomes, as seen in David's and Paul's experiences.
4. Need for Counsel	God's sovereignty does not eliminate the need for wise counsel and practical steps, demonstrated by Nehemiah's strategy in rebuilding Jerusalem.
5. Dependence on God	Maintain dependence on God in all circumstances, including daily sustenance, as illustrated by the Israelites in the desert.
6. Diligent Action	Laziness leads to failure. God's sovereignty does not justify negligence; awareness of responsibilities must guide our actions.
7. Acknowledging Failures	God's plan includes our failures, as seen in the story of Esther, where human errors are transcended by God's ultimate wisdom.
Conclusion	The interaction between God's sovereignty and human responsibility encourages trust and action, emphasizing prayer, prudence, and accountability in our faith practice.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: God's sovereignty should motivate action rather than inaction.

Critical Interpretation: Imagine waking up each day with the understanding that while God governs every detail of your life, He has given you the tools and responsibilities to shape your destiny. This chapter reminds you that trusting in God's sovereign plan doesn't mean sitting back and allowing life to happen to you; instead, it urges you to take initiative, pray intentionally, and act wisely. Each decision you make, informed by prayer and anchored in God's promises, contributes to the unfolding of His divine purpose. As you embrace this truth, envision how your proactive choices—seeking guidance, working diligently, and praying passionately—can transform your personal circumstances, deepen your faith, and ultimately lead you to a life that not only witnesses God's sovereignty but actively participates in it.



Chapter 6: The Wisdom of God

In Chapter 6 of "Trusting God," Jerry Bridges delves into the profound nature of God's wisdom, emphasizing its infinite, intuitive, and infallible characteristics. Through poignant narratives and scripture, he explores the implications of trusting God's wisdom, particularly during times of crisis and adversity. The chapter reveals how divine wisdom operates beyond human understanding and highlights the ways in which God sovereignly uses all circumstances, good and bad, for His ultimate glory and our growth.

1. Understanding Divine Wisdom

Bridges opens with a reflection on the 1966 Aberfan tragedy, where a catastrophic mining disaster claimed the lives of 114 individuals, including 109 children. This harrowing event sparked questions about God's role in human suffering, leading to a sentiment echoed by both believers and skeptics: the doubt of whether God makes mistakes. However, the author asserts that God's wisdom is perfect and beyond fallibility, unlike human reasoning, which is often limited by insufficient knowledge and foresight.

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Chapter 7 Summary: Experiencing God's Love

In Chapter Seven of "Trusting God," Jerry Bridges explores the profound theme of experiencing God's love, particularly during times of adversity. This exploration begins with the premise that it is common for individuals to question God's love in the face of suffering and hardship. It is a natural human tendency to mistakenly equate our trials with God's lack of care or love. Bridges shares personal anecdotes, highlighting that even those who encourage others can struggle with doubt about God's love when confronted with their own challenges.

1. Understanding the Nature of God: Bridges emphasizes that the essential characteristics of God encompass both His sovereignty and His goodness. This duality can become particularly challenging to accept during difficult times. While we might see God's sovereignty at work, the logic of suffering often leads to questions about His goodness. However, the Bible affirms both attributes throughout its pages, asserting that God's love remains constant regardless of our circumstances.

2. The Evidence of God's Love: The crux of Bridges' argument resides in the significance of Calvary as the ultimate evidence of God's love for humanity. He refers to 1 John 4:9-10, where God's love is demonstrated through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. This act is framed as the greatest expression of love, meeting our deepest need—spiritual



reconciliation—rather than our immediate desires for comfort or ease.

3. The Cost of Love: Bridges discusses the tremendous cost involved in God's love, evident through the sacrifice of His Son for a sinful humanity. Here, he invites reflection on our condition before receiving grace, emphasizing that God's love was given while we were still sinners. This foundational understanding helps believers grasp the lengths to which God went to secure our salvation, reinforcing that if God loved us so deeply when we were estranged from Him, His love remains steadfast in our current circumstances.

4. Family Love: As believers, we are adopted into God's family. The intimate relationship we now have is characterized by a fatherly love, marked by God's delight in His children. This truth offers profound assurance of our value to Him, cultivating a sense of security and belonging. Scripture references such as Zephaniah 3:17 illustrate God's tender affection, emphasizing that His love is as immeasurable as the heavens.

5. Union with Christ: Bridges points out the importance of understanding our identity in Christ, stressing that God's love flows to us through our union with Him. This is not based on our merits or achievements but rather on our relationship with Christ. Our confidence in God's love should not rest on self-examination but rather on the sufficiency of Christ's righteousness.



6. Sovereign Love: The relationship between God's sovereignty and His love unfolds further, suggesting that God's plans for our lives are intertwined with His desire for our ultimate good. This partnership means that every trial we face is under His sovereign control, aimed at fostering our growth and character refinement.

7. Faith Amidst Doubt: During periods of adversity, believers might find themselves questioning God's love. Bridges conveys a crucial principle: we must consciously turn our attention from our circumstances to the assurances found in Scripture. The voices of doubt can loom large, but faith allows for a trusting relationship where the love of God reigns supreme, even in distressing times.

8. Comfort in Presence: One of the most encouraging aspects of God's promises is His presence during trials. He does not abandon us in our suffering; rather, He walks alongside us in tribulation. Isaiah 43:2 serves as a reminder that God's presence ensures that we are not consumed by difficulties. His love persists even in the depths of our anguish.

9. God's Unfailing Love: Throughout the chapter, the theme of God's unfailing love is revisited, affirming that His love is reliable and enduring. No matter what circumstances may besiege us, God's love remains constant. This present assurance is a source of hope, reminding us that even through



grief and heartache, divine compassion accompanies our afflictions.

In conclusion, through a careful exposition of scripture and personal reflection, Jerry Bridges highlights that the foundation of experiencing God's love is built upon truth rather than feelings. Recognizing our identity in Christ and the certainty of God's promises helps navigate doubts and reinforces our trust in His unwavering love amidst life's challenges.

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Chapter 8 Summary: Growing Through Adversity

In Chapter 8 of Jerry Bridges' "Trusting God," the author explores how adversity serves as a catalyst for spiritual growth. He draws upon biblical principles, particularly from the book of James, to illustrate that trials and tribulations are integral to developing perseverance, maturity, and Christlike character.

1. **The Struggle of Growth:** Bridges begins with a metaphor of a cecropia moth struggling to emerge from its cocoon. This struggle, although difficult, is essential for the moth to develop the strength needed to fly. Similarly, God uses our adversities to cultivate spiritual strength and character in our lives. Adversity is not merely a hurdle to be avoided but a crucial aspect of our spiritual development as emphasized by James, who states that the testing of our faith produces perseverance.

