

WHAT TO TRUST IN AN EVIL WORLD

(Psalm 12)

Psalm 12----- To the Chief Musician. On An Eight-Stringed Harp. A Psalm of David.

¹ Help, Lord, for the godly man ceases! For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men. ² They speak idly everyone with his neighbor; *With* flattering lips *and* a double heart they speak. ³ May the Lord cut off all flattering lips, *And* the tongue that speaks proud things, ⁴ Who have said, "With our tongue we will prevail; Our lips *are* our own; Who *is* lord over us?" ⁵ "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, Now I will arise," says the Lord; "I will set *him* in the safety for which he yearns." ⁶ The words of the Lord *are* pure words, *Like* silver tried in a furnace of earth, Purified seven times. ⁷ You shall keep them, O Lord, You shall preserve them from this generation forever. ⁸ The wicked prowl on every side, When vileness is exalted among the sons of men.

On January 16th, 2014 Fox News reported that a 66-year-old woman in San Jose, California had been duped out of \$500,000 after being scammed by a man on the Internet dating website *ChristianMingle.com*.

Santa Clara County Deputy District Attorney Cherie Bourlard said that the man, posing as "David Holmes," an Irish citizen working on a Scottish oil rig, wooed the woman with flowers, phone calls and text messages. One time, he even spent 90 minutes with her on the phone when her car battery went dead and hired someone to come to her aid. He prayed with her as well.

But Attorney Bourlard told CBS: "You get the love drug in you and you end up getting duped...they never met in person."

The man—who, according to Bourlard, used a picture of a male model on his profile— convinced the woman to invest \$500,000 into the fake oil rig.

According to the *San Jose Mercury News*, she had to dip into her retirement account and refinance her house to make the payment.

The scammer was busted when his Skype and email addresses were traced back to Nigeria, Bourlard said.

Thankfully, the woman was able to recover \$200,000 she wired to a Turkish bank but the scammer is still on the run (along with \$300,000 of her money).

I don't know if the woman from San Jose, California that we just read about was a Christian woman or not, but I do know this, because of a deceptive and smooth-talking man, she lost a huge amount of money that she will probably never recover. Now some might say that it was the woman's fault for allowing herself to be duped, but the truth of the matter is this—an evil person lied to her and took advantage of her in order to steal what did not belong to him. And because the Internet is a con-artist's dream—with access to droves of people like this San Jose woman—this type of fraud is commonplace.

Pyramid schemes, Ponzi schemes—you name it—we are living in a world filled with liars and deceivers and evil people who care only about themselves. And many, many times, it is the vulnerable and defenseless who end up getting burned.

We live in a world that is filled with deceptive and evil people.

So what does God's Word say to us about how we are to live in an evil world that seems to be worsening around us exponentially?

Title: What to Trust in an Evil World

(Prayer)

You don't have to watch TV very long before a story or newscast comes on in which people have been bilked out of their life savings. But this has been happening since Adam and Eve. Notice the following Scriptures regarding ancient Israel:

Amos 3:10----- "My people have forgotten how to do right," says the LORD. "Their fortresses are filled with wealth taken by theft and violence."

Ezekiel 22:25-----Your princes plot conspiracies just like lions stalk their prey. They devour innocent people, seizing treasures and extorting wealth. They make many widows in the land.

Ezekiel 22:29-----The people of the land have used oppressions, committed robbery, and mistreated the poor and needy; and they wrongfully oppress the stranger.

So what does Psalm 12 tell us (as followers of God) to do in a world filled with violent and cruel and dishonest people?

1. We are to faithfully continue in prayer to God

(12:1-4)

¹ **Help, Lord, for** the godly man ceases! For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men. ² They speak idly everyone with his neighbor; *With flattering lips and a double heart they speak.* ³ **May the Lord cut off all flattering lips, And the tongue that speaks proud things,** ⁴ Who have said, "With our tongue we will prevail; Our lips *are* our own; Who is lord over us?"

