

Our Security in Trust

By John Thiel, [mp3](#)

Scripture reading: Isaiah 51:4 Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people. 5 My righteousness [is] near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.

We today have some victories to gain to be part of the church triumphant.

Victory is assured through faith and obedience. . . . The work of overcoming is not restricted to the age of the martyrs. The conflict is for us, in these days of subtle temptation to worldliness, to self-security, to indulgence of pride, covetousness, false doctrines, and immorality of life. . . . Shall we stand before the proving of God? {TMK 256.5}

When we look at the history of the church through the Dark Ages, we see all those poor people who had to overcome; and today we seem to have an easier life. But the conflict for us today is one of *subtle temptation*, which is much more difficult many times than the blatant temptations of having to stand loyal in the face of death, because they were encouraged by the death of Jesus. Today it is subtle, because everything seems to be so sweet – the subtlety of the Laodicean condition. These are days of *temptation to worldliness, to self-security, and to false doctrines*. It is very subtle.

The part we want to examine now is the concept of *self-security*. Because of the condition that the many Christian churches are in today, churches that have once been God's church and have fallen, we are surrounded by churches that present doctrines from the Scriptures upon which they have put twists. And because there are so many people who are dissatisfied with the denominations that they have been in, and many have separated and started on their own, what we hear today is, I will trust in God, but I will never trust any man, or any decision arising from human counsels. This is what comes to my ears many times. I will not trust the human denominations anymore, they say; we've seen how fallen a condition they are in, how can we trust them? These words are expressed: I can't trust any human being anymore (if ever I trusted them anyway); but I'm going to trust in God alone, and I'm not going to place myself under any ministry anymore. This reasoning comes and is sourced from a statement in Jeremiah. It seems to be a scriptural principle.

Misusing God's Statements

Jeremiah 17:5 Thus saith the LORD; Cursed [be] the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.

This is what people conclude from these words: "I have trusted in churches and in ministries before; they have let me down; cursed is the man that trusteth in man." The following scripture of Micah is a similar statement which is often used as a justification to lay no more dependence and security on any human being around us.

Micah 7:5 Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.

What a statement. This arouses from Scripture a thought that I cannot trust any human being, not even my wife. This is what it says, doesn't it? "*Keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.*" So there is this element that comes from Scripture and that apparently poses even a contradiction to some other statements of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. And we will spend some time now to examine the Scriptures so that in this time in which we are living we don't fall into the traps of these subtle temptations to *self-security*, to *pride*, and *false doctrines*, because we are surrounded by these teachings and false doctrines, these subtle temptations.

There is even a quote from the Spirit of Prophecy whereby we may come to conclusions that may sometimes be wrong, even though they seem right.

We are prone to look to our fellow men for sympathy and uplifting, instead of looking to Jesus. In His mercy and faithfulness God often permits those in whom we place confidence to fail us, in order that we may learn the folly of trusting in man and making flesh our arm. Let us trust fully, humbly, unselfishly in God. He knows the sorrows that we feel to the depths of our being, but which we cannot express. When all things seem dark and unexplainable, remember the words of Christ, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." John 13:7. {MH 486.7}

We have thus far read from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy statements that can be used to say that we cannot trust any man, that we cannot trust in the arm of flesh, but only in the arm of the Lord.

In my past experiences, because I grew up in the terrible time of the debacle that was taking place in the sixties and seventies in Adventism, I came to the conclusion that "I can't trust any minister; I cannot trust my denomination that I have grown up in." And for many years I had felt comfortable under the phi-

osophy we have just read above, until there came a point in time in my life where I needed help. I needed help in matters not directly written. So I pleaded with God, and He directed me according to Scripture in other parts, which befuddled me for a moment because I couldn't trust any man. Here are now the quotes that He gave me in answer to my plea for the help I needed:

Ask Thine Elders

Deuteronomy 32:7 Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.

