

Love always trusts. v.7

See service sheet online at www.knbc.org

Welcome and opening Scripture

Hymn: MP 559 Praise Him praise Him

Bible Reading: Psalm 63

Prayer of adoration and praise.

Notices

Missionary focus

Main reading: Philippians 1:1-11, (p.1178), 1 Cor 13:1-7 (p.1153)

Hymn: MP 162 From heaven you came helpless babe

Sermon **Love always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.**

Hymn MP 626 Teach me thy way

Close -----

Listen to today's sermon by clicking on the link at www.knbc.org.

The audio file is [21_07_18.mp3](#).

v.7 **It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.**



The Government will lift legal restrictions on communal worship in England from Monday 19 July, Boris Johnson has confirmed.

Earlier this month, Health Secretary Sajid Javid announced there would be “no restrictions on communal worship or singing”.

Welcome and pray

“Open your word to our hearts and our hearts to your word” Amen

- Are you an optimist? Always looking on the bright side? Does every cloud have a silver lining? Do you believe everything will work out in the end. Today we are told to be ‘positive’ are you keen to always be ‘positive’ Are your glasses rose tinted?
- Or maybe you are you a pessimist? – the complete opposite - You expect the worst. If it can go wrong - it will go wrong. The bus will be late, I’ll probably be stuck in a traffic jam..... Etc, etc.

It is easy to think along these lines when we read our phrase this morning: ‘Love **always trusts**’, x2 sure! That sounds a very optimistic statement The Bible does not call us to be optimists, - or pessimists – but realists.

When we think of the wide variety of situations we face to **always trust** sound foolhardy, does that mean I am to take leave of my senses?

Should we as Christian always trust and therefore willingly and knowingly allows myself to be taken advantage of? Some see Christians as a soft touch. Or should we employ the wisdom of the world which is always looking out for the ‘con’?

Should I divest myself of prudence and judgment to be easily fooled?

Should I believe a serial liar? Should I expect someone to be on time who has to this day never kept an appointment?

✚ **Is it possible to be both realistic – and trusting?**

- What about the one who stops you and asks for money – should I always trust - and therefore always give?

It is easy to end up believing nothing I hear! So if I am to act in love does that mean I should believe everything? Is that the sign of love?

Should I make no discrimination in regard to things to be believed; and be as prone to believe a falsehood as the truth? Am I to take leave of my senses? Or as they say: “check my brains at the door”

Should I have a blanket response to all things and make no effort to find out what is true and what is false, what is right and what is wrong?

The message in society today is “trust no-one”. In schools it is ‘trust no-one’ The worlds way is to distrust, to fear, - the results is division and alienation.

So how should we be? Is there actually then - in this respect - any difference between a Christian and non-Christian, between a follower of Christ and someone who does not? Yes there is, and it is this:

It must mean that in regard to the conduct of others, there is a disposition, an approach that puts the best construction on things; to believe that they may actually be prompted by a good motive and not bad.

My starting point is a willingness to assume, as far as can be seen, that what is done is done with a good intention.

Christ's love in me produces this, because it rejoices in the happiness and virtue of others, and will not believe the contrary without clear evidence.

I am not to unlearn or ignore my God given faculty of discernment – I can still distinguish black from white.

Discernment is something Jesus specifically says we should have. “**make a right judgment.**” He says. Joh 7:24

This is a hot issue in today's world where we are told ‘don't judge’

- The police cannot function unless they – like all of us – make wise judgments. Eg when looking for a serial house burglar they are unlikely to find them in Austin Village or at our Cameo lunch club. They would certainly need more than a ‘leg up’ to climb through any open window.

✚ No, we must make wise judgments and understand the world we live in.

The phrase this morning is to do with our dealings with each other. The word ‘**trust**’ in the phrase **always ‘trusts’** is the word ⁴¹⁰⁰πιστεύω pisteuo pist-yoo’-o. Here it is translated ‘**trust**’ but often it is translated ‘**belief**’ or ‘**faith**’.

These words are generally interchangeable, **trusts** better explains what we mean. Someone who **believes**, who has **faith** is someone who **trusts**.

✚ Belief is something everyone has, it is what we believe in that varies.

It will be different for the person who looks at the world without Jesus Christ and God - to the one who acknowledges them both.

A Christian is someone who has faith in God - and that God is God over all.

Can I therefore **always trust** when I look out on the events in this world? Y. Can I not be a pessimist, nor a blind optimist but a realist? Yes. God is in charge, - as Jesus said not even a sparrow hops without God's say so.

