

Living Life in God's Hands – LifeGroup Resource

Read the Scripture: Luke 23:46

Read the verse together from more than one translation of the Bible. Here's the CEB (Common English Bible) version: *Crying out in a loud voice, Jesus said, "Father, **into your hands I entrust my life.**" After he said this, he breathed for the last time.*

Looking Deeper: When Jesus said this on the cross, it wasn't just a declaration, it was a prayer. His words came from a psalm that would've been on his mind. Look together at Psalm 31:1-5.

William Barclay suggests that when Jesus prayed this from the cross, he was actually praying a prayer Jewish mothers taught their children to pray before they went to bed.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, was one of the people standing at the foot of the cross and Jesus lifts up the prayer his mother likely taught him. Mary would've heard Jesus crying out in a loud voice—crying out the very prayer she taught him. And it was a prayer of *trust*. This is a prayer we can pray at the darkest moments of our lives, but it is also a prayer we can utter in our everyday lives.

Looking Deeper Still: Notice this prayer of entrusting your life to God in the Book of Psalms is a psalm of David. King David (one of Israel's most prominent kings in the Old Testament) wrote most of the psalms. And he often spoke of trusting his life to God. One time after making sinful choices, he faced the judgment of God. His words when he realized his sin and took responsibility are powerful. Look together at 2 Samuel 24:14.

Question: What does it mean to fall into the hands of God?

Pause and Reflect: This past week, Pastor Tim Keller passed into eternity. He was a beloved leader and author who finished well. He often spoke of trusting God, but he had a helpful phrase that is worth mentioning here. He said not only do we need to trust Jesus for our eternal destination, but we also need to place what he called "our functional day-to-day trust" in the Lord. What are you functionally trusting day to day in your life? Is this easy or hard? Why? Please discuss.

A Final Reflection: In the message this week, a story (below) from Brennan Manning's book *Ruthless Trust* was told. After someone reads the story aloud, take a few moments to share ways the Lord might be speaking to you about trusting him. Finally, close your time in prayer by praying the words of Psalm 31:1-5 together.

When the brilliant ethicist John Kavanaugh went to work for three months at "the house of the dying" in Calcutta, he was seeking a clear answer as to how best to spend the rest of his life. On the first morning there, he met Mother Teresa. She asked, "And what can I do for you?" Kavanaugh asked her to pray for him.

"What do you want me to pray for?" she asked. He voiced the request that he had borne thousands of miles from the United States: "Pray that I have clarity."

She said firmly, "No, I will not do that."

When he asked her why, she said, "Clarity is the last thing you are clinging to and must let go of."

When Kavanaugh commented that she always seemed to have the clarity he longed for, she laughed and said, "I have never had clarity; what I have always had is trust. So I will pray that you trust God."