

The Lorr is Our Trust

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[0:00] Oh, great triune, God, you are our anchor to our souls individually and corporately.

God, we need you desperately. God, we're so grateful that you are unshakable in who you are and unshakable in your commitment to us.

Lord Jesus, you say that you are the source of living water. And this morning we come to you as a people who are thirsty.

God, I pray that this morning you would call out a people from the desolate, parched places of trusting in man. And God, you would call them to the oasis where there is the fountain of living water, Jesus himself.

You beckon us, come. God, would you use your word to beckon us to come. Pray this in Jesus' name.

[1:11] Amen. You may be seated. Children, you are now dismissed to learn about this great God. We're going to be looking at a passage in the book of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 17, verses 5-8. And if you're looking at one of the NIV, the blue Bible in your pew, turn to page 1201.

I think that's what it is. I wrote it. So it's around 1200 somewhere. And if you're looking at the ESV, the white, it's page 546.

We read, Thus says the Lord, Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the Lord.

He is like a shrub in the desert and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land. Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord.

[2:23] He's like a tree planted by water that sends out its roots by the stream and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green. It's not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.

O God, would you just please anoint your word this morning. Give us ears to hear, hearts to receive. God, address us as your children.

In Jesus' name, amen. Well, if you think about American culture as a religion, who would be the object of worship?

If our culture was teaching us to trust in someone, who would our culture be teaching us to trust in, to rely on?

And when I mean by rely, I mean ultimate reliance. Whose voice are you ultimately obeying?

[3:31] Who is defining who you are? Who determines how you live your life? Who says what is the most dangerous thing you face?

And who says the way of deliverance? Who says is our destiny and how we reach it? Whose voice are you ultimately relying on?

If you think about American culture as a religion, Americans worship the triune God of me, myself, and I. We are an individualistic culture.

We are a humanistic culture. We are raised to be self-reliant. And it shows up in whose voice we ultimately obey.

Who defines us? How we walk? How we live? Another way to talk about this ultimate self-reliance is to call it trusting in man.

[4:39] That's how the prophet Jeremiah describes it in Jeremiah 17. To trust in man. It's the air we breathe. But it's just not outside of us. It's inside of us. This ultimate self-reliance, this ultimate trusting of man is like a taproot in us that goes down deep.

It's called pride. We think we're at the center of everything. We oppose God at our very core. And what the Bible uses again and again is the word to describe our core is the word heart. And in Jeremiah 17.10, God says this.

Now notice, it's God saying this. He says, the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately sick. You see, the self-reliance, the trusting in man that our culture prizes, even promotes, and even protects, has a fatal flaw.

[5:53] In our pride, we think we can define ourselves. We think we can make ourselves the ultimate authority. We think we know what's best for us.

We think we can determine our own ways. In Jeremiah 17.5-8, we are presented with two groups of people. One group, those who trust in man, they have a motto.

In man we trust. And then the other group, those who are God-reliant, those who trust in the Lord, their motto is, the Lord is our trust.

Two groups of people with two mottos. In man we trust, and the Lord is our trust. Those who persistently trust in man experience God's curse.

But those who trust ultimately rely again and again in the Lord, they experience God's blessing. So let's look at these two groups and what we'll see is that there are two ways to live.

[7:06] So first group, this in man we trust group. We see this described in verses 5 and 6. And what I want you to see as we talk about in man we trust this group, there are four realities about this I want you to see.

Reality number one is, those who say in man we trust. That motto is built on lies. There's a fatal flaw.

It assumes man can ultimately rely on man for ultimate answers. But let me just give you some data. According to the Bible, human beings are created.

Not the creators. We are dependent. We are dependent on God for our next breath. We have some severe limitations.

Significant limitations. Limited by place and time. We can't be more than one place at once. No matter how much we'd like. We're limited in our knowledge.

[8:21] We don't know everything. There's not one person on the face of the earth today that knows everything. And then if we kind of combined all human beings for all of time and then we measured how much we know, we still wouldn't know everything.

Nor will we ever know everything. Limited in knowledge. Limited in power. Did anybody eat this morning? Did anybody sleep last night?