So in my bewildered state the Lord was telling me, "You need help; you need help to find where the truth is now because you have been confused by all the errors that are going on in the church. You don't know which way to turn now; go and ask the ministers and elders of the past. *Ask thy father* what the past was like." I was to ask and gain help from men? men in the past?

Proverbs 12:15 The way of a fool [is] right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel [is] wise.

Where am I going to get counsel from if I can't trust man? "Go to God!" we hear people say. Well, there are certain things in life, especially when the truth becomes rare, and people are confused by the false doctrines, that you need to find counsel over things that you can't find your way through. So I did need help of men and women of experience. Should I trust their counsel? This was in the 1960s and 1970s; where are we today? Over forty-fifty years later, in a far worse condition than what it was back then.

Then came from the Bible this other text that God gave me:

Isaiah 30:20 And [though] the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: 21 And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This [is] the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

This became so deeply meaningful to me. I am indeed in a state of bewilderment and *adversity*, I thought; the Lord has indeed permitted the waters of affliction to affect me. But He says, *Yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers*. And then, connected with that was the voice of the Holy Spirit: *Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way; these are the teachers, this is what you can trust. This is the way, walk ye in*

it. These were answers to my prayers in the bewilderment that I found myself in.

Pastors According to Mine Heart

The other one that was given to me is found in Jeremiah. I thank God for His word that could deal with the perplexity of these subtle temptations that surround us today.

Jeremiah 3:15 And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

God promised me that He would give me pastors, that He would give me those who are according to God's heart. Interesting. Is there a contradiction here? I did have to rely on the teaching and pastoring of some other minds to help me. Here was a problem. How can I balance the understanding that is in Isaiah 30:20-21 with the statement of Jeremiah 17:5 that we are not to rely on the arm of flesh? There are some statements in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy that, to the surface reader, seem to contradict each other. I will be sharing with you how the Lord helped me to find the balance on this.

Read the words again:

Isaiah 30:20 And [though] the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: 21 And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This [is] the way,

Here is the answer to the perplexity, because there are many preachers and many pastors, but they are not all according to God's heart. But here it says, You will hear a word behind you; a relationship with your God will tell you, These are your teachers. *This is the way, walk ye in it.* God would indicate those that I could trust. What was I to look for so that I could trust them?

Romans 10:15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

What was I to look for? What does the Scripture say? For the preachers that are *sent* of God. There are preachers and there are churches that are no longer sent by God.

False Prophets in Jerusalem

Jeremiah 23:14 I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah.

Prophets in Jerusalem – prophets and teachers in the church. It's a *horrible thing*.

Jeremiah 23:16 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, [and] not out of the mouth of the LORD.

They are not sent from the Lord; they are not speaking *out of the mouth of the Lord*. They are giving visions *of their own heart*.

Jeremiah 23:17 They say still unto them that despise me, The LORD hath said, Ye shall have peace;

So they are preaching to people who despise God's perfect obedience, and telling them, Oh, you believe in Jesus? You shall have peace.

Jeremiah 23:17 ...and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you.

Then God says:

Jeremiah 23:21 I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. **22** But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings.

Slowly and surely the message became clear to me that there were pastors and teachers who were according to God's heart, but that there were also pastors and teachers whom I could not trust because they would be preaching from their own heart, and would be men whom God Himself had not sent. Yet they ran, yet they prophesied, even though I have not spoken to them, says God.

Jeremiah 23:22 ...if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings.

This was making sense to me now. Those He sends I can safely trust. Why can I trust them?

Leaning On the Arm of God

Jeremiah 23:18 For who hath stood in the counsel of the LORD, and hath perceived and heard his word? who hath marked his word, and heard [it]?

