

THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
**I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God
IN CHRIST JESUS.***

(Philippians 3:13-14 NASB)

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Trust is the Lord

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Lately, from the US media, I have heard it said many times that the American people have lost trust in their elected officials and that trust and honor must be restored. I agree with such an assessment; however, as a Christian, I believe it falls short of the real answer as to what ails the US in this day.

For the most part, trust is understood as a concept. One of the definitions of the word *trust* is “firm belief or confidence in the honesty, integrity, reliability, justice, etc. of another person or thing.” According to this definition, trust is based on some good qualities or traits of a person or thing. We could say that when a person has such traits, others will have faith in that person that he or she will do the right thing or act righteously. To carry this thought one step further, *trust* is also defined as “the person or thing trusted.” In other words, the person or thing is trust, which implies that the person is honest, reliable, just, etc.

This leads to a word that came alive to me nearly 17 years ago when I was in the midst of a personal trial, the outcome of which, in the beginning, did not look very favorable for me. But the spirit of God met me and gave the following word that became very real and personal. When all was said and done, I knew that my trust is the Lord, and I know that, for the world that is in the midst of God’s shaking, the answer is the same. It is time to turn to the Lord and know Him as trust.

(5) Thus says the LORD, “Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the LORD. (6) “For he will be like a bush in the desert and will not see when prosperity comes, but will live in stony wastes in the wilderness, a land of salt without inhabitant. (7) “Blessed is the man who trusts [*batach*] in the LORD and whose trust [*mibtach*] is the LORD. (8) “For he will be like a tree planted by the water, that extends its roots by a stream and will not fear when the heat comes; but its leaves will be green, and it will not be anxious in a year of drought nor cease to yield fruit. (9) “The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it? (10) “I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give to each man according to his ways, according to the results of his deeds. (Jeremiah 17:5-10 NASB)

The problem today, especially in the US, is that many people have put their trust in others to solve all their problems. The most obvious example is the trust so many have put in President Obama, as if he alone has all the answers to what ails our once mighty nation. Don’t take me wrong; it is good to put our trust in others that deserve to have our trust because they have a proven track record in this regard, but it is not good to make others our strength and to turn our hearts away from the Lord. We must first and foremost put our trust in the Lord. Speaking through Jeremiah, the Lord is very clear that putting our trust in fallen man and turning our hearts away from Him has one end in view, and it is not very good. Prosperity will not come; but have you considered that prosperity could be lost by a nation that once had a heart for the Lord but turned aside to trust its own strength? Could this be why each day seems to bring us closer to the possibility of an economic/financial collapse unlike any in the history of man?

Now, in verse 7, there are two Hebrew words used that are both translated as the word *trust*. The first *trust* comes from the Hebrew word *batach*, which means “properly to *hie* for refuge; figuratively to *trust*, be *confident* or *sure*: - be bold (confident, secure, sure), careless, put confidence, (make to) hope, (put, make to) trust.” The second *trust* comes from the Hebrew word *mibtach*, which means “properly a *refuge*, that is, (objectively) *security*, or (subjectively) *assurance*: - confidence, hope, sure, trust.” (Source: *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*.)

So, the first use of the word *trust* means that we are to have confidence in the Lord, and the second use of the word *trust* means that the Lord is our very refuge. Some translations use the word *hope* in the first incidence and the word *confidence* in the second. Interestingly, I have not found one translation that uses the word *refuge*. *Rotherham's Emphasized Bible* states: **Blessed is the man who trusteth in Yahweh, to whom Yahweh is his ground of confidence.** The *Concordant Version* states: **Blessed is the master who trusts in Yahweh so that Yahweh comes to be his trust.**

I prefer the way the last translation puts it, for it implies a process. As we put our trust in the Lord, we come to realize that the whole matter of trust is not some esoteric concept but actually a person. For us who believe in this day, **trust is the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.** He is our refuge, and He is our trust. In other words, it is more than trusting in His ability; He alone is the very embodiment or personification of trust, just as much as He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Those knowing the Lord as their trust and whose trust is the Lord are blessed, which means that they are benefited. **“For he will be like a tree planted by the water, that extends its roots by a stream and will not fear when the heat comes; but its leaves will be green, and it will not be anxious in a year of drought nor cease to yield fruit.”**

Jeremiah lived during tumultuous times for Judah and Jerusalem. It was not easy, especially for the young prophet who was often reviled for what the Lord called him to speak forth. Using the metaphor of a planted tree and yielding fruit even in times of a drought, Jeremiah declares to us even today that one whose trust is the Lord will not only survive the rough times but will flourish. Such a one will not be anxious but instead will be strong and bear fruit. This should remind us of Paul's words: **Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God** (Philippians 4:6 NASB). **I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me** (Philippians 4:12-13 NASB). Paul was a lot like Jeremiah in the suffering that he experienced for the sake of the ecclesia. Paul knew where his trust and confidence were: **Christ Jesus our hope** (1 Timothy 1:1).

Again, take note of what happens to one who does not make the Lord his trust: **“Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the LORD. For he will be like a bush in the desert and will not see when prosperity comes, but will live in stony wastes in the wilderness, a land of salt without inhabitant.”** If we place our trust in others (mankind), who, by the way, are just like us, making the flesh of man our hope or confidence and, in so doing, turning our hearts away from the Lord, then we will not flourish but instead be like a dried-up bush in the desert. Let us thrive, not die!

Today, in the US, there is a grass roots movement to revive the nation back to its founding principles and to elect officials that adhere to them. Given the corrupt political system of our day, I understand such a movement and the cry for a return, especially a return to a strict interpretation of and adherence to the US Constitution. My concern for such a movement is its foundation and its trust. Is it based on the strength of men and women who proclaim: “We will prevail!”? Or, is it based on men and women who know Christ as their trust, who are looking to the Lord for guidance and leading? In other words, is it based on the flesh, whose trust is the flesh, or on the Lord, whose trust is the Lord? If it is based on the flesh, it will fail, even if it has some short-term success. If it is based on the Lord, it will prevail.

To all Americans, as well as others throughout the nations of the world, it is time to turn to the Lord and to know Him as trust. Only He can lead us through the dark days set before us and into His marvelous light. There is only one rightful King over the nations, and His name is Jesus, Yeshua, the One who saves. Let us not be persuaded by movements; let us be persuaded by Jesus, our refuge and trust.

Dear beloved in Christ, **blessed is the man whose trust is the Lord!**