

Trusting and Hoping in God's Unfailing Love

During times of crisis such as we are presently experiencing, one of the pressing spiritual issues that we deal with regards trust and hope. When we are faced with the real possibility of becoming infected with COVID-19 and possible death, we yearn for realities or in whom we can put our trust and experience hope. In these troubling times, there are many realities in which we can put our trust and experience hope.

We can trust in the health-care system, and experience hope. But as hospitals become overrun with patients and the system cannot even provide enough N95 masks for their staffs, people feel as though their trust has been misplaced and hope is lost.

We can trust in our government to share timely and effective guidance on how to manage the COVID-19 pandemic. But as leaders fail in terms of strategy and integrity, people feel as though their trust has been misplaced and hope is lost.

We can trust in ourselves, our neighbors, and even strangers to exercise wisdom in terms of physical distancing and safety procedures that can protect us from COVID-19. But then we witness protestors who refuse to wear masks, physically distance, and even threaten people who choose to follow safety procedures, and we know that our trust is misplaced and we lose hope.

In [Psalm 33](#), the psalmist explored the relationship between trust and hope. Placing your trust in some reality results in hope. So, the quality of the reality in which a person places their trust, influences the value of the hope they experience.

Throughout history, most nations and people have trusted in the strength of their military in times of war and in times of crisis, and through that trust experienced hope in challenging times. But the Psalmist suggests that trusting in the size of one's army, the measure of one's physical strength, or the quality of one's armament (horse in Psalms) is foolishness. Psalm 33:16-17 reads; "*No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength. A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save.*" This theme is present throughout the Old Testament in particular. Millenniums

later, humankind still suffers from the same spiritual crisis of poorly placed trust and the hopelessness that comes from such misplaced trust.

In contrast to placing trust in the size of one's army, the Psalmist appeals to the people of God, and to all people, to place their trust in God. The Psalmist contrasts the provincial nature of one's nation with the universe-creating and -reigning reality of God. Kings might rule over an empire for decades, but from the perspective of a God who created the universe and is eternal, a king's time of rule is clearly insignificant.

But the greatest contrast between God and kings, is not the breadth or the length of their rule, rather it is that God reigns in and through unfailing love. It is the unfailing love of God that rescues God's people when they are lost, comforts them when they are heart-broken, liberates them when oppressed, feeds them when hungry, and fills people with an unsurpassed hope that flows from trusting in God. As the psalmist said, it is through the unfailing love of God, that God keeps God's people alive in famine.

So, as we continue to walk through this wilderness known as COVID-19, it is not wrong to place a measure of trust in our medical professionals, our state, and in one another. For each were created and empowered by the God of unfailing love and God can and does work through all people. But in as much as we place a measure of trust in such, we must always be sure that we place our ultimate trust for life and happiness in our God of unfailing love. All others will disappoint to varying degrees, however, God will not!