We get worn out under fears and anxieties. When we make man our strength, human flesh our strength, man, we suffer for it.

There's these limitations, but then there's also this deep-seated taproot of sin. This pride that goes down deep in each of us.

It motivates us. It affects us. There's nothing that we do that is pure in motives because this sin runs so deep. And so at best, our motives for doing things are mixed.

[9:36] So human justice is mixed. That's why our government has checks and balances. Our love is mixed. It runs deep.

So the lie here is that human beings have all the answers. We know what's best. The fatal flaw is we don't.

It's wrong to believe, biblically speaking, that the ultimate authority on all things is man. In man we trust is built on lies.

It's built on something that can't sustain our trust. But there's another reality I want you to see. In man we trust, this motto of a people who trusts in man, in man we trust, it goes by another name. What trusting in man really is is a turning of one's heart from the living God.

[10:57] Would you look at chapter 17, verse 5. Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from

the Lord.

Whose heart turns away from the Lord. Now just a little historical background. Jeremiah was written by the prophet Jeremiah. And it was written to the people of God who were persistently disobeying God's Word.

They kept on arching. They kept on resisting God. And so at this point in Judah's history, Babylon was on the scene.

And so in Jeremiah 39, there is an account of the fall of Jerusalem. And what we have leading up to it is all that preceded that. Jeremiah. God using to warn His people again and again, don't go that way.

Come back to Me. Turn back for Me. He has some really strong language to talk about His people. He calls them a whore. Come back to Me though. One of the areas where God warns His people at that time was Judah sees Babylon coming and what do they do?

[12:20] Where do they turn? They turn to Egypt. They turn to Assyria. They look for help from man. And God says, no, don't go there.

Turn to Me. You see, in man we trust, goes by another name.

I want to tell you something about your heart. Biblically speaking. Your heart. It's your heart that kind of assesses things.

It determines something's worth. It's value. And from your heart as well comes your willful choice to live for it. And so you determine what is of value, ultimate value, and your heart also says, I'm living for it.

That all takes place in your heart. That's why there's such a huge emphasis in the Bible on your heart. your heart is where you worship from.

[13:32] And just to heighten this a little bit more, if you flip a couple pages to the left in your Bibles to Jeremiah 2, to get at the situation a little bit more, Jeremiah 2.13, God warns His people.

And He uses, again, vivid imagery. He says, for My people have committed two evils. They have forsaken Me. They have turned their back on Me.

And then He calls Himself the fountain of living waters. They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

And what we see Jeremiah talking about is His people turning away from Him the fountain of living waters, the One who gives life. The One who sustains.

The One who strengthens. The One who is for them. They turn from Him and they turn to things of their own making. Cisterns.

[14:38] Designed to hold water, but these are broken. They don't deliver. They don't give them what they want. They built them themselves. Do you know what it's a picture of?

It's a picture of idolatry. This trusting in man, in man we trust, the other name for it, is idolatry.

That's what it is. It's the creating of something else to worship in the place of God. Ultimately, what is being gotten at here is that idolatry is relying on something else ultimately.

You're going to that because you want strength from it. You want hope from it. And it's not God. In man we trust, it's built on lies.

In man we trust, goes by another name, idolatry. And in man we trust, is cursed. Cursed is the man who trusts in man.

[15:51] God's response to persistent disobedience from His Word to His Word is what cursing is.

It's the negative consequences for persistent disobedience. That word curse is lifted. It's calling us back to Deuteronomy 28 where God has saved a people and He says, if you want to move forward, you're going to have two choices.

Either obey My Word and be blessed. Experience My blessing. Or disobey My Word and experience curse. The negative outworkings of your sinful choices.

But I just want to let you know, our God is a wonderful God and He is patient. And so in a passage like Exodus 34, 6, and 7 where He reveals Himself, He says that He is slow to anger.

Slow to anger. He is patient with His people. Patiently calling them back. And Jeremiah repeatedly calls His people back to God.

[17:05] But God's patience eventually came to an end. He eventually handed them over to what they wanted.

Romans 1. He allowed for their consequences to come upon them. They tasted and experienced the outcome of their sinful choices and their disobedience to God's Word.

