

Trust in the Lord

Pastor Jeff Graham

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Sermon in a Sentence: We can trust in the Lord because He makes our paths straight.

Application: When you're staring at a tough decision or a difficult situation, how do you know that God is leading you and you're not just telling yourself what you want to hear? We can trust in the Lord because He makes our paths straight.

Me

Have you ever met someone who was too clever for their own good?

- Some would say Pete Carroll for throwing on the 1 yard line, but that was the right call.
- Survivor record 5 were voted out with immunity in their pocket!
 - Hunter, before the vote, declared he had immunity and decided not to play it, thinking that others had fallen for his bluff
 - All 5 were so confident that they were right that they decided not to use their advantage
- Stonks/options. Govt printing money in 2020. My strategy: Buy high, sell low. Most people who stayed made money when the market recovered, but not me!

Proverbs 3:7 (NIV)

⁷Do not be wise in your own eyes;

- Humans are terrible about justifying bad behavior
 - "I can just eat one potato chip"
 - I heard about a man was trying to lose weight, used to pick up goodies. One day he has to run an errand on that side of town, prayed - if God wants me to get the donuts for the team that God would open a spot in front of the bakery, and sure enough there was a parking spot right in front of the bakery on his SEVENTH trip around the block!
- What's the antidote?

Tension Set: We all trick ourselves in various ways.

We (Exploring the tension)

Calories don't count, what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas, the stock market only goes up, I'll get to it next weekend (but next weekend never comes).

How do you know when your mind is playing tricks on you?

When you're staring at a tough decision or a difficult situation, how do you know that God is leading you and you're not just telling yourself what you want to hear?

Thankfully, King Solomon addressed this very question.

God

Solomon, writing as the voice of wisdom

Proverbs 3: 1-4 says

My son, don't forget God's word because it will prolong your life and give you peace and prosperity. If you do what He says you will win favor and a good name in God's sight, and in mans.

Sounds pretty good, right? As long as we listen to Him and keep His commands, things will turn out in our favor.

Proverbs 3: 5-12 (NIV)

⁵Trust in the Lord with all your heart

- Trust is firm belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or strength of someone or something.
- What's more interesting is not what trust is, but what trust does
- Another word for trust is faith (complete trust or confidence in someone or something.)
 - Faith without deeds is dead and useless
- Place your whole confidence in God, and we express that confidence through obedience
- We can't be double-minded in this

and lean not on your own understanding;

- Here's this idea again of not trusting in ourselves, and instead trusting in God.
- We want to do God's things, in God's way, and in God's timing
- How do we know God's way? Spending time with Him

⁶in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

- Submit in a healthy context is the definition of trust and obey. It's telling God I don't have all the answers and I don't need to have all the answers. I'm going to pray for that person, or join that group, or accept that job, or forgive, or reconcile, etc
- I'm going to trust Him, not lean on my way of doing things, do what He says when I don't understand it, and believe that He is working things out for my good.

**⁷Do not be wise in your own eyes;
fear the Lord and shun evil.**

- Flee from evil (sexual immorality, idolatry, greed). And do this out of respect for God.
- When you do this:

**⁸This will bring health to your body
and nourishment to your bones.**

- Sickness is not always punishment, but sometimes it is the result of a life not in line with God. But sometimes you just get sick.
- This is really what we're talking about, bringing ourselves into alignment with what God is asking us to do.
- Studies tell us that the traditional way of doing things is the "right" way to do things. There are other ways, but if you want the best chance at a successful life, you'll do things in this order.
 - Pro athletes and movie stars are the exception that proves the rule
 - We all know people who luck their way into good things, and others who work hard and suffer.
 - Later in life Solomon will call this meaningless
- Proverbs is the case study of the typical life. If you do these things in this way, you will get these results most of the time.

Here's another example:

**⁹Honor the Lord with your wealth,
with the firstfruits of all your crops;**

- When planning a budget...
- Giving is a step of obedience that says I'm trusting you to take care of me more than I trust my bank account. (We practice tithing, but it's okay if you can't give 10% yet, work your way up)
- Here's the promise:

**¹⁰then your barns will be filled to overflowing,
and your vats will brim over with new wine.**

- But remember, we don't give to get, we give because we're grateful
- Giving doesn't guarantee financial blessing,

**¹¹ My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline,
and do not resent his rebuke,
¹² because the Lord disciplines those he loves,
as a father the son he delights in.**

- It is, because God knows, like we all do, that discipline is a necessary part of life, and we won't always make the wise choice on our own.
- **Hebrews 12:7 (NIV) - ⁷ Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children.**
- Hardship is an opportunity to ask God to search our heart

The commands in Proverbs:

Follow God (Trust God for direction) – Fear the Lord (and stay away from evil) – Honor the Lord with your resources – Trust His discipline

Trust God where you go, trust when He says no, trust Him with your stuff, and trust when things are rough.

You

God doesn't discipline us for behavior modification, it's for heart transformation.

Rom 12:2- Don't be conformed, be transformed

I see God's discipline show up in my life as opportunities to correct my attitude. God uses my kids for that a lot (and sometimes you guys).

God is constantly working on me in different areas of my life.

God, give me patience

Was it God's discipline or was it _____? Might be the wrong question.

Every hardship is a chance to check ourselves.

Job was blameless, yet suffered greatly. Man who was born blind

Sometimes closed doors are a sign of correction, and sometimes they're providence.

Sometimes it's discipline, sometimes a fallen world, and sometimes an attack of the enemy.

[SLIDE] Every hardship gets treated the same way, take it to the Lord in prayer

Are you trusting God to guide you? Do you trust that He has the best plan for your life?

[WORSHIP TEAM]

Proverbs 3: 5-6 (NIV)

**⁵Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;
⁶in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.**

- We don't always have to figure out where He's taking us or why. We place our trust in Him and believe that He knows what's best for us.

Whether it's a difficult decision or a hard situation, God wants to speak to you today.

[SLIDE] How to hear the voice of God:

- 1) It aligns with the Word of God**
- 2) It's confirmed by a mentor**
- 3) You have peace in your heart**

It's okay to keep praying until you have peace! (God's peace is a guard to our hearts)

If you've been struggling with a decision, God wants to help you today.

Altar