2. **The Nature of True Growth:** The author highlights that true Christian virtues, such as love, joy, and peace, often arise from adversity. He asserts that our ability to exhibit these traits is tested during tough times, where anger and resentment may surface instead. The struggle itself reveals our need for growth and transformation, prompting us to rely more on God.

3. **Embracing Trials:** While it can be difficult to rejoice in our trials, Bridges urges us to focus not on the hardship itself but on the growth it can bring.



Our joy should stem from the knowledge that God is at work in our lives, orchestrating circumstances for our ultimate good, regardless of how painful they may seem.

4. Submitting to God's Purpose: Bridges stresses the importance of submitting to God's will during adversities. Unlike a defeated general, we should willingly accept our trials, seeking to understand and embrace the purpose behind them. This submission involves both using appropriate measures to alleviate suffering while accepting the outcome as God's will.

5. Learning from Scripture: The author encourages readers to turn to the Word of God during times of adversity. Engaging with Scripture can shed light on our situations and deepen our understanding of God's teachings. Adversity often enhances our grasp of biblical truths, turning theoretical knowledge into heartfelt conviction.

6. Remembering Lessons Learned: It is essential to remember the lessons learned during adversity, as God seeks to use these experiences for our growth. Reflecting on past trials helps us appreciate God's faithfulness and the progress we have made.

7. The Process of Pruning: Bridges uses the analogy of pruning in gardening to explain how God cultivates us through adversity. Just as an unpruned vine may grow excessively but yield little fruit, we can become distracted by



worldly pursuits. Adversity can help us recognize and relinquish those distractions, focusing instead on spiritual fruitfulness.

8. Deepening Holiness: Adversity exposes remaining flaws in our character, prompting us toward holiness. The challenges we face reveal our need for God's grace and cultivate a longing for righteousness. Through adversity, God not only disciplines us but also teaches us profound truths about our dependency on Him.

9. Learning Dependence on God: The chapter emphasizes that true strength and effectiveness in our Christian lives come from relying on God, rather than on our abilities. Even notable figures like Paul experienced situations that forced them to depend solely on the grace and power of God.

10. Cultivating Perseverance: Perseverance is presented as an active response to adversity. Both Paul and James assert that enduring trials builds character. We are called not simply to endure but to press forward in faith, trusting that God empowers us to overcome obstacles.

11. Service through Adversity: Bridges highlights how God equips us through adversity to serve others. Our experiences can become a source of comfort for those around us, as we can share the solace we've received from God in our own hardships.



12. The Fellowship of Suffering: The author points out the camaraderie formed among believers in times of trouble. Shared struggles can break down barriers and foster authentic relationships rooted in mutual support and understanding.

13. Intimacy with God: Finally, Bridges emphasizes that the most valuable lesson from adversity is the deepening of our relationship with God. Through trials, we learn to trust His sovereignty, experience His love, and come to know Him on a more personal level.

In conclusion, adversity serves not only to test our faith but to enhance our spiritual lives in numerous ways. Each experience is an opportunity for transformation, enabling us to grow in love, holiness, and dependence on God. By embracing trials and seeking the lessons they teach us, we align ourselves with God's purpose and undergo a profound spiritual metamorphosis.

Key Theme	Description
The Struggle of Growth	Adversity is essential for developing spiritual strength, akin to the cecropia moth's struggle to fly.
The Nature of True Growth	True virtues like love and peace emerge from adversity, prompting reliance on God amid struggles.
Embracing Trials	Focus on the growth from hardships rather than the hardships themselves; rejoice in God's work through trials.



Key Theme	Description
Submitting to God's Purpose	Willingly accept trials as part of God's plan, while also alleviating suffering appropriately.
Learning from Scripture	Engage with the Bible during adversity to deepen understanding of God and His teachings.
Remembering Lessons Learned	Reflect on past adversities to appreciate God's faithfulness and personal growth.
The Process of Pruning	Adversity helps remove distractions, leading to spiritual fruitfulness like pruning in gardening.
Deepening Holiness	Challenges reveal flaws and increase longing for holiness and dependency on God's grace.
Learning Dependence on God	True strength comes from reliance on God, as highlighted by the experiences of biblical figures like Paul.
Cultivating Perseverance	Perseverance is an active response to adversity, leading to character development as taught by Paul and James.
Service through Adversity	Experiences of hardship equip us to comfort and serve others who are suffering.
The Fellowship of Suffering	Shared struggles among believers foster authentic relationships built on mutual understanding and support.
Intimacy with God	Trials deepen our relationship with God, enhancing trust, love, and knowledge of Him.

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Chapter 9: Choosing to Trust God

In the journey of faith, the act of trusting God, particularly in times of fear and adversity, is paramount. The biblical text largely revolves around the theme of choosing to trust God regardless of one's circumstances. Trust is not merely a passive state but rather an active decision rooted in a deeper understanding of God's character and promises.

1. The Decision to Trust: Trusting God first requires a conscious decision to place our faith in Him amidst fear. This concept is illustrated through the experiences of the author's late wife, who, despite her distress regarding a cancer diagnosis, chose to place her hope in God, reflecting the essence of Psalm 42:11. Just as King David chose to trust God during his trials, believers today are called to consciously embrace trust, even when feelings of fear or despair might prevail.

2. Knowledge and Will Over Feelings: Trusting God hinges on knowledge of His sovereignty, wisdom, and love. It requires believers to discern truth, choosing to believe in God's goodness and promises rather

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Chapter 10 Summary: Giving Thanks Always

In Chapter 10 of "Trusting God" by Jerry Bridges, the author explores the theme of gratitude in all circumstances, emphasizing its importance for a faithful response to life's adversities. Drawing from personal stories and biblical principles, the chapter highlights how gratitude can transform our perspectives and deepen our trust in God's overarching plan.

1. The Power of Thanksgiving: The author posits that gratitude is a deliberate choice and a fruit of the Spirit, rather than a natural human instinct. This is illustrated through the story of Ellen Vaughn, whose mourning for her mother's death led to an overwhelming sense of gratitude for life. Paul's instruction in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 encourages believers to give thanks in all situations, contrasting this with the natural tendency to complain during hardships. Such gratitude acknowledges our dependence on God, reminding us of His providence in both life's joys and sufferings.

2. God's Sovereignty: A fundamental principle of gratitude is rooted in the recognition of God's sovereignty. Believers are called to understand that God is working through every situation for their good, reaffirming the interconnectedness of Romans 8:28 and Paul's exhortation to give thanks. This worldview allows believers to view hardships as opportunities for growth and divine purpose.



