

"No Distrust"

Romans 4:13-25 & Matthew 9:9-13, 18-25

June 5, 2005

I stopped at an area business the other day and came to pay for my purchase only to find that I did not have the correct amount and had left my checkbook at the church – no problem - "just drop of the payment next week", I was told. Isn't it great to live in Bottineau? Can you really trust people? Would you really want to trust some guy that wore a off white, floor length dress to church every Sunday morning? Trust is such a big issue - - - and I don't believe that we generally trust anyone or anything anymore - perhaps that is an exaggeration - but not a big one.

There was a man who was apprehensive about his first airplane ride. His friends, eager to hear how it went, asked if he enjoyed the flight. "Well," he commented, "it wasn't as bad as I thought it might be, but I'll tell you this. I never did put all my weight down!" Can you trust in an untrustworthy world?

Did any of the phrases in the second scripture reading this morning catch your attention in the same way they caught mine? Think about such phrases as: "HOPING AGAINST HOPE...." "NO DISTRUST MADE HIM WAVER" "... BEING FULLY CONVINCED ..." Imagine how different life could be if we trusted so completely ... if our faith never wavered - if we were so convinced about the truth of something, even though it seemed impossible and was totally unprovable What would life be like if 'no distrust' entered into the relationships we have or the business dealings we are involved with or even into the religious convictions that we hold. Image it

I recently read about a young girl that loved baseball and had been anxious to go to a professional game. One day she came to her parents and announced that she would have 4 tickets to a game that was being played in two weeks in Minneapolis. The parents were surprised that their grade school child could have 4 tickets but they did not ask questions. The mother could not go because of previous commitments but the father said he was free and the daughter could take two friends. With that settled, the parents asked where she got the tickets. The daughter explained that her teacher had them and that she, the daughter just had to take a dollar to school and then she would get the tickets. They asked, "You mean that the teacher is selling you the tickets for \$1.00?" No, that wasn't exactly how it worked. The daughter had to give the dollar to some other kids and sign a paper and then latter they would call her to tell her that she could pick up the tickets. The parents didn't really understand until the father took his daughter to school the next day and watched her purchase a raffle ticket for the baseball tickets. He was crushed as he thought about his daughters inevitable disappointment when someone else won the tickets. After school he tried to talk to her about how slim her chances were of

winning - but the girl would not hear of it. She simply said with unquestioning faith that she would get the tickets. That night the phone rang -- it was for the daughter -- after she hung up she simply told her parents that the caller had said that she could pick up her tickets in the office the next day.

Is it silly Or just naive - the innocent trust of a child that does not know any better? Or is it that 'never give up believing,' 'never give up hope,' 'unquestioning trust in what is believed,' kind of attitude that we should live with? --- Imagine what life would be like if we never wavered in trusting what we believe. What if you were able to hope against hope and know that the unbelievable will come to be? What if we could be fully convinced by all of the promises we have received? The peace that would be a part of our lives would certainly transform us into utterly different people.

Paul lays it on heavy when it talks about Abraham -- *hoping against hope, fully convinced, never distrusting*. To me it is incredible. But then it was not hope or trust in the promises that came from a business deal that was out to sell a product - it was not a trust placed in a neighbor or family member or friends who had let him down in the past ----- it was trust in God. And Abraham had absolutely no doubt that the Creator God in whom he had entrusted his life could and would keep His promises.

And then there are the people in today's gospel text. The daughter of one man has died and he comes fully expecting the impossible -- another person, a woman has suffered with a hemorrhage for 12 years and no doctor had been able to do anything - but she touches the hem of His garment expecting the 'unexpected'. Both approach Jesus with the same 'hope against hope' - a totally unwavering trust. They had no doubt of the power of Christ to heal and bring life.

There isn't much of that total trust in our lives - is there? It is hard to believe or trust anyone or anything. You go to a store and plan to buy a product - but the decision is not easy - we have heard all of the sales pitches about each product being the best - but we can't trust what we have heard because we have experienced so many disappointments - what we have heard may be the truth but not the whole truth - maybe what is said is true, but there is more we need to know. One advertisement after another makes claims that we want to believe - yet we are disappointed when the claims do not work for us. How can we have unwavering trust in such a world? So much of what we experience in this life only destroys our ability to trust.

There is an old story of a father who took his young son out and stood him on the railing of the back porch. He then went down, stood on the lawn, and encouraged the little fellow to jump into his arms. "I'll catch you," the father said confidently. After a lot of coaxing, the little boy finally made the leap. When he did, the father stepped back and let the child fall to the ground. He then picked his son up, dusted him off, and dried his tears. "Let that be a lesson," he said sternly. "Don't ever trust anyone."

So how is your faith as you live life in a world that teaches us not

to trust? It is not easy - - but we are hear to talk about God - a God who is "Holy" - separate from the worldwhat I want to tell you is that God is not mankind and you can trust Him even though so much of our human experience teaches us not to trust. You can trust God -- you don't even have to wonder if He will remain faithful to His promises to us -- you can hope against all hope that He will forgive our sins and hold us in His mighty hand and it will be. --- How can we trust God without question in a world that teaches distrust?

You can trust God without question. One thing that I found in my files was a one-liner that said: "The Christian faith has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult and left untried."

AMEN