

Who do you trust? - Sunday May 6th 2012

17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. 18 In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures. James 1:17-18

Beloved in the Lord,

Who do you trust? It seems to me that with every day the list get shorter. It is getting harder and harder to find people whom you can rely upon and trust. Can you trust the government? It is fairly clear that it is becoming increasingly more difficult to do so. It seems that the policies change according to the way the wind is blowing.

Can we trust technology? Not really. Very often technology fails us and our gadgets let us down. They malfunction or break down completely. Earlier this year I read about a person who was taking a group of students to a sports event at Cumberland College in Lidcombe. They were using a GPS navigator, and the navigator directed them to a cemetery plot in Rookwood Gardens.

Can we trust the Church? Sadly not enough. Many Churches have derailed and no longer teach and preach the pure Word of God. Many pulpits are occupied by false prophets.

We could continue with this line of questioning and come to the conclusion that it is hard to find someone or something that you can completely trust.

Our text today gives us hope, and witnesses to the truth that we do not have to despair because there is one whom we can trust fully and that is God.

With God we can be absolutely certain, because as our text states: ***“with Him there is no variation or shifting shadow.”*** God does not vacillate. He does not change direction with the wind. What God has stated stands sure and steady, it is written in stone. He does not change His laws for anyone or anything.

In these uncertain and changeable times it is good to have a place of refuge. It is good to have someone whom we can trust fully.

There are three words that describe God, big words but very important words. They are Omniscient; omnipotent; and omnipresent. They mean all –knowing; all powerful; everywhere present. There is no one else to whom we can ascribe these attributes. Because God is all knowing; all powerful and present everywhere, we can fully trust Him. There is not a single thing that escapes His attention; there is nothing that He cannot do and there is no place where He is not present. There has never been, nor will there ever be a problem that occurs in our lives that God cannot handle. Think about it. Personally I find that extremely comforting. I have a Father in Heaven who knows everything, can do anything, and is

present everywhere I go. Wow. Think about the awesome magnitude of this truth. There is absolutely nothing that God can't do or that He doesn't know! There is no place you can go where He is not. He knows everything there is to know about you, the past, present and future.

This is spelt out so very powerfully in Psalm 139:

"O Lord, You have searched me and known me.

***² You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
You understand my thought from afar.***

***³ You scrutinize my path and my lying down,
And are intimately acquainted with all my ways.***

***⁴ Even before there is a word on my tongue,
Behold, O Lord, You know it all.***

***⁵ You have enclosed me behind and before,
And laid Your hand upon me.***

***⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
It is too high, I cannot attain to it.***

***⁷ Where can I go from Your Spirit?
Or where can I flee from Your presence?***

***⁸ If I ascend to heaven, You are there;
If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.***

***⁹ If I take the wings of the dawn,
If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea,***

***¹⁰ Even there Your hand will lead me,
And Your right hand will lay hold of me.***

My friend this is the truth that our enemy of faith – Satan tries to keep us from understanding and believing. When things do not go as planned, when we experience grief, pain, loss, sickness, suffering, then Satan arrives and tries to implant thoughts in our head along the lines of "God has abandoned you, you are being punished." These are lies that Satan uses to try to drag us away from trusting in God's Sovereignty. The Devil does not want us trusting in God, relying on Him and praising Him. That is why Satan works tirelessly to oppress us. He is always trying to sow seeds of doubt in our minds.

We must come against these seeds of doubt in faith. We must reject the Devil and His lies with God's Word, the sword of the Spirit. The Psalm we just read reminds us of the truth. If we are children of God, if we have trusted in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour then we can be sure that God will never leave us or forsake us. Jesus put it this way: ***"I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.***

³⁶ But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe. ³⁷ All that the Father

gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out."

John 6:35-37

If we have surrendered our lives to God in faith then we have this great promise that He will never cast us out of His presence. Nothing can separate us from the love of God. Paul stated this truth in Romans 8: ***"If God is for us, who is against us?"³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?³³ Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies;³⁴ who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?³⁶ Just as it is written,***

"For Your sake we are being put to death all day long;

We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered."

³⁷ But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

(Romans 8:31-38)

What I would like you to notice here is that Paul writes about things that we do not like to hear about; things that he experienced as a child of God, as a follower of Jesus Christ: suffering, persecution, famine, perils etc.

To live for God does not mean that we will not have to suffer trials and difficulties, but what it does mean is that we do not go it alone. We can be like Paul and say "I am fully convinced that God is for me."

Latvians have a saying that what God does, He does well. My question is do we really believe this? Certainly when things are pleasing to us. Real faith acknowledges and accepts that God does ALL THINGS WELL, even when it may not look or feel or seem that way!

If God allows persecution and suffering and trials in our life it is because He has a certain plan for us. It maybe to help us grow and draw closer to Him. We may not understand but we can be convinced that God knows exactly what He is doing and nothing happens to us without His knowledge and permission.

That is why Jesus taught the disciples to pray and to address God as *Our Father*, to pray that His Kingdom come and His will be done.

God's will and His way is always right, and everything that God does, He does well, righteously, truthfully and His motivation is always love, for He is love.

Paul wrote that he was convinced. How about you? Are you convinced that God is control and always acts in the right way? Are you convinced that you can fully trust God, that His Word is the absolute truth? That He loves you? That He knows what is best for you?

If you are not fully convinced, then you probably do not really know Him. You have not yet surrendered your life to Him in faith.

He is inviting you to come to Him today and to trust Him. He loves you with an everlasting love. He has demonstrated His love for you by sacrificing Jesus on the cross: ***“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)***

Jesus shed His blood for you. He did it because He loves you. How can you not respond to Him in love and thanksgiving?

Come to Him today and trust Him in everything so that you can confess with Paul: “I am convinced that nothing can separate me from the love of God!

Amen.

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All Bible quotations taken from New American Standard Bible.