

Sermon Title: In God We Trust?

Primary Text(s): 2 Kings 5:1-14 (read by pastor with the sermon)

Other Texts: Psalm 66:1-9 (read by Worship Leader as OT reading)

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Place: KSUMC

Season: Fourth Sunday After Pentecost

Main Point: In our divided world, we could certainly benefit from more trust: trust in God **and** trust in/through neighbor.

IN GOD WE TRUST was first printed on US coins in 1864. It was adopted by Congress as the official motto of the USA in 1956, and printed on our paper money since 1957. According to a 2003 joint poll by [USA Today](#), [CNN](#), and [Gallup](#), 90% of Americans support the inscription "In God We Trust" on U.S. coins.

If that poll was taken again in 2019, I doubt that the support would be that high, but I think that it would still be surprisingly supportive.

Small old countryside markets still display the time worn, once humorous sign:
IN GOD WE TRUST.
All others must pay cash.

Today I want to raise the question: Do we really even trust God?

Trust is highly valued these days. With the rise in technology and the proliferation of fake news, it is difficult to figure out which news outlets we can trust. Most often we chose to trust the news that we prefer to believe because we want to believe someone. We want to be able to trust someone!

This search for sources we can trust has driven wedges between people and wedges between our once trusted institutions. Due to the polarization of our political climate, if one family member holds a differing political opinion from the rest of the family, they are "marked" in some fashion. Suddenly, their opinion on related matters might not be as trustworthy anymore.

Trust in religious institutions is decidedly low, and for one in five people who claim no religious ties, their distrust of organized religion is why they are religiously unaffiliated.

In our faith, Jesus' command to love God and to love neighbor is one of the simplest sounding instructions we have from the Bible. Yet, we cannot even get that right because we do not know how to love our neighbors. Why? Because we do not trust them.

We like to think that we trust our neighbors, but as we see in our crisis at the US-Mexico border, as we see in our denomination, as we see in our local churches, as we see in our school systems, as we see in our families, we actually do not have trust.

Today's scripture, the story of Naaman has long served as a prooftext for why Israel's God is greater than the gods of others. But it is equally about trust.

Naaman, King Aram's great commander, is suffering from leprosy and is desperate for healing. A young slave woman, a captive from Israel (the "other," who lacks power and social standing), speaks with authority and certainty to Naaman's wife that the prophet Elisha in the land of Israel could heal Naaman. Maybe it was out of desperation, or maybe it was the work of God's Spirit speaking to Naaman, but Naaman trusted the Israelite woman and went on a journey to the land of Israel to be healed.

There he encounters Elisha (the "other," from a differing religion and territory). Elisha gives Naaman instruction to wash seven times in the Jordan River. This seems so simple that Naaman does not believe him. But he heads the advice of his servants (the "others" who lack power and social standing). And indeed he is healed and trusts the God of Israel.

Three times in this narrative, Naaman is putting his trust in the "other." Whether it is the young, female Israelite captive of no social standing, or Elisha, the prophet of the "other" land and religion, or his own servants (again low social standing), Naaman puts his trust in them.

The story is about trust in God AND it is about trust in the "other."

There is a human correlation between love and trust. Human friendships depend upon trust. Human love depends upon trust. The very fabric of our society – relationship – breaks down without trust.

Jesus said love God and love neighbor. That means: love the other. Loving God and loving others are inseparately tied together. We show our love to God when we also actively love others.

Both Love and Trust are inheritances from God.

God has entrusted us with the stewardship of the world, everything from the natural realm to our relationships with one another. In turn, we are called to trust God in word and in deed.

IN GOD WE TRUST. Really? Do we trust God? Do we really love God?
 Somehow it takes trust to love, and it takes love to trust.

 Must we be desperate like Naaman to learn how to trust one another? Or can we take a lesson from Naaman to lower our guard? Can lowering our guard help us to truly love the Lord our God?

As we think about the correlation between loving and trusting as an inheritance from God, what are some instances in our own lives where we might do a better job of trusting the "other"?

What would the world look like if we were to operate from a position of trust rather than suspicion?

In our divided world, in our divided churches, in our divided communities, in our divided families, we could certainly benefit from more trust: trust in God AND trust in/through neighbor.