3. Worship Amidst Trials The chapter underscores worship as a vital response to adversity. Job's humble worship after losing everything serves as a powerful model. Worship involves acknowledging God's majesty alongside our dependence and sinfulness, framing adversity within the context of God's infinite love and grace.

4. Humility as a Response: In light of our experiences, humility is presented as a crucial response to adversity. Peter's counsel to humble ourselves under God's mighty hand illustrates that accepting God's sovereignty enables believers to cast their anxieties onto Him. Ultimately, humility aligns our hearts with God's will, fostering deeper reliance on His grace.

5. The Role of Forgiveness: The chapter emphasizes forgiveness, especially when adversity is inflicted by others. Recognizing our own failings and the grace we have received in Christ encourages us to extend grace to those who have wronged us. It shifts the focus from resentment to understanding God's greater purpose in allowing these trials for our good.

6. Prayer for Deliverance: The author advocates for prayer as a means of seeking deliverance from adversities. While believers should earnestly pray for resolution and healing, they must approach God with the heart posture of Jesus, accepting God's will above their own.



7. Seeking God's Glory: Above all, the chapter emphasizes that believers should prioritize seeking God's glory in every circumstance. Paul's response to his imprisonment exemplifies a selfless pursuit of glorifying Christ, regardless of personal suffering. This perspective fosters spiritual maturity, encouraging believers to trust in God's perfect plan amidst personal trials.

In conclusion, the chapter invites readers to cultivate a rich relationship with God by embracing thanksgiving, worship, humility, forgiveness, diligent prayer, and a focus on His glory. These responses to adversity can profoundly transform the believer's experience, grounding them in trust and hope amid life's challenges. By understanding these principles and applying them consistently, one can build a resilient faith that acknowledges God's sovereignty over every situation.

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Best Quotes from Trusting God by Jerry Bridges with Page Numbers

Chapter 1 | Quotes from pages 10-17

1. And call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me.

PSALM 50:15

2. Life is difficult.

3. When friends and loved ones hurt, we hurt.

4. Can I trust God when adversity strikes and fills your life with pain?

5. Even creation itself, Paul tells us, has been subjected to frustration and groans as in the pain of childbirth.

6. It is only in the Scriptures that we find an adequate view of God's relationship to and involvement in our painful circumstances.

7. God in His love always wills what is best for us.

8. In His wisdom He always knows what is best.

9. In His sovereignty He has the power to bring it about.

10. To know God's name is to know Him in an intimate, personal way.

Chapter 2 | Quotes from pages 18-28

1. God ... is the blessed controller of all things, the king over all kings and the master of all masters.

2. God's providence is His constant care for and His absolute rule over all His creation for His own glory and the good of His people.

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3. If we are going to learn to trust God in adversity, we must believe that just as certainly as God will allow nothing to subvert His glory, so He will allow nothing to spoil the good He is working out in us and for us.
4. Nothing, not even the smallest virus, escapes His care and control.
5. The sovereignty of God is the one impregnable rock to which the suffering human heart must cling.
6. All evil is subject to Him, and evil cannot touch His children unless He permits it.
7. No detail of our lives is too insignificant for our heavenly Father's attention; no circumstance is so big that He cannot control it.
8. His ways are higher than our ways... His judgments are unsearchable, and His paths are beyond tracing out.
9. The mighty Roman Empire could not crucify Jesus Christ unless God gave it that power.
10. In the midst of our suffering we can rest in the knowledge that He is sovereign.

Chapter 3 | Quotes from pages 29-38

1. The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases.
2. God sovereignly intervenes in the hearts of people so that they make decisions and carry out actions that accomplish His purpose for our lives.
3. We see in the New Testament as well that God moves sovereignly in people's lives.
4. The stubborn will of the most powerful ruler on earth is directed by God as easily as



the farmer directs the flow of water in his irrigation canals.

5. Are you dependent upon your boss (or your commanding officer) for advancement in your career? God will move in the heart of your boss or commander one way or the other, depending on God's plan for you.

6. God never allows people to make decisions about us that undermine His plan for us.

7. God does not always restrain the wicked and harmful actions of others.

8. We should then look to God in prayer in all those situations where some aspect of our futures lies in the hands of another individual.

9. If God is for us, who can be against us?

10. The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law.

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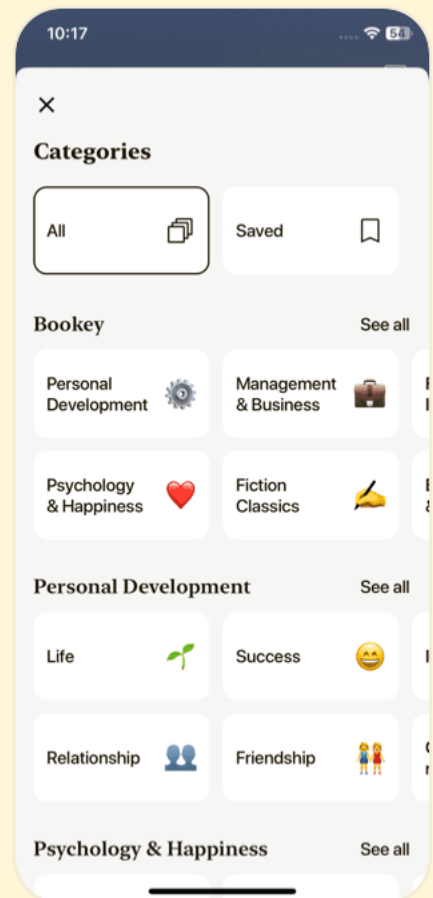
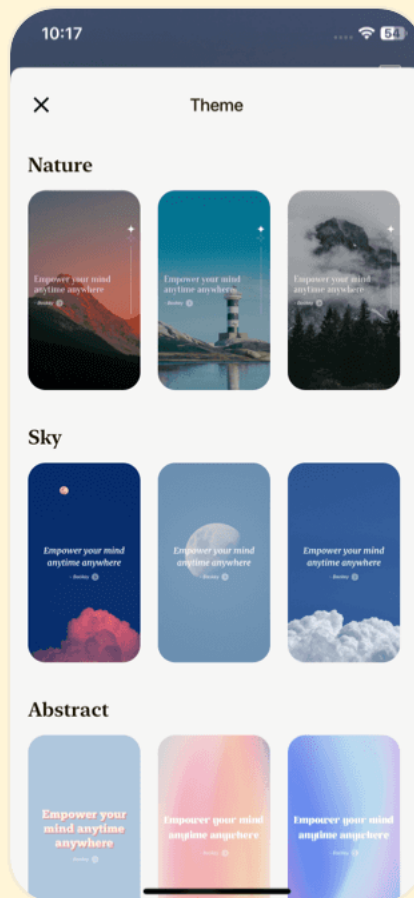
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Chapter 4 | Quotes from pages 39-50

