

To Trust in God: A Devotional

Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Whitworth College, January 16, 1979

Psalm 130

I am encouraged when I read my Bible. Its pages are filled with the stories of people like you and me grappling with the very same things that we do, who in their confusion, pain and semi-darkness seem for the most part to meet each crisis head-on with a response so simple that if we are not paying close attention we may easily overlook its simplicity. If people of the Bible have anything at all to teach us, anything of lasting value, any profound message to engrave upon our souls, it's this: when you're down and out, when you're facing a crisis, when you're facing eminent danger, when you're standing undecided at some fork in the road, when darkness and chaos enfold you - *trust God*.

I.

When your world is without form and void, when darkness covers the face of the deep - trust God.

When you're covered from head to foot in dust and boils, when everything and everyone you ever counted as precious is gone forever; when there is not a shred of hard evidence that God is good or fair or even loving; when everything you've been taught about life and how to live it no longer makes sense, when reason is useless and understanding impossible - trust God.

When your fig trees and grapevines and apple orchards and wheat fields and pastures lie barren, when your barns are empty, when no sounds come from your sheep pens - trust God.

When the Canaanites want to cut a deal - trust God.

When Goliath stands six feet taller than you and weighs four hundred pounds more - trust God.

When everybody else has deserted God and gone down the street to worship Baal; when you're the only prophet left on the block - trust God.

When you hear the Chaldeans lining up their chariots, when they mount their horses for the charge, when you see their spear tips reflecting in the sunlight - trust God.

When Sennacherib is battering down your front door - trust God.

When you are a thousand miles from home, firmly planted on alien soil, and your jailers

order you to sing a hymn to your God so they can ridicule your Faith - trust God.

When Nebuchadrezzar's furnace blows hot in your face, and it's your turn to enter it - trust God.

When not one stone of God's temple is left standing on another, when the holy altar lies broken in a thousand pieces; when you are weeping and God is weeping and the world has spun from its axis - trust God.

When God is as silent as Bethlehem's star - trust God.

When Rachel weeps for her slaughtered infants - trust God.

When Herodias asks for your head on one of the banquet platters - trust God.

When the religious establishment looks for a way to shut you down forever because you offend their sensibilities; because you question its motives, its hermeneutics, its sacred institutions; and most of all its effectiveness to restore and to save - trust God.

When your best friends – your *best* friends, mind you – deny they know you and desert you and run for their lives - trust God.

When you feel the whip, the spit, the thorns, the nails - trust God.

When you think God – even God - has forsaken you - trust Him anyway.

When everything you've ever counted on in life is either nailed shut or has a stone rolled in front of it - trust God.

When everyone else gives up the dream and goes fishing - trust God.

When they throw you out of their synagogues and drag you in chains before their magistrates, their kings and their emperors - trust God.

When it's midnight, when your cell door is slammed shut and you lie there beaten half to death with your feet in stocks, and your cell mate says, "Let's sing" - trust God and sing the hymn.

When you try to pray but spit cotton; when you run out of words; when you listen for some sure word from the Lord, any word at all, but hear only the ringing in your ears and the beating of your own sad heart - trust God.

When you feel the earth beneath you giving way and the foundations starting to heave and pitch; when you see the beams above you splitting, and there is fire and smoke and a dark sun and a blood-colored moon - trust God.

When you hide behind a locked door; when your hands and heart tremble with fear; when there is a price on your head; when the sweet dream seems ended – trust God. Dream on.

Trust him also when you are about to cross over the Great River; when you hover there between the far shore and this one, when eternity rises in the distance; when the Bright Morning Star beckons, when you hear a distant chorus sweetly singing the song you were born to sing – trust God. Go gently. Go joyfully.

II.

And one last word: it's very important to trust God when things are going well, when things have never looked better; when you think you've got it made; when you're relaxed and satisfied.

Trust God especially in springtime, when blossoms cover the trees, when all that's slept through the winter cold awakes; when every king but your king goes forth to war; when your husband is gone fighting on a forgotten frontier far, far away; when your king, the king who lives next door, *God's chosen king*, invites you to drop by his palace for refreshments - trust God. And get an unlisted number.

Or when Potiphar's wife smiles and offers you tea on the veranda - trust God. Flee. Run for your life.

Or when the king – God's *king*, mind you! - appreciates your work so much that he offers to build you a private wing adjoined to his palace so that you, his close friend (and all this time you thought you were a nobody) may serve as his very own live-in prophet - trust God.

When Satan offers to be your friendly realtor; when he makes you an offer too good to be true; when he transports you to a very high place and offers to give you free, in exchange for nothing at all (well, almost nothing), all the kingdoms of this world (for pastors he offers all the kingdoms of *the Church*) - trust God.

When your three best friends offer to build you a booth, a kind of monument, actually - in your honor, on some high and holy mountain - trust God.

When someone offers you a scepter (however small) and a crown (however small), and another tells you how lucky your mother was just to have given birth to you and nursed you; and still another suggests that someone of your status and calling would look so much more impressive seated on a war-horse (after all, *Kings ride war-horses, not comical donkeys!*) - trust God.

When Judas opens his arms to you and puckers - trust God.

Conclusion

I tell you, in all these situations and situations just like them, in all these moments and all the moments between, do your best to trust God as much as you possibly can, trust him with all your heart, with everything you've got, trust him with all the trust God has given you so far.

Trust him more than you trust anyone or anything else. Trust him even if no one else trusts him. Trust him more than you trust yourself, your learning, your worldly possessions, your professional standing, your theological persuasions, your particular brand of orthodoxy, your country, or your heartbeat. Trust him because you were created to trust him. Trust him because your bones *want* to trust Him. Trust him because he has earned the right to your trust. Trust him because of all He has invested in you, because of all he has entrusted to you. Trust him because he's the only thing in this world or the next worth trusting. Trust him because he raised Jesus and he can raise you any old day.

Then, one of these days, perhaps sooner than you expect, because you have trusted him, you won't need to trust him any more. You will be the honored guest at his table. The banquet will be set, the candles lit, the celebration begun.

On that day, that *great* day, you will hear from his own lips just how much, throughout all your years, *he has trusted you*.

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