

"In God We Trust"

By Richard Kelley

A Proposal

On November 13, 1861, a Pennsylvania preacher named M.R. Watkinson wrote to then Secretary of Treasury Salmon P. Chase, concerned that future generations might look back on their era, a time of civil unrest and bloodshed, and remember *the ignominy of heathenism*. In his appeal, he pleaded with Secretary Chase to add an inscription that, *...would place us openly under the Divine protection we have personally claimed*. He then wrote these words, *Would not the antiquaries of succeeding centuries rightly reason from our past that we were a heathen nation?* Purportedly a Christian man, Chase concurred, and made provisions to grant the preacher's plea. U.S. mint Director James Pollock received a letter from Chase one week later, in which he found this request, *The trust of our people in God should be declared in our national coins*.

The Phrase

From that time, mottos recognizing this national affection were debated. Among others, Chase was really taken by God, Our Trust. Supposedly, this was partially inspired from his particular affection toward a line in the national anthem. By December of 1863 however, Chase had narrowed his favorites to just two. Yet, and with slight modification, only In God We Trust was imbedded on the 1864 two-cent piece [the other saying was, Our God, Our Country].

The Process

Twenty-seven years earlier, congress had enacted a law that prescribed what must be printed on the national coinage. So, in 1863, it took another act of congress to change the inscription to the pious phrase now found on our pocket change. While its tenure has been interrupted, it has appeared continuously on some form of coinage since April 22, 1864, and on our paper notes since October 1, 1957. Today, mandated by three U.S. laws, three inscriptions can be found on our coinage, Liberty, E Pluribus Unum (from many, one), and In God We Trust.[1](#)

The Point

Remember M.R. Watkinson's concern for the future of the United States in 1861, *Would not the antiquaries of succeeding centuries rightly reason from our past that we were a heathen nation?* Did you ever wonder what people will see when they study *this* generation? Will they accurately report our political corruptions, deceptions and immoralities? Will they compare us to Rome, as many have already done? The days of every nation are numbered, as Daniel declared to Belshazzar (Daniel 5:26). *Do we* see the writing on the wall? Many have forgotten that it is righteousness that exalteth a nation, but that sin is a reproach to any people (Proverbs 14:34). Many are caught up in the transient moment, and cannot (or refuse to) see how brutal and arrogant this country has become. Many refuse to see the acute epidemic of, and extreme **tolerance** for such sins as atheism, homosexuality, abortion, fornication and adultery leading to the destruction of the home and consequently the nation; and, of course most recently, the defense and plea for recognition of the so-called gay marriage. So many refuse salvation from sin, choosing rather to revel and rejoice in it. In some places, Americans cannot mention God without facing legal repercussions, but the *same system of law* **requires** the Divine Name on its coinage! We wonder how long it will be until our Constitution is declared *Unconstitutional!* We may have the name of God on our currency, but **will not the antiquaries of succeeding centuries rightly reason from our past that we were a heathen nation?**

The Proposition

Christians are part of the eternal kingdom that will never be destroyed (Daniel 2:44); it has a King who cannot be removed from power (Matthew 28:18); the death of its Captain and Commander (Hebrews 2:10) proved to be its greatest triumph when He rose again from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). Hence, His kingdom cannot be shaken (Hebrews 12:22-28), for even the grave, the greatest enemy of man, was put to shame when our King burst through its bars (Acts 2:27), bringing life and immortality to light through the Gospel (2 Timothy 1:10). When centuries from now people look back on this generation of the nation, let them mark the moral corruption, let them scope into our scandalous government, let them despise our

downfalls, but let them see *vividly* that through it all, God's people fought the good fight of faith and remained faithful even to the point of death (Revelation 2:10)!

The Plan

America (incidentally, individuals of all nations (Matthew 28:18; Mark 16:15) must be *obedient* to Jesus Christ in order to be saved from his wrath (2 Thessalonians 1:6-9). If we *truly* trust in God, we will be obedient to his Word. Remember Jesus' words to the church at Sardis, I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead (Revelation 3:1)? Should we continue our current course, this may well be America's epitaph. This quote is taken from a book written in 1974 by Batsell Barrett Baxter called, *America, It's Not Too Late*. Its message, written from a godly pen and mind, is as the God it represents, timeless:

*If we leave God out of the picture, I do not believe that it will ever be possible for our nation to lift itself by its own bootstraps to higher levels of commitment and behavior... If we keep God in the picture, however, all things are possible... **Our future really depends on how much we believe in God and how much we respect His will** (emp. mine, *rek*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids: 1974, p. 114.*

Amen!

[1www.ustreas.gov/education/fact-sheets/currency/in-god-we-trust.html](http://www.ustreas.gov/education/fact-sheets/currency/in-god-we-trust.html).