✚ This affects how I look at everything - and how I approach everything.

But although God has given principles and proverbs, an array of cause and effects, - I cannot predict anything about which he has not clearly spoken.

- For example, I did not trust that England would win the football last week –shame on me!. Or that I can stop myself from catching covid. Nor whether I can predict the traffic so I will always be home by six.

I don't know what will happen, but I do trust that God is in charge and will have good purposes in it.

If there's no God then all is chaos, - But God is there, so I trust him.

✚ Samuel Rutherford said: "Duties are ours, events are God's; We are not to double guess events, and then hold God to account for his Providence - but to trust him.

(Unbeliever)

Our passage ‘**always trusts**’ is to do with people. What about my next door neighbour? What about all those we meet in the normal course of life?

Let us think a bit more about trusting people. God has told us about people.

And while people are complicated we are essentially made up of two main – and opposing – forces or characteristics.

Firstly that God made man, men and women, in his own image. Since Adam and Eve fell from that high position we are now as the Bible says, made in the image of Adam. However, remnants of God's image still remains.

Secondly since Adam and Eve's rebellion and curse every descendant, all people – all people that is except Jesus – have become corrupt, sinful and selfish. And not just a little bit, mankind is constantly demonstrating his total depravity – and it is latent within all of us, we are all ‘a chip off the same block’ – *let us be clear about that!*

Some think people are all good, we must all be nice to each other, and then we will all get along famously – the perpetual optimist says one day the world will become free from its problems – [read the humanist manifesto!](#)

This gross misunderstanding of human nature is the common failing of the world's ideologies. Communism would work wonderfully – if it wasn't for people. So parents, teachers, and us - all don't misunderstand human nature.

Then there are those on the other side who expect the worst of everyone all of the time – the pessimist. This man or woman forgets that all men retain the watermark, a deposit of our image bearing, God derived characteristics

Here a man or woman can display sacrificial acts of kindness, *like the man who lost his life recently in saving another from drowning*. And how many show restraint from indulging in the array of evils that surround us.

There were many in Victorian England who were not Christians but had a standard of moral conduct and concern for others that would shame us.

- So true it is today in a number of countries, some African countries.
- I was always impressed with Don Wrapson's ability to draw out the best in people. He sought to see in others those innate God given qualities - if someone was courteous, did a kindness, offered help, gave something, he was quick to encourage and commended them for it. My father also.
- ✦ **The French theologian Godet said: The term *always believe or always trusts* usually refers to God; here it denotes confidence in man; but in reality this confidence has for its object the Divine in man, all that remains in him of God's image. For it is this which prompts love to interpret the conduct of our fellowmen in a good sense.**

It does not mean we are naïve as to what we are like, no, it acknowledges the dreadful stamp of sin on every man and woman. But as Christians we are salt and light. God is honoured when men are dissuaded from evil and righteousness is promoted. This is what love does. This is what **always trusting** does. To do so is to commend a God of goodness and righteousness. It is to point others to find that true inner change that only Christ can bring.

CROSS - Christ's work on the cross was done to remove the stain of sin by washing it away – and make a way for righteousness to come. *Is that you?*

But while that difficult person, or neighbour remains still unchanged - I continue in love - for **love believes all things, it always trusts**.

Christ has done a work of grace in me, I know it, and so I know he can do a work in that other person – I believe he can, it's a great spur to faithfulness.

And where good is not seen – say in that thoughtless neighbour – you live in hope for the future so love **always hopes**. And while hoping for change in that person - we bear with him and the situation – we **always persevere**.

These last four are connected together, love covers, trusts, hopes, perseveres

That person can change because God is able to change him. He has changed me therefore he is able to change him or her. Will he? I don't know. That is why we pray, *Lord be merciful to him – as you have been with me* - and we

long that he will. There are many he won't – but he could - and as I don't know if he will - I continue in **love, always trusting**.

There will be pain as we see the present daily triumph of sin in our family, and in those we long to see changed. Do you long for that day of change? *Of course*, long for that victory of Christ over sin in their life? *Of course you do!* — Then continue and do not become *weary*; but hold on, don't give up.

We do this because God does this. God is patient, he is long-suffering He endures and perseveres with us

And therefore as his people, his ambassadors we act with the same love; **always trusting, always hoping, always persevering**.

In the story of the prodigal son it is really a picture of Jesus Christ as the father. He waits for the repentant sinner to come over the hill and head to him. The father longs for this to happen so is always on the lookout.

