

A SERMON FOR REFORMATION

Trusting Only Thee



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SERMONS FOR REFORMATION

SERMON

¶ Grace, mercy and peace be to you, followers of Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior, as we celebrate the Reformation this day. There was a game show in the 1950s and '60s called “Who Do You Trust?” It involved deciding if you could trust your spouse to answer a question or answer the question yourself. Whether you won or lost the game was determined by how much you trusted yourself or your partner.

In the game of life, we put our trust in more things and more people than we may actually realize. We trust the our alarm clock will wake us up in the morning. We trust that our car will start when we turn the key in the ignition. We trust that the food we eat is safe. We put our trust in doctors, plumbers, mechanics, teachers, coworkers, friends and family to help and support us. But because of sin in the world, sometimes the alarm does not go off, the car fails to start, food goes bad, people don't come through for us. Our trust in people and things can be broken as a result.

But God has provided us with a solution when we have little or no trust in this broken world. The solution is Jesus. We can always trust in Jesus. He will never fail us or abandon us or forsake us. He will always protect us and support us and love us. No matter what we have done or said in disobedience to him or to God, we can forever trust him to forgive us and restore us to new life in him, which will last for all eternity.

Jesus makes it clear in Scripture how trustworthy he is. He says:

“And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20).

“In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also” (John 14:2-3).

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love” (John 15:9).

“I came that they may have life and have it abundantly” (John 10:10).

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10).

“Your sins are forgiven you” (Luke 5:20).

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11).

“No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you” (John 15:15).

All these trustworthy sayings from Jesus are very comforting to us and help to build up our faith in him. But we can be a forgetful people, can't we? We can forget what Jesus said to us and even start to distrust him or doubt him when faced with difficulties in this life, or we start to listen to other false Messiahs telling us to trust in them instead. Who are these fake Messiahs? As mentioned in the children's sermon for today, they can be such things as money or fame or accomplishments, but they can also be movie stars or popular authors or talk show hosts or just that casual acquaintance who puts strange notions in your head that you begin to obsess about or start to consider to be more valuable than the Gospel message of Jesus.

Martin Luther, in his day, was running into people and even a church body that had forgotten that all we need to do is to trust only Jesus. He wrote his *95 Theses* to discuss his opposition to the sale of indulgences, which were certificates that were said to grant forgiveness of sins. Martin Luther knew that it was Christ alone who could forgive sins. Christ's death on the cross guaranteed that the punishment for our sins would be erased. His death on the cross assured us that we would have life in heaven with him, Luther knew. By faith alone, by grace alone, by Scripture alone, Luther declared, we are called to live a life devoted and dedicated to Jesus Christ and him crucified.

But our human nature is to think that there is still something that we must do or say to somehow win forgiveness or salvation for ourselves. “Be a good person.” “Say nice things.” “Go to church every Sunday.” These are all wonderful things, of course, but they are not a means to an end to get us into heaven or win Christ's favor. The only way to look at being good or doing nice things or frequenting the Lord's house is to view them as a response to what God has already done for us through Jesus' death on the cross. We want to love and care for others, and we want to worship our Savior because Christ has loved and cared for us so deeply, even to