

# The Sixth Sunday after Epiphany February 17, 2019

Our Savior's Way  
Worshiping Sundays 8:00, 9:30, & 11:00 AM  
Pastor Kumfer

To begin our sermon today I need to ask for a volunteer. Someone who thinks they trust me pretty well. And I'm going to ask that person to come up here for a few minutes.

(Trust exercise)

I want you to think about what you trust most. Maybe the one you trust most is your mother or father for you kids out there. Maybe the one you trust is your spouse. Perhaps the one you trust is your friend(s) or extended family. Perhaps it's your pastor that you trust, although I think some of you trust me less after my example today.

Perhaps what you trust in isn't a person at all. Maybe it's your job. Maybe it's the government. Maybe it's your car. Whatever it is, if it's any of these things that you trust in most, I have to tell you that putting your trust in these things can be sinful and lead to destruction.

Let me unpack that for us a bit. In our reading from Jeremiah today, the prophet is talking about who you trust. Jeremiah writes, *"Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the Lord. He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land."*

There are probably many of you out there thinking, ***“But I need to trust in those things. Trust is an important thing.”*** And you are absolutely right. Trusting in friends, family, your spouse, or parents is 100% a good thing. But if you were to trust in them above God, this is where the problem lies. Because when you trust in man or the things of man, your heart turns away from God. You essentially make an idol of whatever you place your trust in most.

I know this seems harsh and that’s because it is. But I want us all to think about how often this happens in our lives. Because for everyone in this room, including myself and the other pastors, this is a temptation that we often fall into. We put our trust in things more than in the most holy God. It is as if we’re saying this thing or person will be able to carry me through. I don’t need to worry about anything else as long as I have this.

I don’t want to take away the joy that these things often bring or the assistance that they can provide but I want you to think for a minute. Is what I put my trust in really trustworthy? Let’s put this to the test a bit. How many you have ever forgotten a Valentine’s Day? I see some heads looking down, uh-huh. That’s what I thought. How many of you have experienced a car breaking down or job loss? How many have had a secret told in confidence shared with others by someone you trusted? How many of you have broken the trust of another?

When those things happen to me it drops me right to the pits. Because the trust I have in that particular thing has become greater than my trust in God.

It connects us back to the verses from Jeremiah because when those bad things happen, ***“we are like shrub planted in the desert, and shall not see any good.”*** We lose all perspective of good when bad things happen because we have set them above God who has a plan for us.

Thankfully, there is good news for all of us. Jeremiah continues, ***“Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by***

*the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.”*

It's a part of that plan that God has for us. We never know exactly what God's plan for us might be. But we can trust in God's plan for us. In order for us to do that there are a few things we need to first get ready. The first is that we need to know who He is. If we don't know God by reading His word and seeing His character throughout and praying to Him, it is difficult to trust Him. But when we see Him and His faithfulness we can come to have complete trust in Him. Trusting in God also includes a second part which is a perspective shift. This might be the hardest part because it would force us to check our thoughts and actions. But God has a plan for us. His plan is no better shown than when Jesus entered into the world.

Not only is Jesus' life, death and resurrection the hope for us, that no matter our circumstances, there is life at the end of it. But Jesus also talked about how we would be blessed even during difficult times. In Luke and Matthew there are sections called beatitudes which reveal the provision that God gives. In these sections all of the blessings are given to those who experience difficulty, whether it's the poor, hungry, sad, or hated, God says that blessings will be theirs. But on the flip side God contrasts that with the rich, well fed, joyful, and well praised, will have woe because once those things are gone, the good ends. But for us it's a different plan.

When we place our trust in God above all things we have a different view of blessing. Sure, things may come to us that we might trust in but we shouldn't hold onto them and treasure them above God because He is our treasure. He is the one we trust in. And what's amazing and so hard for us to grasp about these blessings is that they aren't just for our eternal life after we have gone to be with Jesus. Those blessings are ours today. God is our blessing. He provides for our needs, He cares for each one of us individually.

Jeremiah said that there will be difficult times but we, who trust in God, don't need to fear because we are cared for and have a blessed hope. The hope that God's plan for us is better than anything that could come from the things he created. It is in that plan where we learn about the God who loves us beyond our understanding and is there, for everyone who trusts in Him. Then we will be freed because God is our most trusted friend and no one can provide for us better. As Jeremiah promises, blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord. So the question is, do you trust him? In Jesus' name, Amen.