Sermon for March 16th, 2014

Second Sunday in Lent, Matthew 26:14-25

BLESSINGS TO YOU AND PEACE FROM GOD THE FATHER, OUR

LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

Last week I began the **preaching** series *"Restored in Christ"*. The topic for

the sermon was *'broken vessels'*. **This** week the topic is *'broken trust'*.

In our world trust is something which is **not** easy to come by. Of the more

than **1 million** words in the English language 'trust' is number **949** in our most

commonly used words. On **Amazon** if you were to go and just type in the word

'trust' there would be **36,000 books** that you could chose from regarding this topic.

In the database that **psychologists** use to do literature reviews there are **96,000**

references to 'trust'. And if you **ask** people in relationships *'what is the most*

desirable quality you are looking for in a partner when you are dating?'

trustworthiness is the number 1 answer. Trust and betrayal are the number 1

issues in relationships as **almost all conflicts** are about a trust issue of some sort.

There has been a **dramatic decline** of trust in our world and in our

communities here in the United States over the past **50 years**. In this country of

ours there are actually 'low trust and high trust' areas in which we could live. For

example, Nevada and the Deep South are **low trust** regions and Minnesota is a

very high trust region. *(Good for the Lutheran 'mother-land'.)*

Trust is an <u>essential component</u> to healthy **relationships** and healthy

communities. If this is a **true** statement, *why do you suppose there is so little trust*

in the world when we profess it to be such an important part of our interaction

with others? My guess is that it stems from our <u>being broken and flawed vessels</u>.

Sin and betrayal has become **so** ingrained in our culture that trust has **often** times

been eroded. But we are <u>not the only</u> culture in which this happens **nor** are we at

the <u>only time</u> in history in which **trust issues and betrayal** have been a part of life.

<u>Broken trust and betrayal has gone on for centuries.</u>

In our **first** reading for this morning from the book of 2nd Samuel the Lord

sent the prophet, <u>Nathan</u>, to David. You may remember from our reading **last**

week that David had **seen** Uriah's wife, <u>Bathsheba</u>, he **wanted** her, so David **sent**

Uriah to the **front** lines to be killed so David could be with her as she was

pregnant with David's child. Uriah, <u>the good soldier that he was</u>, **trusted** and did

what he was **ordered** to do. David **betrayed** Uriah and **sinned** against God by

committing **adultery** with Bathsheba. In time, David and Bathsheba <u>got</u> married

and <u>had</u> a son.

This is where our <u>reading for today</u> begins. Nathan tells David a story which

angers David greatly <u>until</u> he hears that **he is the man** Nathan is talking about.

<u>God was betrayed by David</u>, <u>God trusted him</u> to do what was right—He **anointed**

him as king over Israel, He **rescued** him from the hand of Saul, He **gave** him the

master's house and wives, He **gave** him the house of Israel and Judah. God

trusted David with all that and **still** David betrayed Him. **Yet**, in the end after all

was said and done God forgave David—but; **not** without taking away much of

what David had been given even the son he had with Bathsheba. Broken trust.

In our gospel reading we heard of a betrayal of trust that is likely **more**

familiar to us. It is the betrayal of **Jesus by Judas.** Judas was one of the trusted

inner circle of disciples, he was handpicked to be one of Jesus' **closest** friends, and

he was the one who was trusted with the purse that held **all** of the disciple's

money. Beyond that we do not know too much about him. Matthew's gospel does

not spell out Judas' motivation for betraying Jesus but what we **do know** is that

the society in which these men lived—to **betray** one's teacher, one's Lord, into the

hands of his opponents—the **betrayer** would have been considered the *lowest of*

the low.

None the less Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver which, according

to Exodus 21:32 says, *"If the ox gores a male or female slave, the owner shall pay*

to the slave owner thirty shekels of silver." And Zechariah 11:12 which says, *"I*

then said to them, 'If it seems right to you, give me my wages; but if not, keep

them.' So they weighed out as my wages thirty shekels of silver."   Hmmmm.

Jesus' life being worth **only the price** of a slave or **insulting wages** in Judas' eyes.

Broken trust for sure.

With all this betrayal and misplaced trust in mind we **now** turn to the reading from Colossians where Paul writes to the people of **Colosse** who had been subject to false teachings. In this letter Paul **builds up** the people by giving them something to trust in which is being God's **chosen** ones, **clothed** in compassion, **kindness, humility, meekness, forgiveness, love, binding together in perfect harmony, and patience**. This is how a **trusting** community becomes closer, more tightly knit. Let **Christ rule**, be **thankful**, let Christ's **words dwell within**, **teach one another** in wisdom, **praise** God with gratitude in one's heart, do **all** things in Jesus' name, and **give thanks** to God. That is the way to live.

These verses outline the way we Christians are to be treating one another which leads to **trust and unity**. We believers we have the trust that we are grounded in God as well as being guaranteed that we have a **relationship** with Him that will **not** falter and we will **not** be betrayed. We know that we have been declared holy **not** by anything we have done but on the basis that God genuinely, passionately, loves us. Because of what **Jesus did for us** on the cross we are called to **forgive** as we have been forgiven **even** in the face of betrayal and mistrust.

What a totally different feel to this reading than the other two. When betrayal, mistrust, sin, and evil are present there is an air of **heaviness and**

impending doom surrounding us. When there is **joy, celebration**, and living with a **grateful, abundant** heart the mood is <u>uplifting.</u>

We humans are <u>broken and flawed</u>. **Betrayal and mistrust** abound in this world. <u>Broken trust</u> lies <u>behind or at the bottom of</u> so much of the **suffering and hurt** that people experience in their lives. David <u>was self absorbed, his self interest came above all else.</u> <u>Judas abandoned Jesus' trust and betrayed him for 30 pieces of silver—the price of the cost of a slave or meager wages in those days.</u>

The ways of God are **not** the ways of we humans.   When <u>trust is broken</u> **God remakes** what <u>sin destroys</u>. He **gives life** to those who have <u>fallen away</u> and are <u>empty inside</u>. Those who are **guilty of broken trust and betrayal** are forgiven. But such <u>remarkable giving does not come without a cost.</u> Jesus **forgave** as he hung on the cross. Jesus **forgave** as he died for our sins. Jesus has **died** for you and for me. He **paid** the price. The **shame and the suffering** are His. <u>Jesus' body and blood</u> were given **totally** for the sake of the world. Because of that, **forgiveness and joy** are ours. This week **once again** we have heard how we are *"Restored in all that Christ does for us"*. All thanks be to God. **AMEN.**