

Where Will You Put Your Trust?

Investing is difficult, isn't it? It's hard to figure out how to save enough money for the future, isn't it? We do our best to make sure that we have money to invest. Then we do our homework and invest it in companies we trust. And then the stock market takes a nose-dive and here we are. Investing money is difficult. If investing money is difficult, how much more difficult is it to invest our trust! All of us have invested time and energy and trust into people, only to have friendships broken, promises broken and trust betrayed. In Psalm 146, we find solid, wise advice about investing, so that if we ask the question 'Where will I put my trust?', God's word tells us plainly.

The Psalmist starts out and tells us first of all where we are to *not* place our trust. He tells us: *"Psa. 146:3 Do not put your trust in princes, in mortal men, who cannot save. 4 When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing."* The psalmist tells us to not put our trust in princes. The word here in Hebrew isn't really talking about a prince or a king. The word actually means 'do-gooder'. It describes a man who has an abundance of money. He has enough money for himself. He has more than enough. And so, there are people who come to him asking for help with the various needs in their lives. How would we translate that today? Maybe 'Philanthropist' might be a good word. These are the sort of people the psalmist is talking about. They are the sort of people whom people look up to and go to. They give out money. But what does God's word say about them? It says 'do not put your trust in them.'

The next question we will immediately ask is 'why?' Why should we not put our trust in them? The Psalmist tells us: *"Psa. 146:3 Do not put your trust in princes, in mortal men, who cannot save. 4 When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing."* Do not put your trust in them, because they cannot save. They cannot save themselves. How do we know? They die and they return to the ground, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. And with them goes all of their money and all of their plans. They cannot save. They cannot save themselves. And if this is true, then how much more is it true that they cannot save you!

It is a sin when we expect people to solve our problems. It is a sin when we put our trust in Bill Clinton and all the other presidents. It is a sin when we put our trust in Bill Gates and the millions of dollars he has behind himself. It is a sin when we put our trust in Bill Cosby. It is sin when we trust in anyone named 'Bill' or any other name. It is a sin to expect that they will be able to solve the problems in our lives. They cannot address your problems, because they cannot address their own problems.

What does this sin look like in action? Well, just take any big problem and then see how the world reacts when they address the big problem. When hurricane Katrina came, where did people put their trust? They put their trust in the local and federal government. But, all the governments in the world can't stop a hurricane from coming. When the stock market goes down, how do people react? Some say that the government should have done something. It should have protected people's investments. Others say that the government should step out of the way so that enterprising, hard-working people can make money and get this economy running. Look at these examples and so many more and you will see one common attitude. Where do these people put their trust? They put their trust in a 'do-gooder'. They put their trust in a president or a business man or in some other person.

And, again and again in our lives we are tempted to put our trust in some politician or leader or benefactor. And it will never work. The government doesn't know who you are. Nor does any business. They don't care for you and they will not be there for you when your world falls apart. It's not their job to. It's the job of businesses to make money *for themselves*. It's the government's job to keep the peace. It's not the government's job to raise your children or take care of you when you are old.

Do not put your trust in human beings. They cannot save themselves. They cannot save you. Instead, put your faith and trust in the LORD. We sin so very often by placing our trust where it doesn't belong: in ourselves, in those with the money or power to help us. But, the LORD is the only one who can and does help us. Listen to what the Psalmist tells us: *"5 Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God, 6 the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them — the LORD, who remains faithful forever. 7 He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry."*

Notice how in these words, the LORD gives us so very many reasons to put our trust in him. First, he is the one who keeps the truth forever. How many politicians have there been who have made promises—wonderful, glorious promises, but then didn't deliver on those promises? Notice what the psalmists says about our God. He makes a promise and then what does he do? He keeps it. He does not forget. He does not give in. He does not give his responsibility over to someone else. He knows what he has promised and he delivers on that promise. The best place we have that shown to is in the life of our Savior, Jesus. The writer to the Hebrews describes his faithfulness to his promises to us in this way: *2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.* Jesus promised to suffer for us. Jesus promised to endure shame for us. Jesus promised to die and rise from the dead for us. And he has done all of these things perfectly. And the result is clear: We are his forgiven, redeemed children. What a joy it is to put our trust in a Savior like that.

So then, my brothers and sisters, where will you put your trust? Will you put your trust in Wall Street? It cannot even make money for itself, let alone save you from the problems you face in your lives. Will you put your faith in the government? It is blind to your needs and deaf to your cries for help. No, you know very well the answer to that question. Continue to put your trust in the LORD. Trust Jesus, for he does hear and he does save.

What then do we do with the world? What then do we do with the government? God's word is clear. Jesus tells us: *"Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."* Give your taxes, give your respect, your duty, your obedience and your service to the government. But, give who you are to your Savior. Give Jesus your worship, your honor, your praise, your thank-offerings of money, time, energy. Bring your prayers to him. For he hears and he helps. Amen.