1. "Therefore our hope is in you, for you are the one who does all this."
2. "God has not walked away from the day-to-day control of His creation."
3. "The believer is never the victim of the powers of nature or fate. Chance is eliminated."
4. "When we complain about the weather, we are actually complaining against God who sent us our weather."
5. "God controls all the forces of nature, both destructive and productive, on a continuous, moment-by-moment basis."
6. "All expressions of nature, all occurrences of weather, whether it be a devastating tornado or a gentle rain on a spring day, are acts of God."
7. "His infinite wisdom and perfect love have determined that the particular sorrow is best for us."
8. "God never wastes pain. He always uses it to accomplish His purpose."
9. "To truly accept our pain and heartache has the connotation of willingness."
10. "Though he did not understand what God was doing, he would trust Him."

Chapter 5 | Quotes from pages 51-60

1. God's sovereignty does not negate our responsibility to pray, but rather makes it possible to pray with confidence.
2. Prayer assumes the sovereignty of God. If God is not sovereign, we have no assurance that He is able to answer our prayers.
3. The knowledge of His sovereignty is meant to be an encouragement to pray, not an



excuse to lapse into a sort of pious fatalism.

4. In every respect, we are dependent upon God to enable us and prosper our efforts.

5. Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain.

6. We are absolutely dependent upon God but, at the same time, we are responsible to diligently use whatever means are appropriate for the occasion.

7. Our trust must be in the sovereign will of God, as He works in the ordinary circumstances of our daily lives for our good and His glory.

8. All of our plans, all of our efforts, and all of our prudence is of no avail unless God prospers those means.

9. There is no conflict between trusting God and accepting our responsibility.

10. Let us hold equally to both, doing our duty as it is revealed to us in the Scriptures and trusting God to sovereignly work out His purpose in us and through us.

Chapter 6 | Quotes from pages 61-70

1. Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

2. God does not make mistakes in our lives.

3. His wisdom is intuitive, infinite, and infallible: 'His understanding has no limit' (Psalm 147:5).

4. The best possible end of all of God's actions is ultimately His glory.

5. God is able to take all of these elements—the bad as well as the good—and make full



use of everything and everyone.

6. God's infinite wisdom then is displayed in bringing good out of evil, beauty out of ashes.

7. The good that God works for in our lives is conformity to the likeness of His Son.

8. God disciplines us for our good. There is no agonizing by God, no hoping He has made the right decision.

9. God's wisdom is fathomless; His decisions are unsearchable.

10. An unreserved trust of God, when we don't understand what is happening or why, is the only road to peace and comfort and joy.

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Chapter 7 | Quotes from pages 71-81

1. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?
2. God is love.
3. If God loved me enough to give His Son to die for me when I was His enemy, surely He loves me enough to care for me now that I am His child.
4. God's love cannot fail.
5. Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken.
6. He delights in us as a father delights in his children.
7. Even in their judgments, He was with them.
8. Our doubts do not destroy God's love, nor does our faith create it.
9. In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.
10. Nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Chapter 8 | Quotes from pages 82-92

1. Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.
2. The adversities of life are much like the cocoon of the cecropia moth. God uses them to develop the spiritual 'muscle system' of our lives.
3. The development of a beautiful Christlike character will not occur in our lives without adversity.
4. God does not ask us to rejoice because we have lost our job, or a loved one has been



stricken with cancer... But He does tell us to rejoice because we believe He is in control of those circumstances.

5. The Christian life is intended to be one of continuous growth.

6. God wants us to do more than simply endure our trials; He wants us to remember them as His disciplines — His means of bringing about growth in our lives.

7. God uses adversity to loosen our grip on those things that are not true fruit.

8. Adversity enhances the teaching of God's Word and makes it more profitable to us.

9. God uses adversity to enlighten our minds about our own needs as well as the teachings of Scripture.

10. For the believer, all pain has meaning; all adversity is profitable.

Chapter 9 | Quotes from pages 93-101

1. When I am afraid, I will trust in You.

2. Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

3. Trusting God is first of all a matter of the will, and is not dependent on my feelings.

4. I will trust You though I do not feel like doing so.

5. God is absolutely trustworthy.

6. Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.

7. Trust is not a passive state of mind. It is a vigorous act of the soul by which we choose to lay hold on the promises of God.

8. The promises of God must be true; surely the Lord will help me, if I am willing to be



helped!

9. Our trust must be in Him and Him alone.

10. When I am afraid, I will trust in you.

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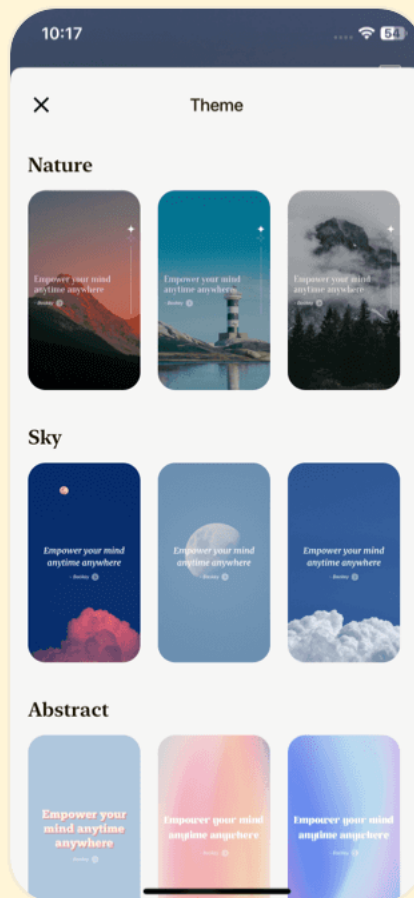
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Chapter 10 | Quotes from pages 102-110

1. "The day I had dreaded all my life became the doorway to real renewal."
2. "Death makes it clear that each day of life is an opulent gift."
3. "When we gain our reference point for all things from His cosmic grandeur and holiness-rather than from within ourselves-He will hear us up."
4. "Thanksgiving is an admission of dependence."
5. "Everything we are and have we owe to His bountiful grace."
6. "We are to give thanks in all circumstances, both the good and the bad."
7. "God is at work in all things for our good."
8. "God does not just respond to an adversity in our lives to make the best of a bad situation."
9. "Worship involves a two-directional view; looking upward at God's majesty and recognizing our dependence upon Him."
10. "The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice."

