

I'm not any different to the next person, so where is this strength coming from, how do I face life and make choices that are beyond my capability?

Paul is reminding you today, that he's no different to you. He too is just a clay pot, but what a treasure lives inside. To just look at the outside would leave you missing the best.

When you look at yourself, what do you see? An ordinary, unadorned clay pot? Don't be deceived, the Spirit lives in you, the Spirit who links you intimately with Jesus, resides in you. You are much, much more than meets the eye. Don't deceive yourself.

How do you make your decisions, your choices?

How do you know who to trust, who to follow?

Easy, stop, talk it over with Jesus, through the Spirit, and go for it. Take the first thought that comes into your mind believing it is Jesus, speaking through the Spirit, and be living by faith.

You could live solely by your reason, but I've discovered Jesus can be quite unreasonable at times. Or is it that my reason isn't perfect?

I invite you to enjoy living as that wonderful unadorned clay jar, who contains the Spirit; and live out that wonderfully supernatural love that comes from Jesus, because in and through him, it's now your new natural. Because you're not

deceived by all that glitters; but know the love of God for you in Jesus, personally, intimately, conversationally.

How do you make your decisions, your choices?  
How do you know who to trust, who to follow?

Stop, talk it over the Jesus, through the Spirit, who lives in you, and then go for it. Take the first thought that comes to your heart, believing it is Jesus. After all you've just asked him. And take that wonderful step of faith, doing what Jesus has inspired you to do.

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## Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

3 June 2018

## HOW DO YOU KNOW WHO TO FOLLOW?

2 Corinthians 4:5-12



The people in the church at Corinth were faced with a common decision; who do you believe? Paul was saying one thing, other people had a different point of view.

How do you work out who to follow, who to trust?

It appears from Paul's letter that some had made their decision based upon outward appearance. Paul doesn't claim to be the greatest speaker compared to those challenging him. Paul gives the impression that compared to them he wasn't all that impressive to look at or to listen to.

How do you work out who to listen to, or what to listen to?

Advertising seems to work on selling a product as if you can't

do without it. Or at least that's how it seems to me; bright, sparkling, it will enhance your life, you'd be silly not to use it. When I watch a car ad there are beautiful people; which means if I buy that car I'll be one of the beautiful people.

Paul described himself as an 'unadorned clay pot'. What would you choose an unadorned clay pot or a bright shiny gold pot?

I know my first instinct would be to go for the gold pot.

That reminds me of Jesus speaking to his disciples. He asked them, which would you prefer, to be sitting at the dinner table or serving the meal?

Guess what my first reaction would have been? That's right, I'd

want to be sitting at the dinner table.

Then Jesus drops his bombshell and says; 'but I'm the waiter, serving the meal'. Which means if I'm to follow Jesus where would I be? The waiter, serving the meal!

How do you work out who to listen to, or what to listen to? How do you know who to trust, who to follow?

In the reading from Mark we have an example of people who are complaining to Jesus about his disciples; "Look, why are they breaking the law by harvesting grain on the Sabbath?" (Mark 2:24)

What was the basis of their decision? The custom of the day. Their need to feel good about

themselves. Concern for the disciples well-being. What were these people using to make their decision? Because according to Jesus they'd got it all wrong.

Don't you find that a worry? They'd got it all wrong, horribly wrong.

In our story about Samuel, he too is faced with a decision. He hears a voice and believes it to be Eli. At that point in the story, what was Samuel basing his actions on?

Then Eli, helps Samuel to really hear what is going on. He invites the young boy to respond to the voice; 'Speak, your servant is listening.' Then, what a change. Samuel is encountered by God himself. Samuel is given a word to speak to Eli; a word he didn't want to speak but does. Now Samuel knows the voice of God, how would that shape his future? How

would that shape the way he was to make decisions in the future?

Paul was suggesting that to the world around him he looked just like a common old clay jar. Nothing to attract people to him.

That reminds me of what the prophet

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### What is the treasure in you?

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Isaiah said about Jesus; "There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him. He was despised and rejected – a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care." (Isa. 53:1,2 NLT)

Jesus didn't attract people to him because of his good looks. He was despised and

rejected. He was crucified. Actually that's the place Jesus says our eyes become open and we see reality; there we discover real love. When Jesus is lifted up; lift up on the cross, that's where he wants to draw people to him.

Jesus avoids the slick and attractive. He is mercilessly crucified, insulted, rejected, humiliated. But it is here we get to see the real Jesus.

Here the veil over our eyes begins to be removed.

I'm so easily deceived by all that glitters, all that impresses, all that seems majestic and wonderful. I'm so easily fooled.

To the world each one of us probably seems like an old clay jar. What do we have to offer? Why should anyone listen to a word you say?

I have something in common with a clay jar; we're both made

of clay, and we're both fragile.

Take to a clay jar with a hammer and what will you have? A smashed jar. Take to me with a hammer and I'd look pretty smashed up too!

Paul compares himself to an unadorned clay pot. Not to put himself or anyone else down, but so we might see the extraordinary treasure living in this unadorned clay pot.

What is the treasure in you? As a child of God, who lives in you?

The Holy Spirit, that's God in person, lives in you, with you, through you. The Holy Spirit who reveals the person, Jesus. What an amazing treasure God has placed in you, his unadorned clay pot.

Which means this clay pot won't crumble under pressure. Not because of its own strength, but because

the Spirit lives within us. We now live, and thrive by his power and authority, which comes from Jesus.

That means we are now able to bring praise, glory and honour to Jesus without robbing the if for ourselves. When we succeed, we point to Jesus, we celebrate

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### Stop; Talk it over with Jesus; Do it!

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together with Jesus, we are freed to enjoy life when we get it right without getting a big head, without being swollen with pride.

Because we, unadorned clay pots, contain this extraordinary treasure, the Holy Spirit, who links us with Jesus, we now can make decisions like Samuel; listening to the voice of God, then stepping out and doing what we have sensed Jesus laying on our hearts.

Should I travel overseas next year? Stop, talk it over with Jesus, through the Spirit, and follow his lead. Should I listen to what people are saying about me? Stop, talk it over with Jesus, through the Spirit, and believe what he gives you. Should I go to work this morning? Stop, talk it over with Jesus, through the Spirit, and jump out of bed and enjoy what he's called you to.

Amazingly, because Paul lived this way, he got people to look beyond himself and to Jesus. Paul got people to look to Jesus and discover, I'm and unadorned clay pot, with Jesus inside. Wow! What an amazing life I'm invited to share, to live, to enjoy.

As I like Paul get people to look beyond me to Jesus, because I should have broken by now, but I haven't.