

We Entrust Our Lives To Our Father

The stock market isn't what it used to be. Some of the greatest giants of industry are no longer giants. They are the punch-line to jokes. And they are the objects of cursing. If there's one lesson we have learned, it's that it was not a good idea to invest money in names like AIG, Bear Stearns and Citibank. Nobody trusts them now. But, what would you say to someone who entrusted thousands of dollars to these companies, and then when they imploded, they entrusted even more money to them? You would say: "you're stupid. You're crazy!"

In the words we look at this evening, our Savior, Jesus entrusts something precious to his Father. No, it's not his retirement fund. It's his life. As Jesus is dying in our place on the cross, he cries out the words of Psalm 31: "5 *Into your hands I commit my spirit; redeem me, O LORD, the God of truth.*"

Jesus entrusts his spirit, his very life itself into the hands of his Father. Now, I want you to think carefully about what we speak about next. Does God the Father have hands? Our Father is spirit. He does not have flesh and blood. Then why would Jesus cry out these words? Why would speak about his Father's hands?

Jesus is using a figure of speech. It's called an *anthropomorphism*. An anthropomorphism is where God takes on human quality to teach us about himself. Hands are a symbol of power. After all, what do hands do? Hands crush. And that's exactly what was happening here on the cross. The Father was slowly crushing the Son. He was squeezing the breath, the energy, the life out of his son—his one and only son, whom he loved. He crushed his mind and emotions so very thoroughly. He allowed his own people, the Jews to abandon him. Then his own family abandoned him. Then his disciples lied about him and ran from him. And, finally, the Father, himself abandoned the Son so suffer Hell alone.

Just as severely as he crushed his mind, he crushed his body. For that's what crucifixion is. People didn't die on the cross from trauma or blood loss. They died by suffocation. The weight of gravity slowly piles up on them until they can't lift up their body to breathe. Then they die.

And yet, Jesus cries out on the cross: "*Into your hands I commit my spirit.*" He entrusts not gold or silver, but his very life into the hands of the Father who crushed him and was squeezing away his life. Would you buy a ticket on a sinking ship? Would you entrust your money to a company which was losing it? Would you entrust you life and breath and soul to a God who was taking all those things from you? Our Savior did just that. The more his Father crushed him, the more he put his hope and faith in him. He did this for one powerful reason. Jesus knew that his Father's hands were powerful. They were powerful enough to crush. But, even more important: they were powerful enough to cradle.

Now, before we speak about Jesus any longer, let us set aside time to speak about you. Jesus entrusted all he had into the hands of his Father. What about you? Do you entrust your soul and life into the hands of your Father? Here is where we see our sin. Here is where we see the darkness of Good Friday. For the darkness that covered the land when the Sun gave out was only a picture for the darkness in our hearts.

You are in the hands of your Father. Do you entrust your life to him, even when he crushes you? When you see your retirement income plummet do you entrust your life and your future to your Father? How many high-schoolers are there out there in the world, who when they cry out to God, asking for a place and a purpose in this life only see darkness and hear silence? How many parents are there out there in the world who lose so much sleep at night, worrying about the children who are now on their own?

You see? We see the great powerless we have in ourselves. We do not entrust our lives to him when he crushes us with silence and misery. And, what's worse, we do not entrust our lives to him when he allows good to come into our lives. How many people are there out there in the world who blamed God when they were poor and then promptly forgot about God when they were rich? How many parents are there who work so hard to bring their children to catechism class. But then when they are confirmed, they give up the fight to stay in God's word. How many parents are there who, when their children grow up and have good families and good jobs promptly give up on their Father and stop coming to church?

We are in our Father's hands. And it is only when we are in his hands do we fully see the strength and power of

our sin. The darkness on Good Friday was nothing compared to the darkness in our hearts. The LORD squeezes us in his hands and we despair and blame him. The LORD loosens his grip and we forget about him. If this is how we act when times are bad and when times are good, what hope is there for us when there is *no* time? What hope is there for us when we breathe our last as Jesus did? If we didn't entrust our lives to him throughout our lives, how will we have the power to do so at the end of our life?

Do you see now what Good Friday is all about? We need a Savior. We need a brother who can do we cannot. We need a brother who will trust in our Father perfectly, even when his Father was crushing him. We find that Savior in Jesus. And Jesus found his strength and hope in the names of his Father. Listen again to the names the LORD gives to himself: *"redeem me, O LORD, the God of truth."*

In this verse we find two, amazing, beautiful names. These are the names that Jesus clung to when his Father was crushing the life out of him. The Psalmist says: *"redeem me, O LORD."* The LORD is one of the most beautiful words and names in the bible. In the Hebrews, it comes from the verb, "to be." The LORD is what he is. He is the God of faithful, forever, free grace. Jesus knew that when his Father made a promise, he would keep it. In a different psalm— in Psalm 16, Jesus cries out: *"Psa. 16:9 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, 10 because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay."* Jesus knew that his Father would never let his body stay in the tomb long enough to see decay. He knew that his Father would raise him because he made a promise.

The LORD is the first name. The second name is the *God of truth*. In hebrew, the word "אֱלֹהִים" means to rest your weight on something. Jesus could put all of his weight on his Father. He could entrust his life to him because his Father would not let us down.

The names that his Father had meant so much to Jesus. And they mean so much to us this evening. We can trust his names. He is the LORD. He keeps all his promises. He promised to take away our sin by sending a Savior who would trust perfectly in him. And he did. He promised to take away our sin by crushing his Son in our place. And he did. He promised to not abandon us when we die. He will raise our bodies up to be with him forever in heaven. He is the LORD. And he is also the God of truth. We can entrust our faith and life to him.

But here is were we also find so much comfort. For there is a huge difference between *can* and *will*. There is a huge difference between *wanting* and *doing*. We *can* entrust our lives to our Father. But, our sinful nature is strong. How can we overcome it? We find the answer to that question there on the cross. Jesus said: *"Into your hands I commit my spirit"*. Note: the present tense. Jesus continued to trust and entrust his life to him. And through the Holy Spirit given to us through water and word, we aren't just *able* to entrust our lives to him, we *do* what our Father commands. The Holy Spirit gives us faith to entrust everything we have and are into his hands. For his hands are powerful. And his name is faithful. Amen.