

In God We Trust

In God We Trust is the official motto of the United States of America. It was adapted by the United States Congress in 1956, replacing *E pluribus unum*, which had been used since 1776 for the original design of the Great Seal of the United States. . It was first heard in the U.S. National Anthem, "*The Star Spangled Banner*", written by Francis Scott Key in 1814. In the last stanza, Key wrote a variation of the phrase: "...*And this be our motto: In God is our trust. And the Star Spangled banner in triumph shall wave, O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.*"

In 1864, the phrase was shortened to "In God We Trust" and was applied to U.S. coins. The U.S. Department of Treasury says the motto was placed on the coins due to the increased religious sentiment existing during the Civil War.

The then-Secretary of the Treasury, Salmon P. Chase, had received many appeals from devout citizens urging that the United States recognize God on United States coins. From records at the Department, the first such appeal apparently came in a letter dated November 13, 1861. It was from Rev. M. R. Watkinson, Minister of the Gospel, Ridleyville, PA.

On November 20, 1861, Secretary Chase wrote to James Pollock, Director of the Mint at Philadelphia , requesting him to prepare a motto to use:

"Dear Sir: No nation can be strong except in the strength of God, or safe except in His defense. The trust of our people in God should be declared on our national coins.

You will cause a device to be prepared without unnecessary delay with a motto expressing in the fewest and tersest words possible this national recognition."

In God We Trust was later added to paper currency.

In 2006, In God We Trust was designated as the motto of the state of Florida.

While the Bible does not directly state "In God We Trust", there are similar references to it, such as...

... Psalm 91:2, "Say to the Lord, 'My refuge and fortress, my God in whom I trust'." [Old Testament]

...2 Corinthians: 9, "that we might trust not in ourselves but in God who raises the dead." [New Testament]

Melkote Ramaswamy, a Hindu American scholar, wrote "In God We Trust" on American currency is a reminder that "...there is God everywhere, whether we are conscious or not."

Judy Pearson