And that's a bad place to be. In Jeremiah 17, verse 6, we have a very vivid picture of that place. Let me read it for you. He is like a shrub. Those cursed. He is like a shrub in the desert and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness in uninhabited salt land. It's a picture of desolation. It's a picture of barrenness. That word shrub can also be translated naked, believe it or not.

[18:21] Barren. Exposed. We see here that there is a hopelessness to those who persist in their disobedience to God.

Shall not see any good come. It's a lonely place in uninhabited salt land. It's a parched place. No water.

Doesn't see the good come. And when the heat of life arises, there's no place to run to. No place to hide.

It's a really hard place. No shelter from the heat. We've all tasted of the curse.

We've all tasted this. Maybe you've binged on pornography. You know that place afterwards?

[19:32] It's a parched place. It's a lonely place. It's an empty place. Desolate. Maybe you've binged things get hot in your life and you go shopping.

And afterwards, you're like, what? This is empty. Parched place. This doesn't satisfy me. This is a broken cistern. Maybe a web of lies.

It's a bad place. Hard place to be. We all know this place. I know this place. This is a hard place.

When you trust in man, you turn your heart from the Lord and you experience the consequences for disobeying His voice.

It's a hard place to be. And man, we trust is a cursed place. Would you look at chapter 17 again, verse 13?

O Lord, the hope of Israel, all who forsake You shall be put to shame. Those who turn away from You shall be written in the earth, reference to death, for they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living water.

[20:56] There it comes again. The fountain of living water. Not only have we seen it in chapter 2, now we see it showing up in the very passage that we're looking at. God is the fountain of living water. And so, in man we trust, we experience curse.

We miss the waters. And so, the last reality I want to show you is this.

It's a call to those who are trusting in man. It's a call to the fountain of living water. It's a call to turn away from trusting in man.

From self-reliance. How do we respond? If you find yourself in the parched place, how do you respond? You turn from it.

You turn from it and you turn to your God. You turn to the fountain of living water. Turn from trusting in man and turn to God.

[22:00] Come out of the cursed, parched place. Come out of there. Stop trusting in man. Stop trusting in yourself.

And come to the oasis. The blessing of trusting in the Lord. Of drinking deep from the fountain of living water.

Can I tell you something awesome? Flip over in your Bibles to Galatians 3. Galatians 3. Galatians 3.

Chapter 3. Verse 13. Christ Jesus, Christ, redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.

For it is written, cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree so that in Christ Jesus, the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles. That's us.

[23:18] Are you in the parched place? Jesus took on your curse on Himself so that you could experience God's blessing.

Who do you ultimately trust in? Whose voice do you ultimately believe? Who's defining you? We're being shown here, don't trust in man.

Turn to God. And now let's turn to verses 7 and 8 of Jeremiah 17. Let's turn to the fountain of living water. Let's turn to the One who is the source of our strength, our hope, and even in the midst of heat and drought.

We are not to trust in man. The cry of our hearts is the Lord is our trust. Four realities. The Lord is our trust.

Verses 7 and 8. The Lord is our trust. Is our model. It's what we proclaim. It is the banner over us. And I just want to show you that this motto is built on a foundation of truth.

[24:39] Not lies. God is the Creator of all. All things depend on Him. We depend on Him. He does not depend on us.

He is unlimited in terms of place and time. He's omnipresent. He is unlimited in His knowledge. He knows all things all the time and He doesn't sweat it.

He's unlimited in His power. There's nothing that God cannot do, so He wills. He is holy.

He doesn't have a deep root of sin. He's holy. He's perfect in all that He is. He's gloriously good and right and true.

And that shows up in His justice. His justice is always pure. That shows up in His love. He always loves purely. God is great.

[25:42] Now, if you were wondering who to choose at any given moment to trust in, man or God, if you do the math, it's pretty obvious. God is worthy of your trust.

But there's a step of humility, isn't there? There's a step of coming under God's authority. And that's where our pride can trip up. I just want to help you to see.

If you do the math, God is worthy of your trust. He is able to bear your ultimate reliance. He's big enough.

