

Trust In God

John 14:1-14

May 14, 2017

First United Methodist Church, Lindstrom

(This is a manuscript prepared for sermon delivery and may not represent actual words spoken.)

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.”

So here we have a familiar passage. It is the Gospel lesson I read at most funerals and memorial services. It references troubled hearts...and encourages trust.

Okay...so first this trust thing. When I trust a person or thing it means that I have a rock solid belief in the honesty and truthfulness or ability or power of that person or thing. When I trust a person, I am believing that person will want what is best for me...and will certainly cause me no harm. Who was the first person or persons we learned to trust? Our parents...right? And I'm not so sure we learned to trust them. We just did. We trusted them to provide for us and to protect us and to keep us safe. We did not ask questions; we just trusted. When we were very young...that is. This is one reason—one reason among many—why Jesus invites us to become like children. Children just trust.

Now, not trusting...that is what is learned. People put in a position of trust abuse that trust. They fail to provide or protect. They cause hurt or harm.

So I was thinking on this text...and jotting down a few thoughts. I thought about trust. I thought about a couple of things. I thought about who the people are I trust. Think about that. How many people are there that you trust? I am not talking a superficial kind of confidence here. These would be folks in whom you have a rock solid belief in their honesty and truthfulness. These would be folks who would always—always—want what is best for you...who would think the best of you...who would—to use a more earthy thought—always

have your back. Always. How many names on your list? List might be shorter than you think.

Then I also flipped that thought. I wondered...on how many lists would my name appear? Just how many people are there out there who trust in my honesty and truthfulness...who trust that I always want what is best for them...who trust that I would be loathe to do anything that would cause them any pain or harm. Then I further wondered what things in life I may have done that have led to my being erased or scratched from some lists. Just a few things here that popped into mind as I meditated on this text.

I've met some people who...well, Jesus would not make their list. That is very sad...but very true. Sadder still is I know people who used to trust Jesus...but not any longer.

Jesus wanted to be on his disciples' list. He wants to be on ours...at the top.

We read from John's Gospel. As we know, John's Gospel is quite a bit different from the other three. Of course, all four tell us about Jesus. All four are the good news. But John went about it differently from the other three. For example, it is because we have John's Gospel that we know the ministry of Jesus spanned at least three years. John reports three trips by Jesus to Jerusalem for the Passover. The other three...just one such trip. John has all these “I am” statements by Jesus. “I am the bread of life. I am the light of the world. I am the resurrection and the life. I am the gate and the good shepherd.” These statements are followed by some lengthy teaching and preaching. In today's text, Jesus states, “I am the way and the truth and the life.”