

WHOM CAN YOU TRUST?

Joe Slater

Scottish novelist George MacDonald said, “To be trusted is a greater compliment than being loved” (brainyquote.com). That’s true. Jesus teaches us to love everyone – even our enemies. But whom can you trust?

The Pharisees “*trusted in themselves, that they were righteous*” (Luke 18:9). Jesus told the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector to quash that notion. Paul was once a Pharisee, but he learned that neither his righteousness nor his strength was from himself; so he trusted “*in God who raises the dead*” (2 Corinthians 1:9). Unfortunately, self-trust is still with us today.

The Pharisees’ self-trust also involved trusting in their ancestry. “*Abraham is our father,*” they bragged to Jesus (John 8:39). Paul could have out-boasted them all had he wished to do so. “*If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so*” (Philippians 3:4). Paul’s pedigree was amazing, but it made not the least difference in his relationship with God. Too many in the church today are trusting their pedigree: “My grandfather was an elder.” “My dad was a deacon.” Wonderful! How are **you** serving?

Perhaps the most common misplaced trust is not in a person, but in our material wealth. Paul wrote to Timothy: “*Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy*” (1 Timothy 6:17). Jesus warned of this very danger: “*Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God*” (Mark 10:24).

Trusting in self is vanity gone to seed! Trusting in your ancestry or wealth is folly. But “*The Lord redeems the soul of His servants, and none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned*” (Psalm 34:22).

The Incredible Ant

Forgive me for getting too personal, but I have a math problem for you. Take your weight and multiply it by fifty. Now imagine being able to lift that amount of weight ... with your mouth! According to some scholarly sources that is precisely what ants do every day (about.com). Especially industrious are the female worker ants. These workers labor diligently to provide food for their colony, which can consist of millions of ants. Just let a single ant happen upon your carefully prepared picnic basket, and that lucky ant will leave a scent trail for other ants in their colony to follow. Before you know it, a whole army of ants will do their best to carry off the bounty prepared for your family's enjoyment.

Worker ants can often be observed busily going about the thankless but necessary job of constant housekeeping, cleaning and expanding their colony, a business that usually involves them carrying burdens far heavier than themselves. This often requires feats of strength that would be equivalent to our being able to lift and walk off with an automobile.

Besides their great lifting ability, ants are also extremely fast for their size. If we could move as fast, in proportion to the size and speed of the ant, we could be competitive with the fastest racehorse in the Kentucky Derby!

Gifted with a divine helping of wisdom, King Solomon can be found carefully contemplating a colony of ants only to find in their industry an example worthy of our emulation (Proverbs 6:6-11). He saw in these little creatures a drive to accomplish for the needs of today while wisely making preparations for tomorrow. Quite powerful lessons we can gain from such a tiny insect.

--David Bragg (via Bulletin Gold)

Can You See?

"And the God of all grace, who called you unto his eternal glory in Christ, after that ye have suffered a little while, shall himself perfect, establish, strengthen you" (1 Peter 5:10, ASV).

She was ninety years old and feeble, shut up in a nursing home. Angry and bitter, she had few friends there. Yes, family and church members came to see her, but she didn't enjoy their visits. Although she had served God faithfully, He had forsaken her. At least she thought He had forsaken her, but in her anger and disappointment, she had forsaken Him. She had gone blind, and to her, it was all God's fault.

No, she couldn't see. She couldn't look back and see all the times God had blessed her. He had given her a Christian husband, children, and the needed material things for her life.

She didn't remember that God had blessed her with all spiritual blessings. Through Jesus she had forgiveness of sins, and therefore, could be free from guilt. She could claim the righteousness of Jesus for her own and stand before God. She had God's care and comfort during her life. If only she could look back and remember all these things.

But most sadly, she couldn't look forward with hope to sharing in Christ's glory with God. Surely it would be only a few short years before she would have a new body free from pain. Her new eyes would behold the things that God had prepared for her. Since she had forsaken God, she would never know the glories and wonders of God in heaven, things so wonderful that no one can even imagine them.

Can you see the blessings of God in your life? Can you see His wonderful promises through faith? May you never lose that hope.

--Donna Wittlif (Denver, CO)