Nothing or no one else is. He is able to carry you. The Lord is our trust is a motto established on the truth of who God is and what He's done in history.

The second reality I want you to see is this. The Lord is our trust goes by another name. If you look at v. 7, you see, blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord whose trust is the Lord.

[26:49] There's a little emphasis there. He goes from blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord to whose trust is the Lord. So maybe think about it this way.

What we're called to here is not to trust in your trust. To not have more faith in your faith. It's not about how much faith you have.

It's about who you are trusting in. And what we're seeing here, it's the Lord is our trust. He is our confidence.

On Him we rely. Remember, trust is reliance on God as an ultimate reliance. He defines who we are.

He determines how we are to walk. He lets us know what our greatest danger is. He let us know. He shows us where deliverance is to be found. Jesus.

[27:46] And He ultimately determines our destinies. The Lord is our trust goes by another name. Did you know that your heart is designed for something?

God designed it for something. It's designed to recognize something of worth. It's designed to give kind of credence to it and follow it.

To live for it. God designed your heart. He designed your heart for Himself. He designed your heart to recognize His glory and live for it.

That's what your heart was designed for. These words, the Lord is our trust.

trust. This goes by another name. And it's not idolatry. It's worship. True worship. Trusting in the Lord is an act of worship.

[28:59] Recognizing His worth and then living for it with all that you are. Calling back from Jeremiah 2.13.

The Lord is our trust. The Lord is our trust. It's kind of putting away the cisterns that we make. It's putting away of the places we go to to find strength that's not God.

It's putting away of idolatry. It's putting away of things that we look to for deliverance. And it is drinking deep from the fountain of living water. It's depending on God as our source of strength.

Augustine said it this way. Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you. Until they find their ultimate reliance in you.

ultimate worship in you. Ultimate trust in you. The Lord is our trust. Goes by another name.

[30:14] Worship. The fourth reality I want you to see under this banner the Lord is our trust is the blessing. How God responds.

When we trust God's Word. This is back to Deuteronomy 28. Blessing and curse. When we trust God's Word. When we rely on what He says blessing follows.

The positive consequences to relying on God and His Word. We see the picture of it in verse 8.

He's like a tree planted by water that sends out its roots by the streams.

It does not fear when heat comes for its leaves remain green. It's not anxious in the year of drought for it does not cease to bear fruit. It's a picture of life. It's a picture of vitality.

It's a picture of a tree planted by streams of water. That should ring a bell. Psalm 1. It's a picture of vitality. This tree sends out its roots by the streams of water.

[31:15] It's a very vivid picture. Water gives life. Water sustains. We all need water. water. It's in sharp contrast to the shrub in the desolate parched places, isn't it?

Quite a contrast. Contrast in pictures. What makes verse 8 so wonderful?

This blessing, this vitality of living is the water. water. And Jeremiah seems to have water on his mind because he references water in 8 and then in verse 13 again, I pointed this earlier, for they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living water.

What's the water? The water is our God. He's the fountain of living water. It's a picture of a thriving oasis.

in the midst of stifling Middle Eastern heat and drought. With God as our trust, we thrive even when the heat comes.

[32:31] Did you notice the references to fear and anxiety? To heat and drought? Those can make you a little fearful. A little anxious. But with God as our trust, our leaves remain green.

We bear fruit even when the heat comes, even when there's drought. God is our fountain of living water.

We experience heat regularly. We experience drought, and when we see it coming, we can be afraid. We can be anxious. ISIS is in the news.

And so, I'm guessing many of you are thinking, okay, where are they going to hit next? What's going to happen? Who's going to die? How many people? It can start making you anxious. It can make you fearful.

Syrian refugees coming to Wisconsin. How do you respond to that? It can raise questions of fear and anxiety because you start wondering who's coming in with them.

[33:36] As Christians, we're to respond compassionately and wisely. Financial strain.

Unemployment. Conflict with loved ones. Huge decisions. What is the next step we're going to make? Difficult work environments.

