

In God we what?

July 11, 2010

Do you believe America trusts in God? Is God the ground—the center—of our faith?

When we think about our personal future, which do we depend upon more—our faith in God or our retirement accounts, Social Security and medical insurance?

When we're concerned about our loved ones, about how things are going at work or even about the next big venture for our church, where do we look—to God's grace, our hard work and social skills, or the help of others?

When we consider the course of our country, do we trust God or political power? And what about our trust in the U.S. military?

'An obvious lie'

As my friend Dick Bridges observed regarding our national motto: "It is an obvious lie. We trust in money and power and politics and votes. The nation shows no evidence of trusting in God."

Not surprisingly, "In God We Trust" has become a battleground in the culture wars. About three years ago, the U.S. Mint released the first of a series of dollar coins. Immediately, a [false rumor](#) began to circulate, claiming the new currency did not include "In God We Trust." Critics chalked it up as "another way of phasing God out of America." Actually, the mint stamped "In God We Trust," as well as the motto from the Great Seal of the United States, "E Pluribus Unum," on the side of the coins.

Tangible irony

Whatever you think of the motto—and let's set aside all the church-state

arguments for the moment— isn't stamping or engraving "In God We Trust" on money ironic? I'm preaching to myself when I say most Americans trust money way more than we trust God. God may be fine for the sweet bye and bye, but when we're planning for today, tomorrow and all the time in-between, we want a storehouse of money.

I wish every American completely trusted in God. But what if we really trusted in God?

From personal experience, I can say my life is more joyous, outward focused, grace-filled and generous when I truly trust in God. Sure, I want to provide for my family, and I don't want to be a burden to them when I am old. But when I look back and see how God has provided for my needs—not always my wants, but my needs—up to now, I face the future with calm assurance. Even in the midst of a great recession and uncertainty, I can look ahead with expectation, because God is and will be present.

Keep believing

Sometimes, I tell myself all this so I'll keep believing it. The worries and concerns of the day mount up. That's especially true when the economy falters and the great institutions of our land tremble.

Then, it doesn't help to consider what's written on a dollar. I must turn my heart toward heaven and trust in God.