Trusting God Discussion Questions

Chapter 1 | Can You Trust God? | Q&A

1.Question:

What themes are introduced in Chapter 1 regarding adversity and trust in God?

Chapter 1 introduces the theme that tragedy and adversity provoke deep questions about God's role and trustworthiness. It highlights that both personal and global crises—such as the 9/11 terrorist attacks and natural disasters like the Asian tsunami—lead people to reevaluate their faith. The author emphasizes that adversity can take many forms, including emotional pain, disappointment, and loss, affecting both believers and non-believers. This chapter argues that in the face of such challenges, individuals often grapple with the question of whether they can truly trust God, regardless of the nature of their circumstances.

2.Question:

How does the author view the relationship between suffering and faith?

The author presents suffering as a universal experience that often leads individuals, even Christians, to question God's presence and care. He discusses how personal pain can intensify doubts about God's sovereignty and love. Through various examples—such as illness, financial hardship, and emotional trauma—Bridges illustrates that while pain is a common human experience, it is essential for believers to view their adversity through faith. He argues that both obedience to God and trust in Him are crucial, and that distrusting God is akin to questioning His goodness and sovereignty.

3.Question:

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What are the three essential truths about God that the author argues must be believed to trust Him in adversity?

The three essential truths about God that Bridges presents are: 1) God is completely sovereign, meaning He has ultimate control over all events, including calamities and good things; 2) God is infinite in wisdom, suggesting that His understanding of what is best far surpasses human wisdom; 3) God is perfect in love, indicating that whatever He allows in our lives is rooted in His desire for our ultimate good. He stresses that these truths are foundational for fostering a trusting relationship with God amidst life's challenges.

4.Question:

Why does the author emphasize the importance of knowing God personally in order to trust Him?

Bridges emphasizes that trust in God is rooted in an intimate, personal relationship with Him, which goes beyond mere knowledge of facts about God. He cites Psalm 9:10, which states that those who truly know God will trust in Him. This deeper understanding comes from seeking God amidst personal pain, where individuals discover His faithfulness and trustworthiness. The author suggests that as believers engage with God in prayer and reflection, they cultivate a relationship that strengthens their ability to trust Him, especially during difficult times.

5.Question:

What role does Scripture play in developing trust in God, according to



this chapter?

According to Chapter 1, Scripture plays a crucial role in developing trust in God, as it is through the Word of God that believers gain the foundational truths about His sovereignty, wisdom, and love. Bridges notes that faith to trust God in adversity comes from understanding these truths revealed in the Bible. The author encourages readers to immerse themselves in Scripture, as it provides an adequate view of God's involvement in painful circumstances, reminding them of His control, care, and purpose. He also suggests that prayer and reliance on the Holy Spirit are essential for this transformative process.

Chapter 2 | Is God Really in Control? | Q&A

1.Question:

What does the chapter assert about the relationship between God's sovereignty and goodness?

The chapter asserts that God is both all-powerful (sovereign) and wholly good. It emphasizes that these two attributes are not mutually exclusive, as Rabbi Kushner claims in his book. Instead, the author proposes that the Bible teaches that God governs all of creation, consistently exercising both His power and goodness. God's providence encompasses His constant care for and rule over all His creation for His glory and the good of His people. This means that even though suffering exists, it does not negate God's sovereignty or the ultimate good He is orchestrating.

2.Question:

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How does the author define God's providence, and what is its significance? The author defines God's providence as His unceasing activity in sustaining and governing all aspects of creation for His glory and the good of His people. This includes the guidance of all events, circumstances, and free actions of both men and angels. The significance of this understanding is profound—it reassures believers that nothing in their lives is outside the control of God and that all circumstances are ultimately for a purposeful end, encouraging trust in God during adversity.

3.Question:

What biblical examples are used in the chapter to illustrate God's sovereignty in difficult circumstances?

The chapter cites several biblical examples, including the story of Joseph who endured unjust imprisonment and the Apostle Paul's two-year detention by Felix, both of which were under God's sovereignty. These accounts highlight that even severe injustice and misfortune are subject to God's ultimate control and governance. Additionally, it references the actions of individuals like Satan, who still operate within the bounds of God's permissive will, indicating that God is aware of and allows human actions, both good and bad, to fulfill His overarching purposes.

4.Question:

What is the author's perspective on human free will in relation to God's control?

The author acknowledges that while God is sovereign and governs all



events, this does not eliminate human free will. He explains that people can make choices and act independently, but ultimately, those actions are still under God's sovereignty. The author emphasizes that God does not merely react to human decisions but rather integrates these decisions into His divine plan, ensuring that nothing occurs outside of His will. This perspective assures believers that their choices matter, yet they are always within the framework of God's overarching plan.

5.Question:

How does the chapter encourage believers to trust God in the face of suffering and adversity?

The chapter encourages believers to trust God by affirming that their suffering is never outside the realm of God's control and that even painful experiences serve a greater purpose. It stresses that although circumstances may sometimes appear chaotic or unjust, God's sovereignty remains intact. Therefore, believers can have confidence that God is working through their difficulties for a purpose that aligns with His glory and their ultimate good. This understanding fosters assurance and hope during trials, as it emphasizes that God cares for His people and is actively involved in their lives.

Chapter 3 | God's Sovereignty over People | Q&A

1.Question:

What is the primary theme of Chapter 3 in 'Trusting God' by Jerry Bridges?

The primary theme of Chapter 3, 'God's Sovereignty Over People,' is the exploration of



God's control over human hearts and decisions. It emphasizes that while people act freely and make their own choices, God sovereignly influences those choices to accomplish His plans and purposes. The chapter illustrates this through biblical examples, such as God's intervention in the hearts of the Egyptians during the Exodus and King Cyrus allowing the Jews to return to Jerusalem.

2.Question:

How does Jerry Bridges explain the relationship between God's sovereignty and human free will?

Bridges acknowledges a complex relationship between God's sovereignty and human free will, stating that while God influences human hearts to fulfill His purpose, people still make real choices and are held accountable for them. He references Proverbs 21:1 to illustrate how God can direct even the most powerful rulers, like kings, while asserting that individuals are not puppets, but rather make decisions based on their own will. This mighty influence doesn't negate their freedom; instead, it operates concurrently with their ability to choose.

3.Question:

Can you provide examples from the chapter that demonstrate God's sovereignty in the affairs of people?

Yes, the chapter provides several biblical examples to demonstrate God's sovereignty:

1. ****The Exodus****: God foretold that the Israelites would leave Egypt not empty-handed, and when they asked the Egyptians for gold and silver, the



Egyptians willingly gave, acting favorably due to God's prior influence on their hearts.