(Towards believers)

What if that person is a believer?

If that neighbour is also a brother in Christ there is a difference. If he is Born Again by God's Spirit we can expect there to be evidence of that new life - some activity in the heart, some movement, some change.

We may well act in a similar way to the outsider - but our expectations are different; Why? Because God has made promises to him or her - **God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.**
1Co 1:9

Again: **“being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”** Php 1:6

What about that brother or sister in the church you find difficult to love? Their odd behaviour, their difficult manner. The careless words said.

We as Christians draw the sting - a Christian will reckon it better to absorb, have his own kindness and easy temper taken advantage of, than to wrong his brother by withdrawing my love from him or her – *sadly so often done*.

If that other person has Christ in them – I expect that Christ will be loving, patient etc. to them. So how can I be anything else than loving to?

I pray and like the watchman look on expectantly to see what He will do.

Christ has made promises to that Child of God and so I believe him for it.

And because I believe him for it, I **always hope**, and therefore I **always persevere**. This is how a fellowship of loving believers functions.

✚ We don't give up on each other, no sighing with despair, no grumbling.

Paul is writing to the church at Corinth, they had a lack of love for each other. There were those with different eating habits, different views on marriage, etc. they gave in to criticize and condemn each other, even Paul.

■ We have a wayward brother in the church? When do we cut him adrift?

As men and woman of God, his brother and sisters we **always trust** - we **believe** all that God says in his word, all his truths, and all his promises; and even sometimes in hope against hope, as Abraham did, relying upon the power and faithfulness of God - so **we always hope, always persevere**.

There will come a time when we will have to cut him adrift – for God's honour demands it.

■ I have a Christian friend who is in a similar situation – although he has cut himself adrift – I am deeply concerned for him.

But again because I believe, am I not told even to “**be confident ..., that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.**” Php 1:6

✚ So I don't give up, I don't walk away and expect the worst! No

Not only are there promises, and many of them - but also my experience.

■ I only have to look at myself - Christ has done a work of grace in me, he is patiently growing me, bearing with me, and helping me on my slow road to Christ-likeness. Many of you can say - Amen - me to.

So to always hope means that however dark it may look; If Christ is resident in that person's life - Love will make me *hold on to this hope* until it becomes clear - and I am compelled to believe - that his conduct is so far gone that the person was never saved in the first place.

Paul said: **I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.** 2Ti 2:10

Therefore, as we love each other **always endure, always persevere** bear up under the hardships along life's way.

This last word love endures, is like the first, the apostle returns to that with which he had started: **love is patient, love is long-suffering,**

Yet here the word **perseveres** or **endures** is a military word, and means to sustain the assault of an enemy. That is what it feels like sometimes, so as a soldier let us bear up under them, and enduring them patiently. Heb 10:32 12:2.

Remember Christ left the 99 sheep and went after the stray one - he found him and brought him safely back. He is still doing that now, so continue to love - **always protecting, always trusting, always hoping, always persevering.**

Finally

Knowing this makes a huge difference as to how I approach life, how I approach people and situations.

✚ So we don't throw in the towel, we don't give up in despair. A Christian doesn't walk away..... Morning pick-up

For an unbeliever I pray and wait expectantly - God can do a work in him as he has done one in me.

For a believer I trust that God will be as true to his promises with him or her as he is true to his promises with me.

✚ A covenant keeping God is a promise keeping God

■ What are the most war torn devastated lands in the world? Yemen [Central African Republic \(CAR\)](#) How about investing there, buy up land?

In Jeremiah Ch. 32 God tells him to buy a field. Fine, but Jerusalem and the whole of the land is about to be overrun. Who buys property when the land is about to be laid waste. It is to throw money away, sheer foolishness. When God speaks to Jeremiah he immediately obeys and goes to buy it. He has it signed sealed and witnessed by Baruch the scribe / secretary and before all the Jews in the court area - for God wants to show that while it looks like all is lost and therefore it is a foolish thing to do – it is proof that God will keep his promise to restore the land.

✚ What a vivid assurance that God is a covenant keeping, promise keeping God.

So love **always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.**

Believe that with God's promise there is no situation beyond his reach and grasp. For a believer particularly expect change - for God is able.

*But oh, what light and glory, Would shine o'er all our days,
If we always would remember, God means just what He says.—A. B. Simpson.*

So it is not being optimistic or pessimistic but trusting the reality of the God who is really here.

Paul confident that Christ's love will prevail – places his stamp of approval at the end by simply saying: **Love never fails.** x2 Amen _END