David is praying on behalf of the entire nation. It has gotten so bad, it seems like godly people are nowhere to be found. So David cries out to God to **"Help"** (or, rescue) his nation from violent and deceptive people.

In verse 3, **he prays that God will "cut off"** their smooth-talking lips—*"Lord, silence these arrogant liars who only say what **they** want to say and won't listen to anyone."*

In the midst of a corrupt and vile world, we are to pray. And we are to pray that God will silence murderous and deceptive people like this in whatever way He chooses because they are a danger to society and to all of our lives.

Elizabeth Eliot, whose husband Jim Elliot was martyred on a South American mission field she said this about prayer:

"The saint who advances on his knees never retreats."

Notice (in v. 5) what God does in answer to King David's prayer for his nation (allow me to paraphrase):

⁵ **"Because of the** violence done to the poor, and because of the agonizing cries of the needy, **now I will arise,**" says the Lord; **"I will rescue and protect them."**

This word picture of God standing up is a powerful one. Yes, God sometimes allows bad things to happen to his children at the hands of evil people, but other times, God says, "Enough! My children have suffered enough!" and He stands up and puts an end to their suffering.

And this leads us to lesson #2...

1. We are to faithfully continue in prayer to God

(12:1-4)

2. We are to patiently wait for the help of God (12:5)

If you have ever been to a circus with **flying trapeze artists, you know how** scary it is when the flyer lets go of the trapeze and is hanging in midair until the catcher comes and recues him. There's a very special relationship between the flyer and the catcher on the trapeze. The flyer is the one that lets go, and the catcher is the one that catches. **As the flyer swings high above the** crowd on the trapeze, the moment comes when he must let go. He arcs out into the air. His job is to remain as still as possible and wait for the strong hands of the catcher to pluck him from the air.

A member of the famous trapeze troupe called "The Flying Roudellas" once said this:

"The flyer must never try to catch the catcher. The flyer must wait in absolute trust. The catcher will catch him, but he must wait."

And Christian brothers and sisters, so must we. We must pray but we must also wait. God is a promise keeping God. He **will** deal with evildoers. Not one of His promises to us will fail. And that is exactly why King David is able to say to his readers the following in v. 6:

Psalm 12:6--- The words of the Lord are pure words,
Like silver tried in a furnace of earth,
Purified seven times.

As godly people who must live in the midst of a godless society...

1. **We are to faithfully continue in prayer to God**
(12:1-4)
2. **We are to patiently wait for the help of God** (12:5)
3. **We are to vigorously cling to the promises of God** (12:6-8)

The **world** is filled with liars, but the **Word** is filled with truth.

What can we trust in an evil and dishonest world?
The words of God!

God's words, David says, are pure words—there is absolutely **NOTHING** in them that cannot be trusted. They have been tested and proven over and over again. There is no deception in them **AT ALL!**
They are like silver that has been purified 7X!!!!
(= perfectly pure and reliable!)

As the world around us more and more casts off the very beliefs that we cherish, we must rest in God's promise to us in verse 7:

⁷ You shall **guard** them, O Lord, You shall preserve them from this [evil] generation forever.

God does not promise that He will immediately **remove** the problem, but **He will guard us** in the midst of the problem!

Application

- Are you a person of **prayer**?
- Are you a person of **patience**?
- Are you a person who knows God's **promises**?

Close:

A man who loves hunting told the following story. He said:

“Early one morning I heard a number of dogs barking who were chasing a deer. Looking at a large open field in front of me, **I saw a baby deer making** its way across the field knowing it only had a short time to live. It jumped over some rails and crouched within ten feet of where I stood. A second later two dogs came over the rail, and the tiny deer ran directly toward me and pushed its head between my legs. I picked it up and held it tightly to my chest, and, swinging round and round, fought the dogs off. And it was as I fought that I convinced myself that all the dogs in the world could not and would not touch this tiny deer after its weakness had appealed to my strength.”

(Closing comments about God's protection of us in the midst of a very hateful and evil world)