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# TRAILBLAZER

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

PROVERBS 3:6 (NIV)

Have you ever walked through nature without a worn path? Maybe you've hiked through tall grasses or clomped through a tangle of weeds.

It's challenging, isn't it? The ground feels unstable, and you may find yourself stumbling.

But walking on a smooth path is a whole different story! You can see exactly where you are going, your footing is sure, and your walk out in nature is significantly more enjoyable.

When it comes to life, God says that if we trust in Him, He will clear a path for us. He will go before us and make our way straight and smooth.

Instead of stumbling through life, we can give our plans over to God and let Him pave the way. When we trust in Him, He will blaze a path that will make our life a much more pleasurable hike.

## PRAYER

Lord, I have lots of ideas and plans, but I'm not always sure if they are the right decision. Will You take my plans and make a path? I trust that You know what is best for me, and I am grateful for Your guidance. You are good! Amen.

## GO EXPLORE

Take a parent and try walking through nature without a path. Afterward, note the different challenges you faced. Could you see your feet? Was the ground level? How long did it take? Would it have been quicker to hike on a smooth path? Thank God for clearing a path for us to make our way easier.





# FRESHWATER WORDS

Can both fresh water and salt water  
flow from the same spring?

**JAMES 3:11 (NIV)**

The ocean is full of salt water, and lakes are full of freshwater. Pretend it's a hot day and you are tired and thirsty. Which would you like a drink from?

The freshwater, right? One swallow of that cool drink, and you would feel refreshed immediately. Whereas the salt water would leave you thirstier and with a briny taste and possibly a painful stomachache.

Salt water and freshwater do not flow from the same place. And God wants us to think of our words in the same way.

Freshwater words flow straight from God and are refreshing to all who hear them. But saltwater words are from a different source and will leave people with an unpleasant feeling. The two do not and cannot go together. They contradict each other.

As Jesus followers, let's choose the right source and use only freshwater words that give life rather than leave a bad taste.

## PRAYER

Lord, I want to speak freshwater words to the people around me. Guard my lips from saying salty comments that might hurt those I love and contradict who You are. Help me to be a blessing to someone today by the kind words that pass through my lips. Amen.

## PRESERVE AND PROTECT

Do your part to keep our water clean. Animals, plants, and people depend on streams, lakes, and rivers for life-giving, fresh water, so always avoid dumping chemicals, garbage, or other foreign substances into these water sources to help protect animals, plants, and other people.



# SEEING THROUGH MIRAGE

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

MATTHEW 6:13 (KJV)

Have you seen a cartoon or movie where someone is stumbling through the desert looking for water, then all of a sudden, he thinks he sees an oasis up ahead, only to get there and find nothing?

This is called a mirage. And yes, it really can take place. It happens when the ground is hot and the air is cool because light can bend through these different layers of air and create an optical illusion.

A mirage promises but doesn't deliver.

And temptation to do wrong works in this same way.

When we are in a pickle, a temptation (or mirage) will promise us good results through lying, cheating, or

stealing, but if we follow the temptation, we quickly realize those good results aren't really there.

Before we act on any mirage, let's pull out the lens of God's Word and try looking again. His Word will show us that good results only come from following Him!

## PRAYER

Lord, sometimes I am tempted to do wrong in the hope that my situation will turn out right. Help me to think about what Your Word has to say about my choice before I take action. Thank You for helping me to see clearly! Amen.

## GO EXPLORE

Keep your eyes open for a mirage on the horizon. They can show up on a hot road or while you are waiting for a plane to take off. Describe what it looks like to someone. Can you see how a person in the desert would think that it looks like water ahead?



# MOUNTAIN MAKER

I lift up my eyes to the mountains—where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.

PSALM 121:1–2 (NIV)

Right outside my window towers a huge, snow-covered mountain that belongs to the Cascade mountain range. With jagged white peaks that get lost in the clouds, this mountain is nothing less than majestic!

Overshadowing everything in its path, this mountain declares the glory of our great and awesome God: Secure. Immovable. Unwavering.

One look at this scene, and I'm reminded that God really can handle all my problems. My Mountain Maker is not distressed by my worries or shocked when my life is upside down. He is strong, able, and always ready to help.

And He does the same for you! When your problems become overwhelming and you need somewhere to turn, look at the mountains, then call on our great God for help!

## PRAYER

Father, when I look at what You've made, I am reminded that You are my help. No problem is too big or too hard for You to handle. You are strong, steady, and able to help me through all life's challenges. Thank You for being my Savior! Amen.

## GO EXPLORE

Get a mountain view! Find some of the high vantage points in your area, then take a day to explore all there is to see! As you look at some of the grand scenery, take note of how big your God really is!



# OUR HUMBLE HERO

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

ROMANS 5:8 (KJV)

When Jesus came to the earth, He was born as a baby. Think of what a big deal that was!

He could have stayed in His perfect heaven, but the God who made endless galaxies, hung planets in place, and spoke our world into existence humbled Himself by sending His Son into the most defenseless position possible: a crying, needy, hungry baby.

He lowered Himself from the great cosmic Creator with limitless freedom to live a human life that would eventually lead to a painful death on a cross! Why?

Because our great, universe-creating God saw that we needed a Savior. He saw that we were helpless without Him, and He jumped into action.

He sent His Son to become human so He could rescue us and make a way of salvation. Thank You, Jesus!

## PRAYER

God, it's amazing to think that You loved me so much that You would humble Yourself to save me. You didn't have to, but You did. Thoughts of Your great love are filling my heart right now, and I am so grateful. Amen.

## FUN ACTIVITY

Make a galaxy in a plastic water bottle. Layer cotton balls, water, food dye, and glitter. Repeat, switching colors, until the bottle is full and can be closed. Once it is finished, show a friend and tell them about our great, galaxy-making God.

