

# Voices: Put not your trust in guns

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“As long as we live in a gun nation, I’m not going to give up my gun.”

I heard this from a TV personality last week in response to a roundtable debate on gun control following the horrific events in Las Vegas.

I’m young — 23 years old — but somehow already feel numb to mass shootings. When I first hear about them, my stomach drops and I feel deeply saddened. After that first wave of shock, I feel numb as I listen to the national discourse that inevitably follows.

People across the country call for a conversation about keeping these massacres from happening, and congressional Republicans, [deep in the pockets](#) of the NRA, which is itself deep in the pockets of [gun manufacturers](#), keep that conversation from taking place by throwing up smokescreens like “not wanting to politicize a tragedy” and “mental health being the real problem.”

I’ve stopped calling for stricter gun control. The gun manufacturer’s lobby has far too much influence over Congress for any changes to come from Capitol Hill. If real change to American gun culture is going to be enacted, if these shootings are going to be prevented, the change will have to be grassroots, among people who aren’t receiving millions of dollars from the gun industry.

With this clarification made, that I am *not* calling for the government to regulate firearms, I have a few questions for my Christian brothers and sisters who own guns.

# Where is your trust?

Why do we, the people who [believe](#) that “the LORD is our refuge and our fortress, our God, in whom we trust” feel the need to own killing machines to protect ourselves? How do the people who are told “not to fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day” stockpile weapons for self-defense?

Could it be that we lack trust in God to protect us as he’s promised he will?

God doesn’t appreciate it when we show distrust. God tells us that we can either trust ourselves for our protection or him, but not both. In Deuteronomy 17, the king of Israel is [explicitly forbidden](#) from building up a large army, as this would demonstrate a lack of faith in God.

Moreover, a lack of trust in God was one of the main reasons the prophets of the Old Testament gave for Israel’s destruction. The people didn’t trust God to save them from the Assyrians and the Babylonians, so they made treaties with other nations for protection. Because the people sought protection other than God, God left them alone with that protection. [It didn’t turn out well.](#)

I fear this is the situation we’re finding ourselves in now in America. We’ve trusted in guns for our salvation, and they’ve proven to be woefully ineffective saviors. This isn’t surprising. Different than a knife or a car or anything else that might be used to take a life, guns have *no purpose* other than to injure and kill. We invented a machine to take life, gathered them in every home in America, and watched as our country experienced mass shooting after mass shooting.

# Who is your protector?

The TV personality I mentioned at the beginning of the article was Bill Maher, one of contemporary culture's most outspoken atheists. I understand why he feels the need to own a gun: Maher has no conception of a trustworthy, protecting God.

But why are Christians so insistent on participating in America's gun culture? There are currently [more guns than people](#) in the United States. With weapons constantly and readily available on every block in America, it's no wonder that the United States has a gun death rate [30 times higher](#) than the United Kingdom.

We can have one protector: God or ourselves. This isn't Jake Raabe's opinion; [it's what the Bible says](#). I choose to have God as my protector. Even if that weren't the case, I'd rather have my possessions — even my life — be slightly less secure than to contribute to a cultural system that allows for mass shootings to continue without challenge.

Whom will we look to for rescue, America?

Guns have failed us. Our participation in gun culture shows an obsession with personal security at the cost of the safety of our neighborhoods and communities, as well as a lack of trust in God. Who better to begin the de-escalation of gun culture than those of us who know God and have “no fear in death?”

Change has to happen, and it can't begin anywhere but with us.

Lord, give us strength.

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