2. ****Cyrus, King of Persia****: God moved Cyrus's heart to allow the Jews to return to build the temple in Jerusalem, showing how even a non-believer can be directed by God to fulfill divine purposes.

3. ****Abraham and Ahimelech****: When King Ahimelech intended to take Sarah as his wife, God intervened and kept him from sinning against Abraham and Sarah, demonstrating God's protective influence over His people.

4.Question:

What reassurance does Jerry Bridges provide regarding trust in God's sovereignty during difficult circumstances involving other people?

Bridges reassures that in challenging situations where individuals are subject to the decisions of others, such as a boss, teacher, or leader, they can trust in God's sovereignty. He emphasizes that God will work in the hearts of these individuals to align with His will for our lives. Bridging from the biblical focus, he references Psalm 75:6-7, stating that promotion and demotion come from God, encouraging believers to rely on divine influence over their circumstances, reminding them that God is ultimately in control.

5.Question:

What cautions does Bridges mention regarding the understanding of God's sovereignty?

Bridges provides several cautions to avoid misusing the doctrine of God's



sovereignty:

1. Do not use it to excuse personal shortcomings or failures; responsibilities must be acknowledged and addressed.
2. Beware of passivity; understanding God's sovereignty shouldn't lead to inaction, and individuals should still take reasonable steps to advance their situations.
3. Avoid justifying sinful actions by claiming God's sovereignty; people are responsible for their choices, even if God ultimately uses those actions for His purposes.

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Chapter 4 | God's Power over Nature | Q&A

1.Question:

What does the chapter say about God's control over natural disasters such as earthquakes and storms?

The chapter emphasizes that according to Scripture, God has absolute control over all natural disasters and weather phenomena. While many may interpret these events merely as 'acts of nature,' the author asserts that God's sovereignty governs every aspect of creation, including the forces that cause earthquakes, storms, and other weather events. This perspective is supported by biblical passages that directly attribute weather events to God's will, highlighting that nothing happens outside of His providential control.

2.Question:

How does the author address the issue of human suffering due to physical afflictions or disabilities?

The author addresses human suffering, specifically pointing out that physical afflictions and disabilities are also under God's sovereign control. Using the story of Moses as an example, the chapter discusses how God claims responsibility for creating physical conditions such as blindness or deafness. This assertion invites readers to confront the theological reality that these afflictions serve a purpose within God's divine plan, even if it is not clear to us. The author encourages believers to trust God in the midst of pain, understanding that He has a loving purpose, even for the hardships we face.

3.Question:

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What role does complaining about the weather play in our relationship with God according to the chapter?

Complaining about the weather is portrayed as a potentially sinful attitude, as it implicitly denies God's sovereignty and involvement in our circumstances. The author suggests that when Christians complain about the weather, they are in essence lamenting against God who has ordained that weather. Instead of complaining, he urges believers to cultivate an attitude of gratitude and acceptance, recognizing that all weather is under the loving control of God and serves His divine purposes.

4.Question:

How should Christians respond to natural disasters and large-scale tragedies, as outlined in the chapter?

The chapter advises that when confronted with natural disasters, Christians should engage with their feelings and questions reverently and submit to God's sovereign will. While it is natural to wrestle with the existence of evil and suffering, believers are cautioned against judging God's actions or questioning His sovereignty. Instead, they are encouraged to acknowledge God's authority and control over such events, grappling with the mystery of His purposes without relinquishing their faith in His goodness.

5.Question:

What key takeaway does the author want readers to understand about trusting God in difficult circumstances?

The key takeaway from the chapter is that trusting God in difficult



circumstances—whether they involve natural disasters, physical afflictions, or heartache—requires the understanding that He is completely sovereign, infinitely loving, and perfectly wise. Even when suffering occurs, it must be acknowledged that God is in control and has a divine purpose for each situation. Believers are encouraged to accept their circumstances with trust, knowing that God never allows pain without purpose and that all things work for His glory and their ultimate good.

Chapter 5 | God's Sovereignty and Our Responsibility | Q&A

1.Question:

What is the author's main argument regarding the relationship between God's sovereignty and human responsibility?

The author argues that while God is sovereign over all things, that sovereignty does not negate human responsibility. Instead, God's sovereignty provides the basis for our responsibility, especially in prayer and prudent action. We should not adopt a fatalistic mindset that excuses us from taking action or making efforts but rather understand that our actions are part of God's sovereign plan.

2.Question:

How does the author illustrate the importance of prayer in the context of God's sovereignty?

The author emphasizes that prayer is both an acknowledgment of God's sovereignty and an expression of our dependence on Him. He provides examples, like Peter and John praying after being threatened by the Sanhedrin, which show that they recognized God's



sovereign control while still actively seeking His help to fulfill their commission. Prayer is seen as a means through which God's sovereignty can be invoked to address challenges.

3.Question:

What does the author say about the necessity of prudence in relation to God's sovereignty?

The author posits that God's sovereignty does not remove our responsibility to act prudently. He uses examples from the lives of David and Paul to illustrate that even when we trust in God's plan, we must still take reasonable actions to protect ourselves and act wisely. Prudence, in this case, means using all rational means and seeking wise counsel while recognizing that the outcome ultimately relies on God's will.

4.Question:

What lessons does the author draw from the Biblical narrative of Nehemiah in terms of prayer and action?

In Nehemiah's story, the author highlights that Nehemiah balanced prayer with prudent action. When faced with threats while rebuilding the wall, he prayed but also posted guards and equipped his workers with weapons. This demonstrates the principle that prayer should accompany our responsibility to act, reflecting faith in God's sovereignty while also taking necessary precautions.

5.Question:

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How does the author address the potential conflict between God's sovereignty and the consequences of human failure?

The author argues that God's sovereign plan is not frustrated by human failure; rather, it incorporates our mistakes and sinfulness. He cites Esther's story to demonstrate that while God can choose to use individuals to achieve His plans, He is not limited to them. This assessment assures us that our failures do not thwart God's purposes but simultaneously emphasizes personal accountability for our actions.

Chapter 6 | The Wisdom of God | Q&A

1.Question:

What is the main theme of Chapter 6 in 'Trusting God' by Jerry Bridges?

The main theme of Chapter 6, titled 'The Wisdom of God,' revolves around the concept of God's infinite wisdom and how it operates in our lives and the world around us. It emphasizes that God's decisions and actions are always perfect, even amid adversity and tragedy. The chapter addresses human tendencies to question God's wisdom during difficult times, suggesting that while our understanding is limited and fallible, God's plan is ultimately for His glory and our spiritual growth.

