The background of the cover is a composite image. The top portion shows stacks of gold coins, with one coin in the upper right corner being more prominent. The bottom portion shows a man in a workshop, leaning over a large piece of machinery, possibly a printing press or a minting machine. The overall color palette is warm, dominated by gold and brown tones.

Discovering Our Nation's Heritage
The Story of

IN GOD WE
TRUST

JOHN HUDSON TINER

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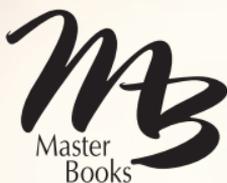
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The Story Of In God We Trust

The United States has a strong **economy**, and its money is accepted everywhere around the world. About two-thirds of United States currency circulates in foreign countries. In nations where the government is weak, United States **currency** is favored over local money. More United States paper money is used in other countries than inside the United States itself.

Much can be learned about a country by the words and pictures found on its money. United States bills and coins bear the statement “In God We Trust.” The inspiring words are carried into some countries where Christian missionaries are not allowed. How the phrase became the national motto is a story that spans 200 years.

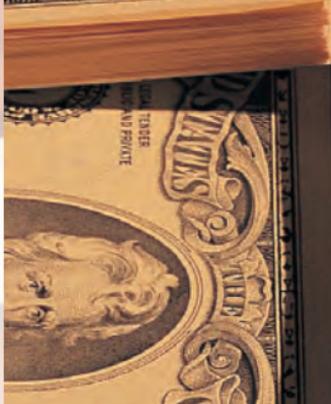




O n American Paper Money

The phrase “In God We Trust” has not always been on paper money.

Until the 1950s, it was found only on coins. The end of World War II (1939–1945) marked the start of the dark days of the Cold War. During this time, **communist** countries rigidly controlled their citizens. Dictators tried to destroy any references to God. Religious freedom in Russia, China, North Korea, and other countries ceased to exist. Communist leaders built walls topped by barbed wire to prevent their people from escaping to the free world.





People with vision
looked for ways to give
Christian believers in
communist countries
a reason for hope.

Matthew H. Rothert was
a friendly man who ran a
furniture store in Camden,

Arkansas. In 1953, he and his wife
visited her family in Chicago, Illinois. At a Sunday morning
church service, Rothert noticed that “In God We Trust” was
on coins. But paper money did not carry the motto.

Matthew Rothert knew that United States currency
circulated all over the globe. A message on paper money
about this country’s faith in God could easily be carried to
everyone. He wrote to George C. Humphrey, Secretary of the
Treasury, about the idea. Secretary Humphrey liked Rothert’s
suggestion. But he explained, “To put the motto on a bill would
require an Act of **Congress.**”

The idea seemed headed for an unhappy ending.
However, Rothert became seriously sick. He put his trust in
God to carry him through the difficult times. He was not idle
while he recovered in bed from his illness. He wrote letters to
senators, representatives, and newspapers. He said,

“Why shouldn’t paper money bear the same inscription as coins? Our paper money should carry a spiritual message to all nations.”

He wrote to President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Rothert said, “Most people believe that the motto ‘In God We Trust’ is on both our coins and our paper money. However, this is not the case, and I believe the addition of this motto in the proper place on our paper money at this time would be a forward step in our international relations.”

J. William Fulbright, one of the senators who represented Matthew Rothert’s home state of Arkansas, was all for the idea. He said, “I think your idea is a very good one.” Senator Fulbright introduced a bill authorizing the use of the motto on paper money. Congress voted its approval, and President Eisenhower signed the bill into law on July 30, 1956.

In 1957, “In God We Trust” appeared first on the back of a one-dollar bill. By 1963, all other **denominations** carried the motto. Today, all coins and currency show the



belief in God that is deeply rooted in the history of the United States.

Money Overseas. Of the 540 billion dollars in total United States currency, about 360 billion is held in foreign countries. Most of that is in denominations of one-hundred dollar bills.

Paper Money. The United States prints about 37



million bills each day with a value of about 696 million dollars. About half of the bills are one-dollar bills. Most are printed to replace old, worn out bills.

Paper money is sometimes called “folding money” because it is folded when a billfold is closed. A bill can be folded about 4,000 times before it wears out. Most one-dollar bills are worn out within two years. Larger denominations last longer. The 100 dollar bill has a lifetime of nine years.

The Iron Curtain. Winston Churchill, the prime minister of England during World War II, visited the United

States in 1946. He gave a speech in Fulton, Missouri. He said, "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent." The Iron Curtain became a symbolic name for the separation between the communist countries and the free world.

I like Ike! Dwight David Eisenhower was a hero of World War II. He led all the forces that successfully defeated Hitler and his armies. Eisenhower's parents taught him as a child to pray and read the Bible every day. As a youngster, he had difficulty controlling his temper. Once he became so angry that he beat his fists against a tree until they began to bleed. His mother bandaged his hands. She told him, "He that conquereth

his own soul is greater than he who taketh a city." This idea is found in the Bible in

Proverbs 16:32. Eisenhower later said

this was the most valuable advice

he had ever received.

In 1953, Eisenhower became the 34th president of the United States. People who elected him president used the slogan "I like Ike!"

