

## TRUSTING GOD IN 2024

*Why Trust God? Psalm 25*

January 7, 2024

**INTRO.:** Happy New Year almost a week late! None of us knows what this year will look like or what it will bring. Last year the elder board decided that each year we want to focus on how we would like to see our relationship with God and with one another deepened. This comes from Jesus' response to this question from one of the religious leaders.

**Matthew 22:34–36** Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. **35** One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: **36** "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

The Pharisees had come up with almost 700 laws; several which they had just created themselves. They wanted to trap Jesus and figured this question would stump Him. They reasoned, "There is no way He can just pick out one."

Jesus' response:

**Matthew 22:37–40** Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' **38** This is the first and greatest commandment. **39** And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' **40** All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Last year we decided, in reference to our relationship with God, to work on prayer. We did a series on prayer and provided different avenues and opportunities for us to emphasize and encourage prayer which we will look to continue this year. In reference to our relationship with one another we did a 10-week sermon series on forgiveness, entitled, "*Are You Serious?*," including a meal and opportunity for you to share how God has spoken to you during the series. This year's theme is centered around *trust*. This is something we all need to work on in our relationship with God and in our relationships with one another.

**ILLUS.:** How many here have participated in something called a *trust* fall. I do not recommend this without proper supervision. The idea is that one person is standing on a platform, facing away from the people down below, with their hands across their chest. Those below have their hands situated like this picture so they can catch the person. The person says falling and the group says *fall* away, at which point the person falls back into the people's arms. If you're the person falling back, what do you have to believe? You need to believe/trust they will catch you. We are beginning with the most important relationship when it comes to trust: Trusting God in 2024.

We want to answer this question, "*Why Trust God.*" Maybe you're sitting here or listening on line or the radio and you're asking why would our pastor ask such a question? Of course, I trust God!

It reminds me of the story of the twin seven year old boys who were always getting into trouble. Their parents knew if any mischief was reported in town, the twins were probably involved. Their mother heard that a preacher in town had been successful in disciplining children, so she asked if he would speak with her boys. The preacher agreed, but he asked to see them individually. The mother sent one boy in the morning, with the other boy to see the preacher in the afternoon. The preacher, a huge man with a deep booming voice, sat the boy down and asked him sternly, "Do you know where God is, son?" The boy made no response, sitting there wide-eyed with his mouth hanging open. So the preacher repeated the question in an even sterner tone, "Where is God?!" Again, the boy made no attempt to answer. The preacher raised his voice even more and shook his finger in the boy's face and bellowed, "WHERE IS GOD?!" The boy screamed, ran directly home and hid in his closet. When his twin brother found him in the closet, he asked, "What happened?" His brother replied, "We are in BIG trouble this time! GOD is missing, and they think WE did it!"

So, pastor, why are you asking the question, "*Why trust God?*" After all, we wouldn't be listening to this message if we didn't trust God! To answer this question, we are going to begin by looking at Psalm 25, which we are going to read in unison.

In this psalm, David, the author, is reminding himself and now us, of important truths concerning God.

James Montgomery Boice says that David needs to remind himself of these truths because:

- 1) He is surrounded by his enemies (v. 2, 19)
- 2) He is conscious of his sins, particularly the sins of his youth, which he asks God to forget (v. 7, 11, 18)

These truths allow David to remain firm in his faith and I believe they also give believers several reasons why we can trust God.

It is in the form of a Hebrew acrostic, meaning that each verse starts with a succeeding letter in the Hebrew alphabet. There are 9 such psalms (9-10, 25, 34, 37, 112, 119, & 145).

As we read through this psalm see if you can pick out the reasons we can trust God. This is a prayer of David.

**Psalm 25:1-12, 20-21** To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul; in you I trust, O my God. Do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me. No one whose hope is in you will ever be put to shame, but they will be put to shame who are treacherous without excuse. Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long. Remember, O LORD, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. Remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you are good, O LORD. Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways. He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way. All the ways of the LORD are loving and faithful for those who keep the demands of his covenant. For the sake of your name, O LORD, forgive my iniquity, though it is great. Who, then, is the man that fears the LORD? He will instruct him in the way chosen for him. Guard my life and rescue me; let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you. May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope is in you.

David begins this psalm with a declaration:  
To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul; in you I trust, O my God.

David declares both his trust in God and relationship with God (“O my God). Some believe this is a psalm of lament and as he is struggling, he desires to declare his trust in God. So, let’s work our way down through this psalm. For all those who have a personal relationship with God, which is what those who were baptized this morning are declaring, you can trust God because:

**\*GOD never disappoints v. 2-3**

**Psalm 25:2-3** in you I trust, O my God. Do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me. **3** No one whose hope is in you will ever be put to shame, but they will be put to shame who are treacherous without excuse.

When you and I think of the word, *shame*, what comes to our mind?

Merriam Webster’s Dictionary: a painful emotion caused by consciousness of guilt, shortcoming, or impropriety or something that brings censure or reproach.

James Montgomery Boice, “This is not the chief biblical idea connected with shame. The unique biblical idea is that of being let down or disappointed or of having trusted in something that in the end proves unworthy of our trust.”

David, while going through very difficult times asks God to not let him be put to shame, to not let his enemy’s triumph over him. Right after that he says that NO ONE whose hope is in God will ever be put to shame or will find that God is unworthy of their trust.

This doesn’t mean that David understood why God was allowing his enemies to continue to come after him. You and I will not always understand why God is allowing us to go through some of the trials and difficulties: battles with the world, the devil, and our own sinful nature.

**Romans 5:1-5** Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **2** through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. **3** Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; **4** perseverance, character; and character, hope. **5** And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

Through Jesus Christ, every child of God, has a sure hope, an eternal hope.