2.Question:

How does bridges illustrate the concept of God's wisdom through real-world events?

Bridges opens the chapter with the tragic incident in Aberfan, South Wales, where a coal tip collapsed, killing numerous children and teachers. This event exemplifies



human suffering and raises the question of God's involvement in such tragedy. Bridges uses this example to highlight the natural human reaction of questioning God's wisdom when faced with disasters. He emphasizes that, despite the devastating nature of such events, they do not reflect a failure of God's wisdom or oversight.

3.Question:

What does Bridges mean when he says that God's good is not necessarily our present comfort or happiness?

Bridges articulates that God's ultimate purpose in our lives is not always aligned with our immediate desires for comfort or happiness. He refers to Romans 8:28-29, clarifying that while God works for the good of those who love Him, this 'good' specifically pertains to our transformation to be more like Christ. The chapter suggests that God may allow suffering and adversity in order to shape our character and deepen our relationship with Him, rather than granting us temporary ease or satisfaction.

4.Question:

What role does suffering play in the development of godly character according to Bridges?

According to Bridges, suffering is instrumental in developing godly character traits that cannot be cultivated any other way. He explains that characteristics such as patience, perseverance, and holiness often require experiences of adversity to develop fully. He argues that God's infinite wisdom determines the right amount and type of suffering necessary for each individual to grow into the likeness of Christ, emphasizing that



discipline from God is ultimately for our good and transformation.

5.Question:

Why does Bridges advise against demanding explanations from God in times of suffering?

Bridges advises against demanding explanations from God, asserting that it reflects an accusatory tone and a lack of trust in God's sovereignty and wisdom. He points out that God's ways are incomprehensible and that humans cannot always grasp His purposes. Instead of seeking rational explanations, he encourages believers to accept God's sovereignty and trust that there are higher purposes at work, stating that true peace comes from trusting God rather than seeking to control or understand every circumstance.

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Chapter 7 | Experiencing God's Love | Q&A

1.Question:

What does Jerry Bridges mean when he discusses the relationship between God's sovereignty and goodness?

Jerry Bridges explores the tension people often feel between the sovereignty of God and His goodness, particularly during times of adversity. He notes that as believers come to understand that God is in control of every situation, they may be tempted to doubt His goodness, asking, 'If God is in control of this adversity and can do something about it, why doesn't He?' Bridges highlights that one should not have to choose between the two, as scripture equally affirms God's sovereignty and His goodness. He uses examples from scripture, including John 4:8 ('God is love'), to reinforce that God's nature is intrinsically good, emphasizing that God's love is evident even in trials.

2.Question:

How does Bridges argue that the Cross serves as the ultimate evidence of God's love?

Bridges argues that the Cross of Jesus Christ is the most convincing demonstration of God's love, as mentioned in 1 John 4:9-10. He explains that the sacrifice of Christ is fundamental because it addresses our greatest need: reconciliation with God due to our sin. Bridges makes the case that if God loved us enough to give His Son while we were still sinners (Romans 5:8), it follows that He will continue to love and care for us in our current adversities. The Cross stands as a testament to God's willingness to incur immense cost for our benefit, proving His love irrespective of our circumstances.

3.Question:

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What does the author say about the nature of God's love through our union with Christ?

Bridges emphasizes that God's love towards believers flows through our union with Christ, a vital theological concept. He cites Romans 8:39, stating that nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. His argument is that God's love for us is constant and unwavering because it is based on our identity in Christ rather than our individual merit. Therefore, even in difficult times, believers can rest assured that God's love does not waver with our circumstances, as it originates from His love for His Son, which is unchanging.

4.Question:

How does the author suggest that believers should respond during times of doubt about God's love?

In moments of doubt and adversity, Bridges encourages believers to turn to the promises of scripture regarding God's love. He advocates for reasoning through faith rather than relying solely on feelings, as illustrated by the author's acknowledgment of feelings of being cut off from God during distress. Bridging the disconnect requires holding onto the truths of scripture, such as Lamentations 3:22-23, which assures that God's mercies are new every morning. He underscores that believers should look to the Cross as the ultimate assurance of God's love and should remind themselves of the ways God has shown compassion and grace in the past to reinforce confidence in His present love.

5.Question:

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What insight does Bridges provide regarding God's presence during trials and how it affects the believer?

Bridges highlights that God does not leave believers to face trials alone; rather, He promises His presence and companionship through difficulties, as seen in Isaiah 41:14 and Isaiah 43:2. He emphasizes that God's love manifests most profoundly in times of struggle, stating, 'God Himself comes to help us.' This comfort means that believers should expect to feel God's presence more acutely during hardship. Bridges assures that even though adversities are part of life, God walks alongside the believer during these challenges, thus deepening their experience of His love and fostering resilience.

Chapter 8 | Growing Through Adversity | Q&A

1.Question:

How does adversity contribute to the development of Christian virtues according to Chapter 8 of 'Trusting God'?

In Chapter 8, Bridges emphasizes that adversity is a crucial element in cultivating the fruit of the Spirit, as mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23. Specifically, adversity is shown to foster love, joy, peace, patience, and gentleness by presenting challenges that uncover our true character. For instance, genuine Christian love is tested when we face offenses, highlighting our anger and resentment rather than our ability to love. Similarly, joy is often disrupted by calamities or disappointments, forcing us to seek true joy that comes from God rather than external circumstances. Ultimately, adversity serves as a training ground for these virtues, revealing areas where growth is needed and motivating us to

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lean on God for transformation.

2.Question:

What illustration does Bridges use to explain the necessity of struggle in growth, and what is its significance?

Bridges uses the illustration of the cecropia moth emerging from its cocoon, which requires significant struggle to strengthen its wings. If the struggle is interrupted—as by someone snipping the cocoon—the moth may emerge crippled and unable to fly, thereby shortening its life. This metaphor illustrates how God uses adversity to develop our spiritual 'muscle', allowing us to mature and grow in character. Without the challenges faced in life, we may remain spiritually immature and unprepared for the next steps in our faith journey. The struggle, therefore, is essential for our development, just as it is for the moth.

3.Question:

What methods does Bridges suggest for profiting from adversity, and how can they be applied?

Bridges outlines several approaches to profit from adversity: First, he encourages submission to adversity, akin to a patient willingly submitting to surgery, rather than resisting God's will. This attitude promotes growth and aligns our purpose with God's. Second, he recommends applying the Word of God to our situations, which helps us derive deeper insights into both the Scriptures and our trials, citing Martin Luther's assertion that tribulations enhance our understanding of the Word. Third, Bridges advises remembering

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our past trials and the lessons learned, which prevents us from simply enduring hardships without gaining wisdom. Believers should view adversity as God's discipline designed to foster growth, prompting reflection and ensuring we do not forget His lessons.

