

Daddy Holds

Trusting God is less like feeling confident and more like a sleepy child letting their full weight land on a parent they know will hold them.

FROM THE BOOK: CHAPTER 4

BEFORE YOU MEET

- Read Chapter 4 of *The Weight of God* (“Childlike Faith”). If you only have ten minutes, read the opening story about the author’s daughters and the section on Abraham.
- Read Proverbs 3:5–6, Genesis 15:1–6 and Habakkuk 2:4 so you’re comfortable with the flow of each passage.
- Bring Bibles (any translation), pens and a printed participant sheet for each person.
- Time plan for 75 minutes: 5 arrive and settle, 10 open, 15 the idea, 10 read together, 25 talk, 5 this week, 5 pray.
- This week brings in three Hebrew words. Nobody needs to memorise them. The picture of the sleeping child does the heavy lifting.

OPEN

10 min

Who has fallen asleep on you lately: a child, a grandchild, a pet, a mate on a long drive? Or where’s the strangest place you’ve ever dozed off?

THE IDEA

15 min

The author of *The Weight of God* has two daughters. One of his favourite things as a dad is carrying them once they’ve fallen asleep. He describes the exact moment it happens. They fight it for a while: heads bobbing, still talking, insisting they’re not tired. Then something gives. The neck goes soft, the arms drop, and in his words, “Their full weight arrives all at once, like a decision their body made without consulting their brain.”

These aren’t babies. They can walk and look after themselves. They simply stop holding themselves up, because they know who is holding them. There’s no backup plan. If he drops them, they fall.

The Old Testament has three Hebrew words that together describe what’s going on in that moment.

The first is *aman*, the root of our word Amen. It means solid, weight-worthy, like a load-bearing wall. Aman is the recognition: *this holds*. The girls aren’t weighing up the evidence. They’ve been carried before, and the

arms held every time. As the author puts it, “They just know that Daddy holds.”

The second is *batach*, the word for trust in Proverbs 3:5. It means to throw yourself down on something and let it take your full weight. “With all your heart” isn’t about how strongly you feel. It’s about not holding any of your weight back. The second half of the verse, about not leaning on your own understanding, uses a word for propping yourself up on a support. The verse isn’t against thinking. It’s against making your own thinking the thing your whole life rests on. “Your mind is a powerful tool but a terrible foundation.”

The third is *emunah*: the same trust, kept up over time. Not landing once, but staying landed, day after day. Habakkuk 2:4 says the righteous will live by it, and the New Testament quotes that line three times.

Abraham shows all three. In Genesis 15 he is old and childless, and God takes him outside at night and tells him to look at the stars: that’s how many descendants he will have. Everything Abraham can see says this is absurd. Yet he believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness. The Hebrew word there is *aman*. Abraham looked at the One making the promise, decided he was solid, and let his weight follow.

When the New Testament writers needed one Greek word to carry all of this, they used *pistis*, the word we translate “faith”. Recognise who is holding you. Let go. Stay there.

READ TOGETHER

10 min

- **Proverbs 3:5–6.** Notice the contrast between two places you can put your weight: on the Lord, or on your own understanding.
- **Genesis 15:1–6.** Notice that Abraham’s circumstances don’t change before he believes. What changes is where his weight goes.
- **Habakkuk 2:4** (optional, if time allows). Notice the word “live”: this is about a whole life, not a single moment.

- 1 Think of a child falling asleep on someone they love. What's the difference between a child who trusts a parent and a child who has actually let go?

LEADER NOTE *Listen for the idea that trust can be real but still partial. The child on Dad's chest already trusts him; falling asleep is the moment the last bit of weight lets go.*

- 2 The girls let go because they've been held before. How does a person come to know that God holds? What has shown you that, or what would?

LEADER NOTE *Some people, especially those newer to faith, may not have that history yet, and that's fine to say out loud. Stories from others in the group can help here.*

- 3 Proverbs 3:5 isn't anti-thinking, but it warns against propping yourself up on your own understanding. What's the difference between using your mind and resting your whole life on it?

LEADER NOTE *Steer away from the idea that only clever people struggle here. The point is about what we lean on, and practical people, planners and worriers all do it too.*

- 4 Abraham's circumstances and God's promise pointed in opposite directions. Have you had a time when what you could see and what you hoped about God pulled against each other? What happened?

LEADER NOTE *Let people share at the level they're comfortable with. Resist tidying up anyone's story with a quick answer.*

- 5 Where in your life are you keeping one foot on your own platform, just in case? What might it look like to let a little more weight go this week?

LEADER NOTE *This is the personal one. Model it by going first with something real but not raw, then give people the option to answer in pairs.*

THIS WEEK

5 min

Notice where you prop yourself up on your own understanding. Each evening, think back over the day and name one moment when you leaned on your own figuring-out: a worry you kept rehearsing, a backup plan you clung to, a decision you made without asking God. Don't beat yourself up about it; just notice it, and then hand that one thing over in a short, honest prayer.

PRAY

5 min

Thank God that he is solid, the kind of foundation you can put your full weight on. Pray for anyone in the group whose circumstances feel like Abraham's, where the promise and the evidence don't seem to match. Ask for help to let go of the one foot each person is keeping on their own platform, and to stay landed through the week.