There is the difference. Preachers that rely entirely on the full spectrum of His words are the ones that I can trust, because they have stood in that word. So if they are moved by Him, and I rely upon their counsel, am I trusting in the arm of flesh? Isn't it obvious? Because they are not speaking from their own heart; they are not teaching from their own opinion; they are taking a plain dependence upon the word of God, they are sent of God; therefore, if I trust them I am not leaning on the arm of flesh. It's obvious. But I must examine them. I must examine them to see whether they are sent from God or not.

What is the arm of the Lord in living reality? An arm is an extension to reach out to others. If I am going to rely on the Lord in those He extends and sends to us, I am to examine them. This is what is written in Isaiah 8. Here He is actually making reference to these multiple different confederacies of Christianity:

Isaiah 8:12 Say ye not, A confederacy, to all [them to] whom this people shall say, A confederacy;

What does that mean? What is a confederacy? It is a company of people uniting together, *confederating*. Don't confederate with these people that say, Come and join us;

Isaiah 8:12 ...neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. 13 Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and [let] him [be] your fear, and [let] him [be] your dread. 14 And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 15 And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.

This is what has happened. But

Isaiah 8:16 Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. ... 20 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, [it is] because [there is] no light in them.

As I studied this carefully to find my way through the morass that existed then (and I see it even more fully now), I came to a condition of release – I can trust something now, someone. I can trust some individuals.

The following words in Isaiah give you an understanding of the arm of the Lord in living reality. I am trusting, not in the arm of the flesh, but in the arm of the Lord, when I rely upon those who are identified as sent of God.

To Whom Is the Arm of the Lord Revealed?

Isaiah 53:1 Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

Isaiah is perplexed. I gave a message that came from God; who hath believed my report? Who has believed the report of these faithful men? *To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* Can you see something filtering through the word here? In this scripture He is actually saying that the arm of the Lord is revealed through Isaiah and through the faithful prophets. *Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?*

We know that the arm of the Lord is quoted from Scripture as Jesus in human flesh. And where Jesus rules in human flesh, there is the arm of the Lord which we can rest upon. This is what Jesus said in John 17. He is talking there in His mediatorial prayer about those who are one with Him and one with God, the arm of the Lord. He says:

John 17:20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

Can you trust *their word*?

John 17:21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, [art] in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Can you see the arm of the Lord? The union of the Father with His Son, the union of the Son with us, is the extension of God to reach to humanity around us. He sent out the disciples; the law was among them; they preached the pure word of God. They could be trusted, because they portrayed the arm of the Lord.

Trusting the Men Whom God Sends

We now read some quotes from the Spirit of Prophecy that make it abundantly clear to us how essential it is to trust the men whom God has sent.

In Christ the cry of humanity reached the Father of infinite pity. As a man He supplicated the throne of God till His humanity was charged with a heavenly current that should connect humanity with divinity. {DA 363.1}

Jesus, the arm of the Lord, connecting humanity with divinity.

Through continual communion He received life from God, that He might impart life to the world. {Ibid.}

Jesus came as the arm of the Lord by His *continual communion* with the Father. And now comes the punchline:

His experience is to be ours. {Ibid.}

Important Principles as Example

In the record of the conversion of Saul important principles are given us, which we should ever bear in mind. {AA 120.3}

The Spirit of Prophecy then describes what these principles are:

Saul was brought directly into the presence of Christ. He was one whom Christ intended for a most important work, one who was to be a "chosen vessel" unto Him; yet the Lord did not at once tell him of the work that had been assigned him. He arrested him in his course and convicted him of sin; but when Saul asked, "What wilt Thou have me to do?" the Saviour placed the inquiring Jew in connection with His church, there to obtain a knowledge of God's will concerning him. {Ibid.}

These are important principles that are given us and *which we should ever bear in mind*. As I became familiar with these statements it brought me to the point where I said, Right, Lord, I need to be where Your church is; because the principle is that the inquiring Jew had to be led by the church. God brought Saul *in connection with His church* for him *to obtain a knowledge of God's will concerning him*.

Many have an idea that they are responsible to Christ alone for their light and experience, independent of His recognized followers on earth. {AA 122.3}

Is that not what we are seeing today?