4.Question:

Why does Bridges argue that perseverance is crucial in the Christian life, and how can it be developed?

Bridges argues that perseverance is vital because it empowers Christians to pursue God's will despite obstacles and challenges. He cites Hebrews, which encourages believers to run with perseverance the race set before them. To develop perseverance, believers must recognize that suffering produces it, as stated by Paul and James. Adversity strengthens our faith and equips us to handle future difficulties. Bridges highlights that reliance on God's strength, rather than our own, is essential for cultivating perseverance. This reliance allows us to press on, trusting that God is at work in our circumstances, shaping us to fulfill the goals He has for our lives.

5.Question:

How does adversity help deepen our relationship with God, according to Chapter 8 of 'Trusting God'?

In Chapter 8, Bridges emphasizes that adversity serves to deepen our relationship with God by fostering reliance on Him in times of suffering. Through hardships, believers are drawn into a closer fellowship with God, learning to trust His sovereignty and wisdom. Bridges notes that suffering



can illuminate aspects of our faith and character that need growth, shouting out the depth of our dependence on Him. This transformation from knowing about God to experiencing a personal relationship with Him often occurs during adversities, as believers begin to see God's powerful presence in their trials. The idea that through suffering, we can share in the sufferings of Christ as Paul indicates in Philippians 3:10 underlines the intimate connection between our trials and a deeper communion with God.

Chapter 9 | Choosing to Trust God | Q&A

1.Question:

What personal experience does Jerry Bridges share to illustrate the theme of choosing to trust God?

Jerry Bridges recounts the experience of his first wife, who faced a serious health issue with a malignant tumor. In the days leading up to her CAT scan results, she felt apprehensive and anxious. Despite her fears, she turned to Psalm 42:11 and made a deliberate decision to trust God, stating, "I choose not to be downcast, I choose not to be disturbed, I choose to put my hope in You." Although her feelings didn't change immediately, this act of will led to a calm in her heart over time. This personal account illustrates the chapter's emphasis on trusting God as a conscious choice rather than a mere emotional response.

2.Question:

How does Jerry Bridges define the act of trusting God?

Bridges emphasizes that trusting God is primarily an act of the will rather than solely a



matter of feelings. He argues that while emotions may fluctuate, the act of trusting God must be a deliberate choice rooted in knowledge of God's sovereignty, wisdom, and love. He states that one must choose to believe in God's promises and truths, saying, "I will trust You though I do not feel like doing so." This definition correlates with Biblical examples, such as David in Psalms, where trusting God is portrayed as an affirmation of will in the face of fear and adversity.

3.Question:

What scriptural support does Bridges offer to affirm God's trustworthiness?

Bridges refers to several Biblical passages to affirm God's trustworthiness, notably Hebrews 13:5, which promises, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." He explains the intensity of this promise, noting that the original Greek emphasizes this commitment with multiple negatives. Bridges also cites Job's testimony of trust in God's oversight, despite his feelings of abandonment during his trials. He encourages believers to cling to the promise of God's presence and care, even when they can't sense it.

4.Question:

What are some pitfalls when it comes to trusting God during favorable circumstances?

Bridges identifies several pitfalls in trusting God, especially during times of prosperity. One key issue is the danger of putting trust in material blessings or in oneself rather than God. He compares trust in riches to a fortified city, illustrating how people may rely on their resources instead of



acknowledging God's role as the ultimate provider. Additionally, he highlights the tendency to trust in human instruments—like jobs or healthcare—rather than recognizing God's sovereignty in their success. Bridges stresses the importance of acknowledging our dependence on God in all circumstances, whether good or bad.

5.Question:

What steps does Bridges suggest for forming a stronger trust in God?

Bridges suggests that trust in God can be fortified through knowledge, prayer, and an understanding of Scripture. He encourages readers to actively remember and recite God's promises, engage in prayer, and rely on the Holy Spirit for strength. A practical approach involves recognizing daily experiences where trust is required, both in small and large adversities. By consistently choosing to lay down anxieties, acknowledging God's provision, and maintaining faith in both minor and major issues, believers can cultivate a deeper trust in God over time.

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Chapter 10 | Giving Thanks Always | Q&A

1.Question:

Why should we thank God in all circumstances?

We should thank God in all circumstances because it is His will for us as outlined in I Thessalonians 5:18. Gratitude recognizes our dependence on God and His grace, acknowledging that everything good we have comes from Him. Even in bad circumstances, our thanks stem from understanding God's sovereignty, wisdom, and love, believing that He is working for our good. This perspective shifts our focus from our immediate pain to the bigger picture of God's glory and providence.

2.Question:

Does I Thessalonians 5:18 mean we should thank God that a child died or a divorce occurred? Explain.

I Thessalonians 5:18 suggests that we should give thanks in all circumstances, which does not mean we thank God for the specific evils of those situations, such as a child's death or a divorce. Instead, we are called to give thanks to God for His presence, support, and the good that can arise even from those painful events. This can include spiritual growth, the strengthening of our faith, and the reminder of God's grace and sovereignty amid our suffering.

3.Question:

What is worship and why is it important, especially in times of adversity?

Worship is the act of recognizing and honoring God's majesty, power, and sovereignty over our lives. It is a heartfelt acknowledgment of our dependence on Him. In times of



adversity, worship becomes crucial as it helps us maintain perspective. By worshipping God, we express trust in His plan, accept His sovereignty, and find comfort and strength. Worship shifts our focus from our troubles to God's greatness, allowing us to respond with reverence rather than despair.

4.Question:

Why is humility an important response to adversity?

Humility is vital during adversity as it helps us accept our limitations, our dependence on God, and the reality of our human condition. It allows us to recognize that we are under God's mighty hand and fosters a spirit of submission to His will. Humbling ourselves leads to a release from pride and self-reliance, allowing us to experience God's grace more profoundly. It encourages us to cast our anxieties onto Him, thereby trusting Him to handle our difficulties according to His purpose.

5.Question:

How does understanding God's sovereignty help us forgive others?

Understanding God's sovereignty comforts us by reminding us that, ultimately, everything that happens is under His control, including the actions of others that may cause us pain. Recognizing that God can use adverse situations for our good allows us to view those who wrong us not just as offenders but as instruments in God's plan for our growth and development. It promotes a spirit of forgiveness, as we realize that holding onto resentment hampers our relationship with God and hinders our spiritual growth.