

was a nobody... Abraham was first named 'father' and then *became* a father because he dared to trust God to do what only God could do: raise the dead to life, with a word make something out of nothing."

Jesus is inviting you to live exactly like Abraham; trusting what he says, before it has come into being. Trusting that Jesus will always keep his word. I can trust Jesus with my life. If he says I'm forgiven through his death and resurrection, then I am, whether I feel it or not. I can trust Jesus that I now have life with his Father, a life of love I get to live now and discover its fullness when Jesus returns. That's what I am, because Jesus is the word that makes

something out of me; so I believe what he says is true. So I live it, believing Jesus, taking him at his word.

If you want to live by a contract, go for it. Grab the law and see how well you do. Fulfil it perfectly and see how loved you are. Or take Jesus at his word; living with him as a constant reality in your life, daily talking with him about everything. Daily seeing life through his eyes; I'm forgiven, I'm loved by Father, I'm a person of worth – Jesus has given his life for me. I'm accepted freely – I didn't earn it – thank God, but in Jesus he freely gave himself, that we might walk through the adventure of life together.

You have a choice; trust what you make

of yourself through the eyes of others, or trust what Jesus makes of you seeing life and yourself though his eyes.

I know where I'm throwing in my lot.

Let us pray. Jesus, send the Spirit into my heart that I might trust you, simply taking you at your word, living out of what you say. Jesus my desire is to trust you and you alone. I seek to throw my lot in with you, come hell or high water. Jesus daily let me hear your voice so that I can follow you, even when I'm scared and uncertain. Jesus I want to follow you daily, risking everything in your relationship of love and promise.



Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
Pastor: Tim 0427326553

Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

25 February 2018

GOD'S PROMISE

Romans 4:13-25 (The Message)



I liked the Message Paraphrase from Romans for today. "If those who get what God gives them only get it by doing everything they are told to do and filling out all the right forms properly signed..." When I read that I thought; 'thank God, I hate filling in forms, and forms and more forms'. Thank God he's not into wrapping himself and ourselves up in piles of red tape. Thank God Jesus doesn't ask us to fill in forms before he acts.

We continue; "that eliminates personal trust completely". Without personal trust what sort of relationship do you have. Here is comes; 'that turns the promise into an iron-clad *contract*! That's not a holy promise; that's a business

deal. A contract drawn up by a hard-nosed lawyer with plenty of fine print." I don't know about you but the idea of a contract with plenty of fine print doesn't stir my heart. It leaves me rather cold and feeling distant. Do you think that's where Jesus really wants us?

Is that what Jesus invited Peter and Andrew into when he called them?

Did Jesus get Peter and Andrew to fill in a contract, with plenty of fine print, or did he call them to trust him. To come and risk life with him. To come and follow him as his disciples. Jesus invites them into somewhat of an unknown. Jesus invites them to risk their life living with him. And that's what

they did, and got far more than they expected.

I'm sure Peter didn't expect to deny Jesus and feel so rotten. I'm sure Andrew was expecting to find himself in a position of power and authority when Jesus became king. Did Peter and Andrew really know what lay ahead of them? No.

They knew Jesus and risked following him. They risked throwing their lot in with him, taking him at his word. Paul put it this way; "there is no contract in the first place, simply a *promise* – and God's promise at that – you can't break it."

God doesn't need a contract to remain true to himself. He knows no other way to live; in every and

any situation Jesus always acts true to himself. No contract needed, you can trust him with your life.

How do we know we can trust Jesus with our lives? That is the whole message of the cross. If there was a contract, at the cross we broke every agreement; Peter sacrificed Jesus to save himself, Pilate conveniently let a person he knew was innocent die to save the inconvenience of a riot. The Jewish leaders of the day killed Jesus out of envy, and in a desire to hold onto their perceived power and influence. If there had been a contract with God, humanity tore it up.

But there was no contract, in Jesus, God was living out his loving promise. In Jesus, God lives out being faithful. Not because we were but because that's who he is. He can't act

any other way, he stays true to himself – you can crucify him and he won't change. Which is precisely what humanity did, and did Jesus change?

Jesus is inviting each of us to trust him. To take him at his word, and live trusting him. What a risk, but that's

Who do you trust? Why?

what Jesus offers. He says to each of us, 'follow me'. No contract, no fine print, no constitution to hold him accountable to. All we have is trust. A trust that Jesus has sought to create through his crucifixion.

Outside the crucifixion we don't really have all that much to hand onto. After the crucifixion we have Jesus dying for us, that we might live loved, that we might find in him life

lived to the full. In the crucifixion we see a person who can be trusted, for he will always stay true to himself. You can risk your life on that.

So we are invited by Jesus to live like Abraham, where Paul wrote; "Abraham believed anyway, deciding to live not

on the basis of what he saw he *couldn't* do but on what God said he *would* do." Jesus is inviting you not to live from what you can't do but to risk all of life on what he said he would do, and has done. Jesus' crucifixion isn't make believe; it is reality. Jesus has given his life out of love for you.

If there was a contract Jesus could have thrown it back in our faces that we broke it. And when you break a contract are there consequences?

Jesus doesn't have a contract. Jesus has a

heart that beats to love you. Jesus' desire is to share his life with you, no matter what extreme he has to go to. He is pursuing us, the ones he loves, more than his own life. You can trust him.

More and more it is dawning on me that life is simply an act of trust. Who do you trust? Science, money, pleasure, self; who do you trust? That is the basic question of life. For what, or who I trust shapes what I do and believe about myself. Who is calling you to trust them?

Jesus is calling you to trust him with your life; with everything. Do you notice that trust is risky business?

Maybe that's why we look for contracts, as we try to take the risk out of life. When we have a contract we get the feeling of being safe; we have fine print, so we must

be safe. But have you ever noticed that no-matter how well written a contract is and no-matter how much fine print there is people still break them!

Contracts offer no real security, just a good means for lawyers to make a living. Is that what

Trust is Risky Business

sort of relationship we want with Jesus; call in the lawyers when he doesn't follow section C, paragraph 7 of the constitution? Or would you rather trust him to be true to himself.

And when Jesus is true to himself an amazing thing happens, I discover myself in him, and then I can begin to live true to who I am. For in Jesus I now know who I am.

Without knowing who you are, guess what? It is impossible to live true to yourself. You end up living a lie, and what do lies do? Do they create trust?

Jesus doesn't lie, but speaks the truth and invites us to trust him as the truth. We go beyond a written creed as our

statement of truth to a living breathing person. I don't have a written document that I agree with; I have a person I trust. I have a person whom I now seek to share my life with, trusting him to be honest and true, always. I seek to trust Jesus, even when I don't understand. And there's lots I don't understand.

So Jesus creates us to be like Abraham. From Romans; "We call Abraham 'father' not because he got God's attention by living like a saint, but because God made something out of Abraham when he