**\*God teaches and guides v. 4-5**

**Psalm 25:4-5** Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths; **5** guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.

Some think that God started things and now He is just sitting back and letting things happen. God wants His children to come to Him for guidance in their lives. This demands humility on our part, admitting we don’t know everything, and

we need God's direction. One of the places we find this direction is the Word of God, the Bible. This is one reason you and I need to be students of this book, the Bible. If we are going to ask for God's guidance, then we better obey Him when He gives it.

**Psalm 32:8** I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.

**Proverbs 3:5–6** Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; **6** in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Jesus promises His disciples that, when He leaves, He will give them the Holy Spirit, to guide and to teach.

**John 14:25–26** “All this I have spoken while still with you. **26** But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

**John 16:13** But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

There is not one person here who can do life well apart from God. When you and I open the Bible, we need to ask the Holy Spirit to teach us and guide us. When faced with decisions in life do we ask for God's guidance?

P.C. Craigie, “The essence of the road of the righteous is this: it is a road too difficult to walk without the companionship and friendship of God.”

You and I can trust God because He never disappoints, He teaches and guides, and because of:

**\*His great love and mercy v. 6**

**Psalm 25:6** Remember, O LORD, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old.

Who can measure God's love?

**Psalm 32:10** Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him.

**Psalm 33:5** The LORD loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love.

**Psalm 33:18** But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love,

**Psalm 36:7** How priceless is your unfailing love! Both high and low among men find refuge in the shadow of your wings.

**Psalm 51:1** Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.

Praise God for His mercy: not getting what we deserve!!

**Ephesians 2:4–5** But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, **5** made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

Every breath we take is a reminder of God's love and mercy!

God never disappoints, He teaches and guides; His love and mercy are great;

**\*GOD is good and upright v. 7-8**

**Psalm 25:7–8** Remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you are good, O LORD. **8** Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways.

This combination of God's goodness and uprightness could also be described using the words *mercy* and *justice*. (James Montgomery Boice)

God cannot just give people a free pass into heaven. He can't turn his hand at sin. God did not sacrifice any of His righteousness in showing mercy to those who come to faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus, the sinless Son of God, was the pure sacrifice for our sins. This completely satisfied the justice of God!

**Romans 5:9–11** Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! **10** For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how

much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! **11** Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

**Romans 8:31–32** What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? **32** He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

God never disappoints, He teaches and guides; His love and mercy are great; He is good and upright;

**“HIS ways are loving and faithful v. 9-10**

**Psalm 25:9–10** He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way. **10** All the ways of the LORD are loving and faithful for those who keep the demands of his covenant.

“*loving*,” this is the Hebrew word, *hesed*, which refers to His covenant faithfulness. You and I can count on God’s faithful love.

**2 Timothy 2:13** if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.

**Psalm 89:14** Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you.

We experience God’s love and faithfulness when we obey His Word. When we disobey God is faithful in His discipline of us and He always disciplines correctly.

**Hebrews 12:4–11** In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. **5** And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: “My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, **6** because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.” **7** Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? **8** If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. **9** Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! **10** Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. **11** No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

God never disappoints, He teaches and guides; His love and mercy are great; He is good and upright; His ways are loving and faithful;

**\*HE is forgiving v. 11**

**Psalm 25:11** For the sake of your name, O LORD, forgive my iniquity, though it is great.

How many here are grateful for the forgiveness of God?

### *His Mercy is More*

This modern hymn was written by Matt Papa and Matt Boswell. The song itself was inspired from a sermon from John Newton, who was a slave ship captain in his earlier years of life.

#### **Verse 1**

What love could remember, no wrongs we have done  
Omniscient, all-knowing, He counts not their sum  
Thrown into a sea without bottom or shore  
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

#### **Verse 2**

What patience would wait as we constantly roam  
What Father so tender is calling us home  
He welcomes the weakest, the vilest, the poor  
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

#### **Verse 3**

What riches of kindness He lavished on us  
His blood was the payment His life was the cost  
We stood ‘neath a debt we could never afford  
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

#### **Chorus**

Praise the Lord  
His mercy is more  
Stronger than darkness  
New every morn'  
Our sins they are many, His mercy is more

**Psalm 32:1–5** Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. **2** Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit. **3** When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. **4** For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Selah **5** Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD”— and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah

**1 John 1:9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

**Psalm 86:1–5** Hear, O LORD, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. **2** Guard my life, for I am devoted to you. You are my God; save your servant who trusts in you. **3** Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I call to you all day long. **4** Bring joy to your servant, for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. **5** You are forgiving and good, O Lord, abounding in love to all who call to you.

**Hebrews 8:12** For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

**Psalm 103:11–12** For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; **12** as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

God never disappoints, He teaches and guides; His love and mercy are great; He is good and upright; His ways are loving and faithful; He is forgiving; and

**\*HE is my refuge v. 20-21**

**Psalm 25:20–21 (NIV84)** — **20** Guard my life and rescue me; let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you. **21** May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope is in you.

What is a refuge?

It is a place to get out of the storm. Anyone here facing any storms?

Why do you and I need refuge?

**Psalm 62:7–8** My salvation and my honor depend on God; he is my mighty rock, my refuge. Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge. Selah

**Psalm 59:16** But I will sing of your strength, in the morning I will sing of your love; for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble. (when Saul is trying to kill David)

**SO WHAT????**

\*Where would I say my relationship with God is at now?

\*What steps do I need to take, with God's strength and power, to deepen my relationship and trust in God?

\*Begin reading Genesis as we start our series next week, *Trusting God's Plan, Purpose, and Design*