Jesus is the friend of sinners, and His heart is touched with their woe. He has all power, both in heaven and on earth; but He respects the means that He has ordained for the enlightenment and salvation of men; He directs sinners to the church, which He has made a channel of light to the world. {Ibid.}

When, in the midst of his blind error and prejudice, Saul was given a revelation of the Christ whom he was persecuting, he was placed in direct communication with the church, which is the light of the world. {AA 122.4}

Who was the church?

In this case Ananias represents Christ, {Ibid.}

The human represents Christ,

...and also represents Christ's ministers upon the earth, who are appointed to act in His stead. {Ibid.}

Are they the arm of the Lord then? *In His stead.*

In Christ's stead Ananias touches the eyes of Saul, that they may receive sight. In Christ's stead he places his hands upon him, and, as he prays in Christ's name, Saul receives the Holy Ghost. All is done in the name and by the authority of Christ. Christ is the fountain; the church is the channel of communication. {Ibid.}

This message could be stopped here. It is self-explanatory. Hence the title of this message, *Our security in trust*. I am to trust those whom God has chosen and sent to me.

So it is that in God's church we learn to lean on His arm in our relationship with one another – *I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one.*

As His representatives among men, Christ does not choose angels who have never fallen, {DA 296.4}

but men who *have* fallen;

...but human beings, men of like passions with those they seek to save. Christ took upon Himself humanity, that He might reach humanity. Divinity needed humanity; {Ibid.}

It needed an arm – *humanity*.

Divinity needed humanity; for it required both the divine and the human to bring salvation to the world. Divinity needed humanity, that humanity might afford a channel of communication between God and man. So with the servants and messengers of Christ. Man needs a power outside of and beyond himself, to restore him to the likeness of God, and enable him to do the work of God; but this does not make the human agency unessential. {Ibid.}

It does not make the human agency unessential.

Humanity lays hold upon divine power, Christ dwells in the heart by faith; and through co-operation with the divine, the power of man becomes efficient for good. {Ibid.}

I love the way God clears the mess. He has cleared the mess in my mind. All the way through these horrendous experiences that I have been through, from mainstream Adventism to the Reform Movement, and to the International Missionary Society, and to where I am now, the Lord has spoken again and again to help me through, through these kinds of messages.

God's Way

In Hebrews 13 you see plainly established in principle the principles which we have been told we should always remember:

Hebrews 13:7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of [their] conversation.

Examine them – *the end of their conversation.*

Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that [is] unprofitable for you.

The Bible doesn't change, God doesn't change. This is God's way. So the importance of trusting those whom God has set aside for my stability is an absolute truth, not to be confused by these subtle temptations that are surrounding us today.

The Purpose for God's Church

is beautifully portrayed in the following words:

Psalm 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant [it is] for brethren to dwell together in unity! 2 [It is] like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, [even] Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; 3 As the dew of Hermon, [and as the dew] that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, [even] life for evermore.

This was at the anointing of Aaron. What a blessing it is *for brethren to dwell together* in that unity. So the experience that the Lord had to help me through, I am hoping will all bless you as well, because it says:

Brethren sometimes associate together for years, and they think they can trust those they know so well just as they would trust members of their own family. There is a freedom and confidence in this association which could not exist between those not of the same faith. This is very pleasant while mutual faith and brotherly love last; {RH, June 3, 1884 par. 4}

It is a blessing; it is something where we can trust. But it must be that which the Lord is sending and the faith and brotherly love.

Making Sense of the Consistent Word

So what did those other statements we read in the beginning tell us? What was it referring to, if we are able to be trusting human beings whom God is sending and moving upon? What is the correct conclusion so that it doesn't contradict the plain principles that we have just seen all through this meditation? What did it say?

Jeremiah 17:5 ...Cursed [be] the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm,

Does it stop there? What are the next words?

