

How to Build Trust in God's Kindness

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Our theme for 2024 is how God's kindness leads us to repentance. To see how, let's study a very old hymn – the song written by King David in Psalm 19.

Build your trust in God's kindness through **God's world.**

The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they reveal knowledge.
They have no speech, they use no words;
no sound is heard from them.
Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world.
In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.
It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
like a champion rejoicing to run his course.
It rises at one end of the heavens
and makes its circuit to the other;
nothing is deprived of its warmth.



Did you know?

Psalm 19 was C.S. Lewis' favorite Psalm.



Read the first section of Psalm 19.

The first verse of Psalm 19 says that “The heavens declare the glory of God.” And King David goes on to say that these skies never stop talking about it, day after day, using no words yet repeating His glory in a constant refrain like the creatures do around the throne of God: *Holy Holy Holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come (Revelation 4:8)*

The nature of the heavens – how the sun, moon, planets, and stars work together – tells us that God is

- Vast
- Consistent
- Creative
- Beautiful
- Structured
- Light and Warmth
- Not bound by language or country or culture





What else do the heavens tell you personally about God?

The most beautiful thing we learn about God through the heavens is His kindness to us. And that's because the skies, the sun, the swirling of space – it was all poured out as a home to sustain us – His people. We work and dream under a bejeweled blanket of light and love, stretched wide over our souls by the hands of the Father.

Here is where God's glory shines most: in His goodness to us. He has even structured our very bodies unlike those of other created beings, so that we might naturally look up and not down, and meet the God who loves us through the skies. He is the bridegroom, He is the champion who is symbolized by the sun rising daily to show us compassion (Isaiah 30:8), not depriving us of His warmth.

What's one regular practice you can begin to get your head out of your work and up to this daily love story from God? _____

Schedule time to do this, and build your trust in God through the goodness of His world.

The law of the Lord is perfect,
refreshing the soul.
The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.
The precepts of the Lord are right,
giving joy to the heart.
The commands of the Lord are radiant,
giving light to the eyes.
The fear of the Lord is pure,
enduring forever.
The decrees of the Lord are firm,
and all of them are righteous.
They are more precious than gold,
than much pure gold;
they are sweeter than honey,
than honey from the honeycomb.
By them your servant is warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.

Build your trust in God's kindness through **God's Word**.

Read the next part of Psalm 19.

If God's glory is revealed so thoroughly in the skies, how much more kind for Him to take the time to reveal Himself over thousands of years in the written Word. Our Bibles are a love letter from the Lord of Hosts – direct communication that so many believers, including every person mentioned within it, did not have to guide their faith as we do.





Write down the things King David says about God's Word in these verses. What is it like? What can it do?

Again, the goodness of God overflows into His Word, just as it did in the heavens. We are changed, we are refreshed with joy, we are made wise through its power. God's words are more enduring than life, more precious than money, more soul-tasty than food.

An interesting contrast to God's kindness in these two sections we've seen: at the end of the first section, God revealed in the heavens we are *warmed*, and at the end of this section, we are *warned*.

One is grace, and one is truth. God's kindness is always the sum of both.



Build your trust in God's kindness through *repentance*.

But who can discern their own errors?
Forgive my hidden faults.
Keep your servant also from willful sins;
may they not rule over me.
Then I will be blameless,
innocent of great transgression.
May these words of my mouth and this meditation
of my heart
be pleasing in your sight,
Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.



Read the last part of Psalm 19.

There's a big shift at the end of this Psalm.

So far, this hymn writer has focused entirely on God's glory, revealed both in His creation and in His Word. But in these final verses, the Psalmist abruptly turns to himself and his sin.

Part of the reason, I'm sure, is that when you experience the vastness and beauty of God,

you become more aware of the small and ugly parts of yourself. I always know I am truly worshipping when I taste the conviction of my sin on my lips.

But let's look at another reason, too.

The Psalmist not only changes the subject here, he also changes the direction. **He stops just talking about God and starts talking to Him.**

David has experienced so much of God's goodness through His world and His Word that he knows He's the kind of God who speaks. He knows He's a God who listens. He knows He's a God who cares.

David's seen enough: God has gone out of His way to be on his side.

And so, he now feels safe to bare his soul, his hidden faults, his willful sins.

God's kindness leads us to repentance because we know we can trust that a God who is so very good to us will not turn us away.

As I often say, knowing how much God loves you is way more important than working on how much you love God. Your obedience and your life before God hinges on how much He knows and cares for you, not the other way around.



Where do you struggle with believing in God's love for you?



How does this hinder your obedience? Your honesty before God? Before others?

Whatever you wrote, or were too afraid to write, you can trust His kindness even in the darkest parts of yourself, because He has revealed His goodness to you. Pay attention to His world and His Word – they are a continuing love story about you.

He is your Rock and your Redeemer. He's not going anywhere, and He won't stop saving you.

You are held. And He is enough.