

We live like the good shepherd; seeking what is best for the sheep according to their need – as we see it through Jesus’ eyes – and we get the joy of paying the price. We do it for no other reason than that’s who we are in Jesus.

Often I think hell will be of our own making; because trying to prove yourself can be hellish – you never arrive. There is always someone better, faster, smarter, or out there to beat you. It becomes a dog eat dog world. Trying to define your own worth, your own purpose, seeking acceptance, but always hanging by a thread. Always seeking, striving, wanting, but never quite making it, always under the judgemental eye –

which so often is our own feelings of not being good enough. What a hellish way to exist.

Jesus comes offering life; knowing who you are and living it. Living with real purpose in Jesus as you live out your new nature. Stepping out in the acceptance of Father; being bold and confident in him, to risk giving myself away as a loving response because in Jesus, that’s who I am.

In Jesus, that’s who you are. Today I encourage you to live true to who you are in Jesus. Today I encourage you not to

keep it a secret; but share the joy, the hope, the life that Jesus gives, that other people might also be reborn as Father’s dearly loved children who bring him great joy.

What an epic mission Jesus has invited us to join him on; saving the people we love, so that they may live loved, because deep in their soul they know without any doubt that in Jesus that’s who they are; Father’s loved children. Let’s risk all, trusting Jesus, living loved, for in him you are.

26 November 2017

MISSION—GOD’S LOVE

Matthew 25:31-46



The three readings for today brought home for me the seriousness of life. There’s a lot that hangs on this life we’re living. If you think life is simply; eat, drink and be merry, you’ve been sadly deceived.

We live in the midst of an epic battle; a life and death struggle. Your life is on the line, and so is the life of everyone you love. The reading from Ezekiel spoke of judgement; between the fat sheep and the scrawny sheep.

The prophet wrote these words from the Sovereign Lord; “So I will surely judge between the fat sheep and the scrawny sheep. For the fat sheep pushed and butted and crowded my sick and hungry flock until you scattered them to distant lands. So I will rescue my flock, and they will no longer be

abused. I will judge between one animal of the flock and another. And I will set over them one shepherd, my servant David. He will feed them and be a shepherd to them.” (Ezek. 34:21-23)

Did you notice the word ‘judge’? Not a popular word; I’m regularly told I’m not to judge. But the Sovereign Lord is going to judge. Doesn’t that say to you that this is serious? It does to me; whether I like the thought of being judged or not. There will be a judging.

Notice that the Sovereign Lord – that means the King, the one in control, the one with the power and authority to do what he says; like it or not. We are not presented with a democracy where we vote on what we want

and don’t want. The King decrees, and his will is sovereign.

Did you notice the fat sheep were being pushy, simply doing what they wanted, when they wanted, and they didn’t care what happened to the other sheep. They ate, drank and were merry, they lived as if they were king and the world revolved around them; but the outcome wasn’t good.

There is more to life than what meets the eye. We live in the midst of what I like to call an epic battle; a battle to save people, for life, life lived to the full in God’s loving presence.

There’s a lot you could take out of this reading; I’d just like to highlight that the stakes are high. There will be a judging; this is life or death.

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



Jesus’ disciples multiplying disciples

The parable in the Gospel reading also focused on the fact that there will be a time of judging. We concluded with this phrase; “And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life.” (Matt. 25:46) There will be a time of judging; like it or not.

One response to this thought could be to prove that you are good, to prove that you’ve done your best, to prove that you deserve to be on the winning side. One response could be to prove yourself; whichever way you choose.

I see people proving themselves in many ways; what they wear, or don’t wear as bathers go these days – this shows you’re among the right people. You could prove yourself by how successful you are at work; however you define success. Go prove your worth as a person; and the

assumption is you’ll be judged worthwhile.

Other people say you can’t judge; that it’s wrong to judge. What is right for them is right for them and you should support them in what they do. People seek to avoid judging by denying there is any judging; but in doing that they’re judging that

We live in the midst of an epic battle.

there won’t be any judging. That’s a big risk, especially when the judging doesn’t depend on you.

What’s God’s way?

Did you notice in Jesus’ parable the people he judged as the sheep, the one’s he was ushering into eternal life, weren’t trying to prove themselves? The parable shows that their actions weren’t done to prove themselves; rather their actions flowed from who they were. Their actions

simply reflected what was at the core of who they were, they weren’t trying to prove anything.

Remember in Ezekiel, the shepherd, David’s son, would feed his sheep. He would be the good shepherd, who cared for the sheep, not for what he could get out of them. He isn’t there to fleece the sheep for his own profit, to prove how great a shepherd he is. His heart is to do what is best for the sheep according to their needs and he pays the price.

Jesus paid the price didn’t he? Jesus pays the price being born our brother – that we might be God’s children. If he’s my brother, his Father is my Father. The logic is straightforward. Jesus pays the price as he dies on the cross, refusing to deny us. Jesus doesn’t deny us to save his own skin; rather he dies that we might know without a shadow of doubt that in

him we are loved by God.

Now we can know without a shadow of doubt that in Jesus we have a new nature. In Jesus we are Father’s children, chosen and marked by his love, the delight of his life (Matt.3:17 Message).

Paul reminds us in his letters that in Jesus we have a new nature. In his letter to the community of faith at Ephesus, which we heard read today, he describes our new nature this way; “At the centre of all this, Christ rules the church. The church, you see, is not peripheral to the world; the world is peripheral to the church. The church is Christ’s body, in which he speaks and acts, by which he fills everything with his presence” (Eph. 1:23 Message).

Our new nature is ‘Christ’s Body’ in which he speaks and acts. How would Jesus act when faced with the hungry, the naked, the

sick, the imprisoned, the stranger, the thirsty?

I think the parable simply reinforces that these people’s actions reflect the new nature of Christ alive in them. That is their source; Christ in them. They live from his power and authority, giving living flesh and blood to Christ’s body today.

That’s our goal...

Jesus judgement is simply acknowledging that their acts reflect who they are. Their actions don’t prove who they are, then it wouldn’t be Jesus at work in them, but fear at work in them, or something else. But their actions are a living reflection of Jesus who is alive in them, through them. It’s who they are.

Jesus really lays it on the line when he says; “Away with you, you cursed ones, into the

eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons” (Matt. 25:41) Do you get the impression from Jesus’ words that he sees this as extremely important, even vital. We have eternal life versus eternal pain.

Thank God, he came, our brother, to save us, so that in him we might have eternal life. Life, discovering and growing into the person, the community that Jesus has created us to be; a living reflection of himself. And we grow in being a living reflection of Jesus by spending time with him, so that the new nature he has planted in us can grow and mature to be like him.

That’s our goal, that’s life, to be like Jesus; growing as his disciple, living true to who we are in him; Father’s loved children who bring him great joy. Loving as we are loved, for in Jesus, that’s our new nature.