

need to experience God's loving presence with me in the person of the Spirit.

Thank God my source of love isn't me. Then what would I have to draw on? Thank God he has placed me in his heart, so that my heart can beat in rhythm with his.

So Jesus comes and empowers us to spot the devil's lie, so that we might live true to who we are. I don't want to be living a lie. I don't want to be shaped by a lie.

So when the devil says; 'Surely it is right that I look at what I do, and how it is affecting others.' I don't let performance take God's place in my heart. Rather, as a loved child of the Heavenly Father, I get to talk with him about

this and invite Jesus to send the Spirit to grow me through this situation.

What I do doesn't determine who I am. Jesus determines who I am. In Jesus God's place in my heart is that he is my loving, heavenly Father, and I am his precious child. This is now who determines what I do.

Do you notice that in Jesus; what you do doesn't determine you, but Jesus determines who you are, and that his power and authority gets to determine what you do. Never the other way around, then slowly but surely my performance or lack of

it will take God's place in my heart.

Thank God, in Jesus, we live in God's heart. Thank God, in Jesus, we love God because he has loved us, he has sacrificed himself for us. Thank God, in Jesus, the Spirit lives daily with us, we have a wonderful personal, intimate, conversation, loving relationship to live and explore.

Thank God, in Jesus, he has taken up place in your heart. Now live from your heart.

6 May 2018

## GOD'S PLACE IN YOUR HEART

1 John 5:21



Today we finish looking at John's letter. He finishes with these words; "Dear children, keep away from anything that might take God's place in your hearts." (1 John 5:21 NLT)

What might take God's place in your hearts?

One of the subtle ways the devil uses to take God's place in our hearts is getting us to think we have to work harder to prove we love God. I could read some of the verses today in that light. I could read; "The reality test on whether or not we love God's children is this: Do we love God? Do we keep his commands?" (1 John 5:3 Message)

After reading these verses I could easily be tempted to think it

all depends on me. I'd better work harder. Or I might be tempted to point the finger at you; you're so loveless.

When the focus shifts to me, to my performance as what makes the difference, I've let something take God's place in my heart. The devil is always good at twisting things. He loves to twist things so that what is wrong looks right.

Surely it is right that I look at what I do, and how it is affecting others!

John wrote earlier: "God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love – not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a

sacrifice to take away our sin."

Where is the source of the love we are called to show? Where is the source, the power and authority that we need to show this love? Is it in you; so all you have to do is try harder.

Where is the source of your love, the love of God that seeks to flow through you into life? Where is the source of this love?

The source of this love isn't me getting it right all the time. I make mistakes. I get hurt and act hurt at times. I've even been known to act selfishly. I've resented what other people had done or said, and felt that it was unfair and totally unloving toward me. Has anyone ever had any of these sorts of thoughts? Thoughts that remind you you're not perfect, that the

---

**Christ Church Lutheran**

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

people around you aren't perfect and they should lift their game if they calm to be Christian! Has anyone every had any thoughts like these?

If I'm the source of love in my life; I'm in big, big, big trouble. At times I don't even like myself. At times I frustrate myself. At times I feel overwhelmed and confused. Has anyone ever had any thoughts like these?

Daily I thank God that he is the source of love. Daily I thank God that he has taken the initiative and come in person to love me. Come in the person of Jesus, giving his life on the cross, not because I'm perfect, but because left to myself I have no hope in living loved. Left to myself I have no hope of ever knowing, let alone experiencing the love that is God.

I'm always blown away by these words of John; from the

Gospel of John, "I (that's Jesus) have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain (in other words live in it, walk daily in it, celebrate life in it) Remain in my love." (John 5:9 NLT)

Left to myself there is no way in hell that I could even begin to comprehend the love

---

**If I'm the source of love; I'm in big, BIG trouble.**

---

Jesus and his Father share, let alone live in that love together with them. But that's what Jesus makes possible.

Notice Jesus hasn't come to make you a perfect person who never makes a mistake. Have you ever noticed that Jesus speaks a lot about forgiveness? In life people will hurt you for a myriad of reasons; you can choose to let that shape you or invited Jesus to give you a forgiving heart, and

then you can seek to live loved.

Or you'll have foot in mouth disease, and hurt people. You can choose to defend yourself or not worry about the other person's feelings, or you can choose to offer forgiveness.

Forgiveness offered and received is one way love between people grows. Expecting perfection is one way to kill relationships.

You'll always have a reason to complain, cause people are always making mistakes. I'm far from perfect. I need your forgiveness, and I need to forgive you, otherwise the hurts and pains of life take God's place in my heart.

Where might the devil be using the hurts and pains done in your life to erode God's place in your heart? The devil does his best work when you have been unjustly hurt,

when you're innocent. You have every right to feel aggrieved; you just won't be left feeling loved or being very loveable. The devil loves to take away God's place in your heart.

I don't want anything to take away God's place in my heart. I want to be living as one of God's children, in his heart, the delight of his life. Not because I'm perfect, but because that's God's blessing over me, that's his promise in Jesus, personally sealed in baptism. Here is the source of love in my life, in me.

That's what I hear when I read; "The reality test on whether or not we love God's children is this: Do we love God?" This isn't a performance test, but a reminder that God is the source of love. It is his love that empowers me to begin to grow and mature as a loving person.

So when I read 'Do we keep his commands?' I don't jump to condemnation; I could point at many, many, many times where I've stuffed things up.

Have you ever noticed that condemnation doesn't breed love?

I don't jump to condemnation, the

---

**Jesus has taken up place in your heart.**

---

word 'command' reminds me that in Jesus I have a power and authority greater than my mistakes. A power and authority that gives me the ability to be growing and maturing as a loving child of God. Because in Jesus, that's who I am.

I'm not trying to create my identity through what I do, but through Jesus' power and authority I have been re-created as Father's loved child, with whom he is well pleased.

Now through the Spirit, Jesus is enabling my life to be a living expression of who I am.

As my life grows as a living expression of who I am in Jesus, my life also is an act of worship. I'm letting, inviting, God, in Jesus, through the Spirit to shape me, to mould me, to flood me with his life giving presence.

So when I do get it 'right' who gets the praise? Me or God? When my life is a living expression of who Jesus has created me to be, when life flows, it is Father who gets the praise.

What a great cure for me having a big head. Being selfish is cured, for Father gets the praise, and we enjoy life together. We even get to enjoy life together when things are running rough.

Anyone's life ever run rough? I know that's when I need to know, I