Jeremiah 17:5 ...and whose heart departeth from the LORD.

What is this saying? If I depart from the Lord, and I rest in my own human opinion, and I then rely on other human beings that I cannot discern properly as being the arm of the Lord to me, then I would be resting on the arm of flesh – on my own arm of flesh, and on the arm of flesh of other men. I am not trusting the Lord.

Then there was the statement of Micah, saying, Don't rely on a friend; don't rely on the one that is in your bosom.

Micah 7:5 Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.

Those who embrace the true gospel power, as in Matthew 10:34, cannot trust unbelieving brothers and friends. They cannot trust those who are not under the principle of God. This is what this scripture above is talking about.

Matthew 10:34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. 35 For I am come to set a man at variance against

his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. 36 And a man's foes [shall be] they of his own household. 37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

We cannot rely on the arm of flesh, on those who are merely fleshly related to us. If they are related to us in the purity of God's word, this is a totally different thing. So it is that we are to depend upon God and upon those who are depending upon God; and we need to discern where they are. We must not think that we are not to rely upon those who are in the inner circle of Christ's church. Jeremiah is here lamenting:

Jeremiah 9:1 Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! 2 Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they [be] all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men. 3 And they bend their tongues [like] their bow [for] lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD. 4 Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders. 5 And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, [and] weary themselves to commit iniquity. 6 Thine habitation [is] in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the LORD.

We must not confuse these kinds of counsels with those counsels that have to do with that inner circle of Christ's faithful people. I mention that *inner circle* because this is an expression found in the Spirit of Prophecy.

The unity, the harmony, that should exist among the disciples of Christ is described in these words: "That they may be one, as we are." But how many there are who draw off and seem to think that they have learned all they need to learn. . . . Those who choose to stand on the outskirts of the camp cannot know what is going on in the inner circle. They must come right into the inner courts, for as a people we must be united in faith and purpose. . . . It is through this unity that we are to convince the world of the mission of Christ, and bear our divine credentials to the world. {TMK 172.2}

Divine credentials – here are the people of God; *here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus*, the credentials. It is the inner circle of God's true people.

Individual Independence

Here is a summary of all the things we have delved upon in this message:

There have ever been in the church those who are constantly inclined toward individual independence. They seem unable to realize that independence of spirit is liable to lead the human agent to have too much confidence in himself and to trust in his own judgment rather than to respect the counsel and highly esteem the judgment of his brethren, especially of those in the offices that God has appointed for the leadership of His people. God has invested His church with special authority and power which no one can be justified in disregarding and despising, for he who does this despises the voice of God. {AA 163.2}

Those who are inclined to regard their individual judgment as supreme are in grave peril. It is Satan's studied effort to separate such ones from those who are channels of light, through whom God has wrought to build up and extend His work in the earth. {AA 164.1}

Can you see how this links back to the statement of *That I May Know Him*, p. 256? This is the subtle temptations of Satan. *It is Satan's studied effort to separate such ones who rely on their own judgment and their own choice to follow God as they see Him, from those who are channels of light, through whom God has wrought to build up and extend His work in the earth.*

To neglect or despise those whom God has appointed to bear the responsibilities of leadership in connection with the advancement of the truth, is to reject the means that He has ordained for the help, encouragement, and strength of His people. For any worker in the Lord's cause to pass these by, and to think that his light must come through no other channel than directly from God, is to place himself in a position where he is liable to be deceived by the enemy and overthrown. The Lord in His wisdom has arranged that by means of the close relationship that should be maintained by all believers, Christian shall be united to Christian and church to church. Thus the human instrumentality will be enabled to co-operate with the divine. Every agency will be subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all the believers will be united in an organized and well-directed effort to give to the world the glad tidings of the grace of God. {*Ibid.*}

This is the word of God to us. I thank God for helping me, and I rest on the arm of the Lord continually. May God help us to rest on the arm of God, just as we have studied it here.

Amen.