

and know he's got the right answer that will grow you to be all that he has dreamed possible.

Isn't it good that we don't simply believe in an idea, but in a living breathing person who is a present reality in our lives; in his life. Isn't it good that Jesus shapes us, not our mistakes, not other

people's opinions, not even our successes; but Jesus shapes who we are and what we hold as valuable.

And Jesus grows us to be all that we are; favoured children of our Father, the ones he delights in, delights to share his life with. I always thank Jesus that the goal and purpose of my life isn't a thing but this most wonderful, precious relationship which he has created for us to live, to enjoy, to be a

living breathing part of.

What we believe in we can experience today, for Jesus is real, and really wants you to live in Father's love of you today. Not the theory but the reality, for he is really alive. Jesus is your Lord and your God, what freedom, what life, what hope we have in him.

Go out this week and live this life to the full with Jesus. Experience his love, know his voice, live in his power and authority, for you are Father's favoured child; at least that's how he sees you in Jesus.

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## Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

8 April 2018

## WHAT DO I BELIEVE?

John 20:19-31



Today we heard these words from Jesus; "You believed because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me." (John 20:29) When you heard the word 'believe' what came to your mind?

Was it simply knowing that Jesus is both God and man. Knowing that he gave his life on the cross that we might have life with him. Is believing the same as knowing?

Is believing the same as reciting the creed? If I can recite the Apostle's Creed and the Nicene Creed with meaning is that the same as believing?

'Believe' is a key word, for John says it is the goal of what he

has written. John wrote; "that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name." (John 20:31) John's stated goal for writing this account of Jesus' life is that we might believe in Jesus. And this believing leads to life, life by Jesus' power.

That says to me it is vital to understand what this word 'believe' entails.

When I look at Thomas, he helps me understand what this word 'believe' seeks to involve. For Thomas, belief meant there was a change. A change that affected his whole life.

Thomas sees the implications of Jesus being alive. It will change his whole world, and he's not

going to change everything for the sake of some fairy tale.

I wouldn't expect you either to build your life, your identity, your future on a fairy tale.

So I love Thomas' boldness in asking the obvious. If Jesus is alive, prove it. Thomas isn't going to let a fairy tale define his life; and why would you. So Thomas puts out there the obvious thought; he's just seen Jesus die. And that was no fairy tale, more of a night-mare. So the obvious is to ask for proof, to see it with your own eyes.

In other words, it needs to be real.

Is Jesus real to you? Not simply an idea you accept, but a real

living breathing person who shapes your life, who defines your identity, who actually embraces you in his love. Not in some figurative way, but really, actually, today. Is Jesus real to you?

Simply knowing Jesus is alive can be quit pointless. I know lots and lots of people are alive for I've seen their images on the news. Without a shadow of doubt they're alive; but I've never meet them, and the truth be told they have no effect on who I am and the choices I make.

I believe that they are alive. I've seen them on the TV. I believe it, but really it makes no difference to me. What sort of belief would you call that? I believe they are alive, but they are totally irrelevant to my life. What sort of belief is that?

After Thomas had touched Jesus he

exclaims; 'My Lord and my God!' Thomas is changed, never to be the same. Jesus is his Lord, the one who rules, the one who is king of his life. Jesus is God, the one who gives Thomas meaning and worth. The one who breathes life into Thomas' existence.

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I believe—what?

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What an exclamation Thomas makes; and invites us to join him in.

Jesus isn't just alive, he's my Lord and my God!

In other words he defines who I am and how I preserve reality. Jesus is the one who gives me the goal of life, and the power to live it. He's my Lord and my God. Jesus isn't some irrelevant person who has no

effect on me or the choices I make.

Jesus is my Lord and my God.

Jesus gives me my identity, for in him I discover who I am. I am not the result of what I do or of what other people think. I am the result of what Jesus has done and what he thinks. And Jesus has made me one of God's favoured children.

Do you see yourself as one of God's favoured children? How does the truth of this statement shape you, define you, empower you?

In Jesus you are one of Father's favoured children. He has literally washed you in his life, in his love, in his presence. He's withheld nothing. You are Father's favoured child.

Why; because that's how he sees you!

Do you want to get out from under the sense that you're not good enough, that you have to prove yourself, that you are always comparing yourself to feel good about yourself. Do you want to get out of this slavery; this very real, stifling slavery. Do you want to live free; confident in who you are, feeling satisfaction with life, knowing you're significant? Who wants to live free?

I sure do. But left to myself I don't have any chance. I'll stay trapped and I'll keep enslaving others. If humanity could have broken free of this slavery, surely it would have years ago. Instead we write more and more laws. Laws that declare what we can do, but they are still laws that wrap themselves around us, entangle us, stifling the life right out of us.

Who wants to live free? Then join

Thomas in his wonderful declaration, that Jesus is your Lord and your God. Jesus is the one who gives direction to your life. And his direction is found in a relationship which he has created through his crucifixion.

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The direction Jesus offers is straight into his Father's heart, so that we might live there. So that we might live this relationship, and not just talk about it, but really live it. For Jesus is really alive, living with Father, right now.

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You are Father's favoured child—believe it?

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offers is straight into his Father's heart, so that we might live there. So that we might live this relationship, and not just talk about it, but really live it. For Jesus is really alive, living with Father, right now.

It's not a bunch of nice words, or wishful thinking; the living breathing Jesus is in Father's loving presence, right now. And Jesus' goal is that we join in living with him in this

relationship. That we experience it in our everyday life.

That's why he sent the Spirit; God, in person, with us now. We don't have words to agree to but a relationship to live. Relationships are for living.

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What would you think of me if I declared boldly and confidently that my wife is alive; but then never spoke with her? Didn't seek to experience life with her? Didn't daily talk with her about everything? What would you think of this bold declaration of mine?

Thank God Jesus is alive and we get to experience that reality daily. Thank God Jesus is alive and we get to walk and talk with him in every area of life. He's interested in everything you do. Thank God you can ask him about every aspect of your life,