

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

Dear Friends in Christ,

After all the bombshell revelations in Washington this past week probably most Americans are wondering who can you trust? If you can't trust the top law enforcement agency in the country to do the right thing who can you trust? Our text gives us the answer to that question. Jesus says, Trust me. **Jesus is worthy of our trust** because of 1) who he is and because of 2) what he has done for us. Let's focus our thoughts on these truths for peace and comfort during this pandemic so that our hearts will not be troubled.

Jesus spoke these words to his disciples in the Upper Room the night he was betrayed. It's not difficult to understand why their hearts might have been troubled. Jesus had just revealed to them some very startling things. First, Jesus came out with this bombshell. “I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray me.” (John 13:21) The second revelation must have caused everyone to gasp. Jesus told them that their leader, Peter, would deny being a follower of Jesus. Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, before the rooster crows you will disown me three times.” As always Jesus spoke the truth. Judas did betray Jesus. Peter did deny Jesus. Jesus, like his heavenly Father always speaks the truth. Jesus is God. One with the Father. Of the same essence. Even though he did not make full use of his attributes as God during his state of humiliation he still is God. Because he is God we can trust him.

We can trust Jesus because as God he is holy and righteous. Holy, that is he is set apart from us who are sinners. Jesus is sinless. He never does anything sinful, nothing evil. He is good. Everything he does is righteous! Jesus always does the right thing. The Triune God has sent this pandemic into our world. In the end we will see that this also was good and the right thing for God to do. As we contemplate the blessings God intends through this event we are just now beginning to see what God is doing. A recent new study has found that “some 20% of non-Christians have become interested in reading the Bible ever since the coronavirus pandemic began to sweep across the globe (Christians News, April 27, 2020, page 23).” The same poll commissioned by the pro-Israel ministry group “the Joshua Fund” and conducted by McLaughlin & Associates, interviewed a thousand Americans—Christian and non-Christian—to find out a bit more about their spiritual reactions to the crisis. Notably, some 44% of Americans polled said that they see the global coronavirus pandemic and economic meltdown as a “wake-up call for us to turn back to faith in God,” and as “signs of coming judgment.” In addition, some one-in-five non-Christians (21.5%) polled said the crisis is causing them to “start reading the Bible and listen to Bible teaching and Christian sermons online even though they usually don't. This group is also inclined to “search online to learn more about Bible prophecy and God's plan for the future of mankind, and have more spiritual conversations with family and friends,” according to the study. As for Christians, four in ten (40.1%) of the respondents said that they are “reading the Bible more than ever, watching or listening to Bible teaching and Christian sermons online since they cannot go to church.” This group was also found to be “searching online to understand Bible prophecy and God's plan for the future of mankind.” Yes, we can trust Jesus to do the right thing. Even what we judge as something terrible is the right thing to do to lead people to learn about their sin and their Savior. Many will be saved eternally.

We can trust, Jesus, because as God he is always faithful to his promises. In life, he promises “never to leave us or forsake us;” in death he promises “because I live, you also will live.” For this reason we have no reason to fear a pandemic. We also know that God has a plan for each of us in our lives, a plan to prosper us, and that he will protect us so that we can carry out that plan. He who has begun a good work in us will perform it to the

end, Paul wrote in Philippians 1. Life and death are in the hands of our God, in Jesus' hands who "has all authority in heaven and earth." (Mt. 28). This faithful Lord who always keeps his promises tells us that "all things will work out for the good to those who love him and are called according to his purpose." (Ro. 8:28) These promises and the fact that Jesus is our faithful God who always keeps his promises give the Christian great hope and confidence to trust in Jesus.

But it's not just who Jesus is, but also what he has done for us that tells us we can trust in him to do what is loving in our lives and especially also during this pandemic. Jesus willingly gave his life for us on the cross to save us from our sins! God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes on him will not perish but have everlasting life. God does not desire the death of the wicked but that they repent and be saved. God knew that we could not save ourselves so he saved us. Jesus carried out God's plan of salvation. By his wounds we are healed. It is this same loving God and Savior who is controlling what is happening during this coronavirus pandemic. This is our comfort. "He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" (Romans 8:32) The God who has graciously given us eternal salvation through his Son, will also graciously give us all we need for body and life and do everything that needs to be done so that we apprehend and preserve that salvation while we live in this evil, sin-infected world. Even the bad things in this world like a pandemic are used by God to serve his purpose of us running and ending the race so that we win the prize of eternal life in heaven. Trust in God, Trust in Jesus to love you for all eternity. He is the Good Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep.