

conversational relationship of love which is immersed in Father's affection for you.

Jesus invites you to live from the future you have in him, with him, through him. What amazing freedom for life we have; our past doesn't shape our lives, rather our future, the future of Father's amazing love in Jesus, now has the opportunity to find expression in all we do and say.

Let us pray. Jesus send the Spirit that we know you more intimately; that we sense your presence in our life and live from this most wonderful relationship. Jesus we want to experience you, so that all we do and say is a living expression of the relationship we share

with you. Jesus keep our focus on that wonderful future of life with you that we have. Send the Spirit so part of that celebration overflows into our lives today. Jesus you are our life, it is you we long for. Amen.

17 December 2017  
**MISSION—COMING READY OR NOT**  
John 1:6-8,19-28



Today we heard John the Baptist declaring that he came to clear the way for the Lord's coming. That means a future event has shaped his life, now. That is the Christmas lifestyle; the future shapes what we do today.

We are not determined by what has happened in our past; good or bad, successful or failure. If we were simply the product of our past actions we'd be slaves to the past; we'd be trapped by our past.

What do you look to, to determine who you are; what you have done, or what God has promised?

Sometimes I wonder if people realise that what they do or don't do has no effect on what God is going to do. My faith doesn't cause God to act or not act. My faith

is me simple taking God at his word, and shaping my life around what God has said. God always keeps his word.

And in the Gospel of John we are reminded today that God's word is a person. Jesus is the word. I always find that good news; I don't have a list of does and don'ts to follow, I have a person. In Jesus I have an intimate, conversational, affectionate relationship to live. In Jesus I have a person to share life with.

Jesus is my future, for he has promised to return. Each advent season we are reminded, not only that Jesus came at Christmas, but that he is returning. That he is our world's future.

I can tell your future. In Jesus, I know for certain what your future

holds. This will happen whether you want it to or not; this is your future.

You will die.

You will die and then you'll face God. There will be judgement. Jesus time and time again reminds us that when he returns it will be a time of judgement.

If you know you have an exam at the end of the year, what do you do during the preceding year if you want to pass?

In year twelve I learnt to play 500. Unfortunately in none of my exams where there any questions on this card game. I knew the future; a test awaited me. But I didn't let the future shape how I lived. How well do you think that worked for me?

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**Christ Church Lutheran**

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

I did year thirteen! And studied. And passed; just to face many more exams!

I'd say many people when they hear of judgement day have in their minds some kind of test; a test they are seeking to pass. So at funerals I often hear how good a person was. That's meant to tell me that they pass the test. People often tell me about their successes, or the wonderful things their children have achieved. They give me the impression that they are trying to pass some test.

I notice that John the Baptist didn't come telling people that they had a test to pass so they'd better get working at being nice people. What did John announce was going to happen?

John's role what to announce the coming Messiah. John's role was to introduce a person; the person who would save his people.

We don't have a test to pass but a person to know.

It is telling that in many of Jesus' parables people are left out in the cold because they didn't know the person. Jesus finishes the parable with a phrase like; 'I didn't know you'.

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**The Christmas lifestyle; the future shapes what we do today.**

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Notice it wasn't I didn't know about you. It wasn't you didn't know enough. People are left out in the cold, for they didn't know the one who loved them. And it doesn't get any colder than being alone, unloved, wishing things could be different but with no way of changing things. It doesn't get any colder than feeling unloved, unwanted, worthless.

Jesus comes so that we might know him, know him personally.

That's why earlier in the year we did a series on Jesus' character; called the 'Beautiful Outlaw'. So that we might know him more intimately. Not that we might know more facts about Jesus, but that we might know him, the person, more intimately.

Why do you read the bible? To know more, or to live out an intimate relationship with Jesus.

When Jesus returns you won't face a test on how many bible texts you know, or if you can correctly explain the Trinity. So if you invest your life in studying for a test that will never happen, what have you done with your life?

If you spend your life talking with Jesus. Building your relationship with Jesus; intimately sharing with him from your heart and soul. Listening to him sharing his heart and soul with you. If you spend your life living, building,

growing, maturing this wonderful relationship; when Jesus returns what will happen?

Remember your faith, your prayers, your actions don't affect whether Jesus will return. Jesus is returning; ready or not.

If you live your life in that wonderful intimate, conversational, affectionate relationship Jesus creates through his life, death and resurrection; when Jesus returns what will happen?

I love the fact that Jesus often finishes his parables with a celebration. When the lost coin is found, they celebrate. When the lost sheep is found, they celebrate. When the lost son comes home, they break out all stops and celebrate. They celebrate so loud that the older son hears it out in the fields.

When Jesus returns he's wanting us to join him in a celebration of Father's love for us.

Jesus is wanting us to join him in Father's celebration of us; his loved children in who he delights.

Actually that's part of the message of Holy Communion. It is a reminder of the celebration that Father has in store for us when we meet. For Father loves his children. He

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**Jesus invites us today to being living our future.**

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wants the universe to know, these are my loved children; let's celebrate.

Let's celebrate for once they were dead in sin, but now they are alive in Jesus; alive in my love for them. The past doesn't shape them for they are forgiven, they are healed and set free for life with their loving Father.

I'm looking forward to life with my loving Father, where all that inhibits this relationship is gone for good.

Good News, John the Baptist points us to our future and doesn't leave us trying to change the past; which we can't. John points us to the future; the Messiah is coming.

Jesus, is coming so that we might join him in the celebration of life, and in the Spirit we get to begin that celebration now. In the Spirit we get to dine on the appetisers as we look forward to joining Father in devouring the main course; his loving presence, his declaring us loved by him. What a great future we have in Jesus.

And Jesus invites us today to begin living our future. Jesus invites you to live with him today; listening to the Spirit's lead, sharing with Jesus your most intimate hopes and dreams because you trust him. Jesus invites you today be begin living your future as you join him in that most wonderful