

## Sunday – Trust Sermon – Rev 22. 6

**Intro** Good morning, great to see you today.

I'm sure at some point in your life someone in your family, work place, social group has said to you with a bit of exasperation/irritation and frustration "Don't you trust me?" When somehow we have questioned their credentials for doing whatever it is they've been asked to do?

When we're on the receiving end of someone questioning our capability/competence/integrity/reliability/our effectiveness and ability to deal with people well we're seriously offended – it hurts – especially when it's about things that are important to us. *On the other hand it doesn't bother me when people question my capability to do DIY, because I know I'm not good at it and DIY doesn't really bother me.*

Being trusted and trusting others is absolutely fundamental to being human, it's impossible to have any social interaction or social organisation without trust in our relationships. It's impossible to thrive without trust. Whether At school, at home, at work, in our families..... Trust is absolutely central. **A couple of definitions of Trust** – *Trust is a belief or confidence in the reliability, truth or ability of someone or something* or *To trust is to voluntarily make ourselves dependent on someone else for an outcome or consequence.*

*When I was in school there was a classic trust test – Would you allow yourself to fall backwards and get caught by other people. Do you trust your friends enough to let go and be caught?*

Some of our hobbies are entirely dependent on Trust. So if you're into mountain climbing you'll know that you have to have complete trust in the person you're climbing with, because your life literally will be depending on them holding the other end of a rope on a cliff.....Likewise it's also true in a different way when couples commit their lives to each other in marriage.....trust is absolutely central to building a healthy marriage.

### Covey

The leadership expert Stephen Covey wrote a book a number of years ago called the Speed of Trust. It was very fashionable in businesses to talk about trust a few years ago because people had realised that they had invested in large systems, but they were slow, bureaucratic and unwieldy and weren't getting the job done. What businesses observed and Covey records is how teams/businesses/organisations that had genuine trust got things done quickly and efficiently, and people were happier as a consequence, square pegs in square holes being productive. But it's hard to create.

### St Swithin's

So why are we talking about Trust now? A couple of years ago when I was praying with other people from St Swithin's about what God was saying to us and what that might mean, one word came through very clearly TRUST. Sometimes that's how God speaks, in a very short and simple word, but that has massive implications across all our relationships. God speaking about Trust means that God wants us to grow in Trust, that there is grace for us.

### Gospel

The theme of trust appears throughout scripture in both the OT and NT (170) You probably know one or two of the famous passages really well, like in Psalms and Proverbs. Throughout scripture we find God's people through ups and downs learning how to trust God. Right at the end of the Bible in **Rev 22** John summarises by saying that *"these words are trustworthy and true"* - *God is the ultimate truth, "The Sun from which all other reality is seen" - the Bible is His-story - and the Bible contains lots of words inviting us to put our trust in God.*

One writer puts it this way - Trusting God is not an obligation we owe him, it is a privilege that we make available to Him. In the bible the words TRUST/FAITH/and CONFIDENCE are very closely related. The good creator God longs for us to be in a trusting relationship with Him. Which implies that God is real, living, of good character and worthy of our trust. *The Bible witnesses that The Invisible God who made himself present in Jesus Christ has substance and form, and that we can still experience that truth of God's Presence in our lives today. It's a trust that enables us to live with the weights, burdens and cares of life lifted. To be free and liberated from sin*

God is relational and wants us to have healthy relationships with others too. God longs for St Swithin's to be a church where people find faith and put their trust in Him. When outsiders meet with us we long for people to tell a story of meeting people they could trust, which means that WE as His church are going to need to grow and mature into Christlikeness and fruitfulness

*I don't know what you feel about our culture, but I think there is a real openness to God but a real difficulty to make sense of it too. Last time I went around town doing some evangelism, with Simon Guillebaud's team, I met and chatted to a couple visiting Bath, who were mystified about Jesus but were really adamant that they did trust science, real physical stuff, physics, medicine. It's real, there's evidence, you can touch and feel it and faith in God felt like a very big step. They were happy for us to pray for them, and it's wonderful to play our part in drawing someone nearer to God*

*Most people long to encounter trustworthy people. But often its like how Proverbs records it **Prov 20.6, Many claim to have unfailing love, but a faithful person who can find? Or Prov 25.19, Like a broken tooth or a lame foot is reliance on the unfaithful in a time of trouble.***

Trust is risky and makes us vulnerable. We all have had bad experiences from people who have let us down and hurt us whether through childhood or adult life, which can significantly damage our ability to trust God and trust others. How do we trust in the face of the raw heartache of broken promises and crushed dreams? That's what we want to discover this term.....God restoring trust

## **Conclusion**

We're in the middle of a pandemic, where the temptation (particularly now) is to retreat into ourselves. We're also In the UK, at a time where there is an epidemic of loneliness and breakdowns in family/human relationships. Who/What/Where do we trust?

One writer put it this way - Trust is our gift back to God and he finds it so enchanting that Jesus died for the love of it. St Swithin's has a great opportunity to shine brightly to a world longing to find faithful and trustworthy people, and ultimate Truth itself in God. Learning to trust is a lifetime's experience and God invites to join us in that adventure

Let's pray that God would grow us in trust this season. How? One spiritual director said this "You don't need any more insights into the faith, you've got enough insights to last 300 years. The most urgent need in your life is to trust what you have received."

## **Let's Pray.**

*"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you **trust** in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. - Rom 15:13 **Amen***