

A Matter of Trust
Psalm 62
May 16, 2021

The late advice columnist Ann Landers used to receive about 10,000 letters per month asking for an advice on various issues. What these letters revealed is that most common topic people are dealing with is a fear of something. People are afraid of losing their health, jobs, or relationships. These are all very important issues. Among these, what affects the relationships most is the issue of trust. Most often relationships break when trust has been violated.

Trust is essential in human life. We cannot survive without trust. When we drive, we trust that other drivers would keep the traffic laws. When we drive over a bridge, we trust that the engineers had built the bridge in such a way that it will not collapse. When we buy a food in a restaurant or in a grocery shop, we trust that what we buy is eatable, and hopefully enjoyable. When we are sick, we trust the doctors to diagnose our condition accurately and provide remedies that will help us. When the doctors perform a surgery, we trust them that they have necessary skills to perform the surgery. Even for banking system we trust the banks to provide secured financial services. When you think about it, just about everything in human life is tied to basic trust.

However, it is concerning when we recognize that it is difficult to trust an institution which affects all areas of our lives, whether that is a government, a news outlet, financial institution, schools, or religious organizations.

According to the Pew Research Center's report that came out last year, only about 20 % of Americans trust the US government to do what is best for Americans. This number was not the lowest. It has been like that for over a decade. Around 2010 and 2011 only about 15% of Americans trusted the US government to do the right thing.¹ Even though only about 20% of Americans trusted the government in recent years, when it comes to trusting the law makers, the members of the congress, both houses, the number is 3%. Only 3% of Americans trust the members of congress.²

Less than 15% of young people aged between 18 and 29 trust Wall Street to do the right thing according to 2015 report.³ Less than 15% of young people

¹ <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2020/09/14/americans-views-of-government-low-trust-but-some-positive-performance-ratings/>

² <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2019/04/11/public-trust-in-government-1958-2019/>

³ <https://www.thestreet.com/investing/why-millennials-dont-trust-wall-street-or-investing-in-stocks-13135109>

trust a major financial institution in American. According to Forbes magazine in 2009, 74% of Americans believed that the people who work in Wall Street were not trustworthy, and the same report also revealed that 39% of the Americans believed that Wall Street did more harm than good.⁴

How about the media? According to this year's February issues of Forbes magazine, about 60% of Americans believe that the mainstream news organizations are deliberately promoting a political ideology or position rather than objectively reporting the facts. Fifty-six percent of Americans believe "Journalists and reporters are purposely trying to mislead people by saying things they know are false or gross exaggerations."⁵ In other words we cannot trust what is being reported in the news. That is the sentiment of American people. I am not sure if we can be confident about who is telling the truth, or if anyone is telling the truth. Isn't that a major problem? We don't know who to trust any more.

I believe that is a serious problem. We have a critical "trust deficit" in our country.

Being able to trust someone or being able to trust our government is what gives us confidence. A journalist, Eric Weiner, traveled around the world to find out why the people of some countries are happier than the people of other countries. What he discovered was that there was a common factor in the countries where the people were happier than others. The essential ingredient was trust. The happiest countries are those in which the citizens feel they can trust their government, they can trust their social institutions, and they can trust their neighbors.⁶

Trust is essential not only for a country but also for all relationships, especially in our marriages. According to the latest report, in the US, 44.6% of married couples end up divorcing. The most common cause for the divorce in the US (88.8%) is infidelity.⁷ Adultery is rampant in the US. Infidelity is a violation of a covenant. It is a violation of trust. When trust is broken, the relationship does not last.

Even our relationship with the Lord is a relationship based on trust. It is based on our trust in the Lord. I say, "OUR trust in the Lord", because the Lord remains faithful always. Moses says, "Know that the LORD your God is God, the

⁴ <http://www.forbes.com/2009/03/23/hating-wall-street-intelligenct-investing-trust.html>.

⁵ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/andymeeek/2021/02/20/fewer-americans-than-ever-before-trust-the-mainstream-media/?sh=1affef1b282a>

⁶ Renee Garfinkel, Ph.D. <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/time-out/201105/who-can-you-trust>.

⁷ <https://www.thehivelaw.com/blog/divorce-statistics-us-divorce-rate-in-america/>

faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.”⁸ Even when we are not faithful, the Lord remains faithful. Paul, in his second letter to Timothy writes, “If we are faithless, God remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.”⁹ Being faithful is God’s character.

Some of our life experiences have taught us not to trust people easily. That is sad; but that is what we have learned. And that is a fact. As a result, trusting someone has become difficult for us, and that spills into our relationship with the Lord. We find it difficult to trust the Lord. We don’t know how to trust the Lord. So, I want to make some suggestions.

How do we trust the Lord? How do we learn to trust the Lord?

First, we need to recognize that we are not in control of the affairs of our lives. We have never been in control of our lives and we will never be. We don’t know what will happen this afternoon or tomorrow. We are not in control of our lives. We may think we are, but we are not! What we can control in our lives is very limited but real affairs of our lives, what actually happens with our lives, we have no idea.

Jeremiah 17:7 says, “Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord.” Why are they blessed? It’s because they can find peace and serenity in the midst of this chaotic and tumultuous life.

1 Peter 5:7 tells us to “Cast all your anxiety on him (the Lord), because he cares for you.” Casting all our cares upon the Lord, pouring out our hearts upon the Lord in prayers, is the beginning of the trust lesson.

Recognize the Lord as the one who controls our lives and leads our paths. We need to yield our lives to him. Adelaide A. Pollard (1862-1934) wrote a beautiful hymn that says:

Have thine own way, Lord!
Have thine own way!
Thou art the Potter, I am the clay.

⁸ Deuteronomy 7:9.

⁹ 2 Timothy 2:13.

Mold me and make me after thy will,
While I am waiting, yielded and still.¹⁰

Second, even when you don't feel that you can trust the Lord, trust him anyway. Trust is at the heart of Christian faith. We trust the Lord not because we like to trust him or because it is natural for us. We trust the Lord because it is his command.

Actress Ingrid Bergman once told director Alfred Hitchcock that a certain scene didn't seem "natural." She did not feel comfortable. What the script called her to do was very unnatural for her. So, she explained to Hitchcock why she felt that way and was hinting to him to possibly change the script. But Hitchcock said: "Fine. I hear you. If you can't do it naturally, then Fake It!"

You don't feel you can trust God "naturally"? You don't feel comfortable casting your concerns upon the Lord in prayers? You don't feel natural living by faith and not by sight? Fine. I hear you. Then fake it! Do it unnaturally! When you fake it, it feels unnatural at first; but if you keep doing it, it becomes a part of you.

Every manager of rock stars or professional athletes encourages the clients to get a charity. Most of them do, because it is good public relations but what begins as good public relations, often develops into a genuine joy and commitment. They may do it with a wrong motive at first, but often the wrong motive becomes the right one with practice.

Third, confess to the Lord each day that your life is not your own, but God's. Confess to the Lord, "I am not my own, but yours."

John Wesley prayed the following prayer at the New Year's Eve Watch Night service every year:

I am no longer my own, but yours.
Put me to what you will,
Rank me with whomever you will.
Put me to doing . . .
Put me to suffering.
Let me be employed for you,
Or laid aside for you.

¹⁰ UM Hymnal #382 verse 1.

Exalted for you, or
Brought low for you.
Let me be full,
Let me be empty.
Let me have all things,
Let me have nothing!
And now, O Father,
You are mine and I am yours.
So be it. And the covenant I am making on Earth,
Let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

Christian faith is one of radical trust, a willingness to trust God. As we practice trusting God, we can also learn to trust others as well.