When you look at yourself in the mirror and you start fearing what other people are going to think about you. It's all different kinds of heat, isn't it? We've been going through some heat as a church. And it can expose who we trust. I know it does with me. The Lord is our trust. He is our ultimate reliance. When we experience this kind of heat, we're tempted to go to places trusting in ourselves, trusting in man.

We go to the Lord who is our trust. Trust. The Lord is our trust. There is where blessing is. There is where life is.

[34:43] When God turns up the heat, we send our roots to the streams of living waters. The Lord is our trust. The fourth reality I want you to see under this is that word water.

Water. Planted by streams of water. It sends its roots out by the streams. I've already made the connection with verse 13 of chapter 17 that God is the fountain of living water.

He is the one who gives life. Did you know later in Jeremiah, Jeremiah 31, Jeremiah speaks of a future when God will make a new covenant with a new people and He'll write His word on their hearts.

We learn from Ezekiel 36 that that new covenant, the Holy Spirit will come upon God's people in a new and pronounced way. A new covenant with a new people with new hearts. And what we learn from our New Testaments is that it's Jesus that inaugurated the new covenant. His life, death, and resurrection. It was by His blood that He shed that we are now living in the new covenant.

[36:08] And so now on this side of the cross, we're reading back through Jesus Jeremiah 17. We're reading back through the establishing of the new covenant in Jesus.

A better covenant built on better promises. We're looking at it through Jeremiah 17. We're looking at it through the cross. Through Jesus. And so when we read a passage like John 4, where Jesus meets a woman at the well, He says this and it takes on new significance in light of Jeremiah 17. this is John 4, verse 10. The Samaritan woman just asked Jesus, hey, can I get you a drink of water?

Jesus answered her, or actually, He asked her for it. If you know the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, give me a drink, you would have asked Him and He would have given you living water.

Later on, He says, everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again from that well. But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.

[37:23] The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life. John 7 says that water is the Holy Spirit living inside of us.

New covenant reality. When we put our faith in Jesus, we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. He dwells in us. He fills us. He empowers us.

He enlivens us. We're like a tree planted by a stream. We don't fear the heat. We're not anxious in drought because the Lord Jesus is our trust.

He is the fountain of living water. To Him we turn. So when we read, blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord, we read that back through where we are.

We read that through the cross of Jesus. And so we can say, blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord Jesus, whose trust is the Lord Jesus.

[38:36] the Lord is our trust. The Lord Jesus is our trust. We've looked at two ways to live here.

Man is our trust and the Lord is our trust. I just want to do a quick three things of application and then close. the first thing in light of what we've been talking about is this.

The Christian life is a continual turning from yourself and turning to Jesus, the fountain of living water. There is the first initial repentance and faith where we're converted.

But the Christian life is a continual turning, turning from broken cisterns and a turning to the fountain of living water. water. Ongoing renouncing of false gods.

Ongoing relying on Jesus. The true fountain of living water. So, we come out. We regularly come out of parched places. And we regularly go to the fountain of living water.

[39:47] It's par for the course. That's the life we live. Second, God uses heat to expose who we trust. What are you afraid of?

What are you anxious over? God is using heat to expose who you trust in. He's been doing that with me.

So, what do you do when the heat comes on? You turn to Jesus. You trust in Him. He's over it. He's in it. He's through it. Let Him lead on. So, we come out of the parched places and go to Jesus to drink of the fountain of living water.

The final thing I want you to see is, in light of the culture we live in, the Christian life is counter-cultural. The motto we live by is a sharp contrast to that of the American culture.

We live by our Lord's voice, by His strength, not our culture's voice. And so, there will be a standing out when we come out of the parched places and when we drink from the fountain of living water, we'll stand out in this culture.

[41:07] So, in close, whose voice are you living by? Who are you ultimately relying in? Jeremiah 17, 5-8 points to two ways to live.

In man we trust or the Lord Jesus is our trust. He became a curse for us so that we can experience His blessing ongoingly.

The difference is who you ultimately rely on. Let me pray. Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus, You are our trust, You are our confidence, You are our fountain of living water. God, You are our hope in the midst of hardship and heat and God, we look to You. And You, Jesus, we follow You. We look to You and trust You. In Jesus' name, Amen.