

Jesus could have gone off at Peter; but he doesn't. Jesus doesn't condemn Peter, for his goal is to liberate him. Liberate Peter to live loved; that's what it means to remain in Jesus love. Not work harder, but realise your loved, and seek to live in that love, to allow Jesus to love you, to live loved by Father.

Today I encourage you to make some time to talk this over with Jesus. Invite him over for a coffee and a chat. Invite him to love you as only he can. Invite him to open you up to

any area he wants to reveal to you that is holding you back, so you can go know his love for you deep in your soul.

Today make time to invite Jesus into your heart, and have a heart to heart with him. Don't rob yourself by only hearing that Jesus loves you, today invite Jesus to let you experience it, to know it in your heart and soul. Invite Jesus to send the Spirit to make his love real for you

today, for that's why he died on the cross. To move us from a people of words, to be loved children of Father, his loved brothers and sisters, living in the Spirit's loving presence.

Today I'd invite you to take a risk, and find some time to be one with Jesus and invite him to reveal his love for you over this Easter season.

29 March 2018

## HOW DO YOU LOVE?

Maundy Thursday



The Gospel reading for tonight focuses on Jesus washing his disciples feet and the new command. Jesus said; "So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." (John 13:34,35)

Jesus later says that the sort of love he wants us to show for each other is the same sort of love that he and the Father share. "I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. When you obey my commandments you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in his love." (John 15:9,10)

So what would be the first thing needed to fulfil Jesus new commandment?

I'd say it would be to know you're loved. Even more than that, to know your loved by Jesus, himself. Importantly, I can't love another person like Jesus, if I don't know Jesus or his love for me.

But simply to know this doesn't necessarily help.

It's a bit like telling me to run faster when I'm in a race. If I'm coming last, or fourth and want to be winning, it doesn't do me much good if you simply yell at me to run faster.

It doesn't do much good simply telling a person that they need to be more loving. I know I need to be more loving, the big question

is how, how can I be more loving.

I'll let you in on a little secret, you probably already know, you don't become more loving by trying harder. That might make you less loving because your focus is on your performance, how well you're doing, and when my focus is on me, I might become more self-centred. And that certainly won't result in me being more loving.

I become more loving when I know I'm loved. There is a difference between knowing about love and knowing you're loved.

I could get you to read 1 Corinthians 13 and then you'd know about love. You'd have learnt that love is patient; but would that make you more patient? You'd have learnt that love is kind; so would that

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**Christ Church Lutheran**

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

mean you failed the love test if you're not as kind as your neighbour?

1 Corinthians 13 is a great passage, but don't forget its context. Paul is talking about gifts from God, and he says this is the greatest gift of all. It is a gift, a gift that can be strengthened and matured but it is first and foremost a gift.

A gift is something you receive, not something you earn or deserve because of hard work. A gift is given, that's where the word grace comes from; a gift freely given. Not earned, not deserved, but freely given. And Jesus has freely given himself to you. It is gift, pure and simple.

Jesus isn't standing on the sideline yelling at us to run faster; he's right there with us, in the midst of life, empowering us to love, as he daily seeks to love us.

Jesus washes the disciples feet to give them a glimpse of what is on his heart. Jesus serves because he is totally secure in who he is. Jesus knows he is loved by his Father; that's where he lives his life, in his Father's loving presence, in his Father's loving embrace, Jesus lives loved to the very core

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**Jesus isn't yelling at us to love more.**

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of his being. Because that's how the Father loves him, to the very core of his being.

The new commandment is a reminder that Jesus has made it possible for me to know this love, to live in this love. Jesus is gifting us with his love. The command empowers me to be more than I could ever be by myself. What a precious gift.

Jesus isn't yelling at us to love more, he is speaking tenderly, reminding us that we

are loved. He has gifted us with his love; it is who we are through Jesus' death on the cross. Jesus dies that we might be loved by Father, and not be left feeling as though we have to earn it, or deserve it. Jesus freely pays the price needed for us to be loved by Father. Jesus has made the way open into Father's heart.

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Do you feel unloved at times? Do you doubt it at times? Or maybe the pressures of

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living simply swamp over this truly amazing love.

Jesus doesn't tell us to love more, rather he comes to us, personally, in the bread and wine of communion to love us, to reassure us that we are loved by him. Jesus comes to pour his loving presence into us, for loved people can love.

Nagged people don't love. They might get stressed, or angry, or give up, but they don't all of a sudden become

more loving. I've noticed that if all you can do is tell me all the things I am doing wrong, I'll just become depressed.

Jesus calls us to repent, which is about discovering I am loved, so that I can now love. It is about coming out from under all the rubbish which is stifling me from being all that Jesus has given his life for me to be. Jesus goal isn't to condemn but to liberate, so that I can love as I am loved by him. So that I can discover and rejoice in the love Jesus and Father share, share with me, inviting me to be part of.

Jesus comes to liberate. To liberate you from the oppressor, so that you might discover this wonderful loving relationship which he has poured his life into. Discover it, live it, enjoy it, celebrate being in Father's heart.

So when you're not feeling love, don't

berate yourself; take time to talk with Jesus about it. Ask him why; why am I feeling this way? Is there something oppressing me that I'm not aware of? Am I hiding from something? Maybe it's just that I've burnt myself out, and I need the Elijah treatment; that was to eat and rest, then eat and rest. Jesus,

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**Jesus comes to pour his loving presence into us.**

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I need you, I want you, what's getting in the road?

Do you notice that when you're talking with Jesus about something; not simply telling him you don't like it, but talking with him. Asking him to reveal what's really happening, inviting him in, into a real to and fro conversation, you're allowing yourself to be loved.

Peter stands out for me, because when Jesus was going to wash his

feet, Peter initially refused. He unwittingly put up his barriers to letting Jesus love him. I wonder where I do that; put up my barriers because what is happening doesn't fit in with how I think things should go.

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Peter put up his barriers, and Jesus lovingly helps Peter, and washes his feet. And I'm sure even then Peter really doesn't know what is happening, but through his

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continued life with Jesus he grows, and matures, and discovers living loved. Where am I putting up the barriers to Jesus loving me?

This week why not ask Jesus that question and see what he says? If you get a condemning voice, guess what, that's not Jesus. The devil is the accuser. Jesus reveals; lifts the lid on the things that cripple our being loved, and sometimes that might cause a bit of pain, but it is never condemnation.