

me what I don't know about his love for me that is making me act this way. For in Jesus, it's not who I am.

Isn't that a great thing to be able to say? After acting totally unloving, to be able to say, 'in Jesus, that's not who I am'. I want to live true to who I am in Jesus.

I hope you notice that wasn't said in a condemning way, but simply a realisation that I'm not being true to who I am. 'Spirit' come on down, and grow me so that in this situation I live true to who I am in Jesus'.

If you prayed that prayer, what do you recon the Spirit would do?

How do you see yourself? A success or

a loser, or in Jesus, a wonderful work of love in progress. In Jesus, a loved child of God the Father, who brings him great joy.

Today I'd like to encourage you not to see yourself, or anyone else, through the lens of 'what they have or how they look'. But to invite Jesus to send the Spirit that you might see yourself, and the people you meet through God the Father's eyes; people he desires to embrace and grow in his love, living personally with him.

Isn't it great that in Jesus we get that fresh start, the old life is gone and a new life

burgeons. Today invite Jesus to fill your heart and mind with the Spirit so that you step out this week and live true to who you are, no matter what happens, no matter what others say. In Jesus you are a life bearing tree, with the fruit of love and life to share.

Invite Jesus to send the Spirit and then step out into this week living as one of Father's children, chosen and marked by his love, the delight of his life. Live true to who you are in Jesus; enjoy.

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

17 June 2018

HOW DO YOU LOOK AT YOURSELF?

2 Corinthians 5:6-17



Paul in his letter to the people at Corinth wrote; "Our firm decision is to work from this focused centre... Because of this decision we don't evaluate people by what they have or how they look. We looked at the Messiah that way once and got it all wrong, as you know." (2 Cor. 5:14,16)

Paul reminds me that what you see with your eyes isn't always the whole story. If I cut up an apple and asked what part you would like, the cut up apple or the core, what do you think most people would go for? I'd eat the cut up apple and throw away the core.

What's contained in the core? The seeds.

When you look at the seeds do you see a potential orchard? Each seed has the potential to grow a tree, a tree

that all going well will do what? Produce apples. Not just one apple, but hopefully many apples over many years.

Once you've eaten the cut up apple, what do you have left? An empty plate, and nothing to refill it with.

Out of the two which would best reflect Jesus, the cut up apple or the seed?

I would say the seed, because the seed has the potential to produce life, to produce many trees. And I think that is what Jesus is after, producing an orchard of life bearing trees.

When you look at yourself do you see a life bearing tree? Or are you just something to be consumed and when it is all gone you're left with nothing. Which of those two would you

like to be a representation of you?

Some days I feel a bit like the cut up apple; I'm consumed by life and feel empty at the end of the day. Have you ever had a similar experience?

I'd rather the seed to represent me. A seed that has been planted in the fertile soil of a loving relationship with God the Father, through his Son, Jesus, lived out with the Holy Spirit.

That gets me thinking of the fruits of the Spirit. Paul expands on the image of the tree and mentions some of the fruit that the Spirit will produce in our lives.

The fruits of; love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Gal. 5:22)

These are the fruits which the Holy Spirit will bring to bear in our lives. If you want this fruit in your life, then hang around the Holy Spirit, inviting him to keep you close to Jesus. Inviting him to shape your heart and mind as living reflections of Jesus. The Holy Spirit will bring about love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control because they are Jesus'

character traits. And the Spirit's goal is to grow us to maturity in Jesus. Paul continued his letter with these words; "Now we look inside, and what we see is that anyone united with the Messiah gets a fresh start, is created new. The old life is gone; a new life burgeons!" (2 Cor. 5:10)

Do you see the new life of Jesus growing in you? For Jesus has given his life for you. Jesus has been raised to life for you. Jesus

has sent the Spirit to be with you. He sealed that at your baptism; so it's not a matter of do you feel it, but it is a promise from Jesus, and he always keeps his promise.

That's why we say Jesus speaks the truth; because what he says he creates. The devil lies, because he'll

Do you see the new life of Jesus growing in you?

promise you the world but leave you with an empty plate. No life giving seed, just an empty heart and soul.

Today as we focus on baptism, and our jigsaw it is a reminder that Jesus is the one who brings shape and purpose to our life. He is the one who can put all the pieces of our life together, so that they become life giving, so that they become a growing reflection of God.

Today I'm reminded not to simply look at individual pieces of the puzzle, for that could just leave me confused, or thinking there is no rhyme or reason to life. Just looking at individual pieces could leave me assessing life completely wrong.

Today Paul is encouraging us to look at life through Jesus' eyes, and not the eyes of what we simply perceive around us.

That's especially true when we look at ourselves. When you look at yourself, what do you see?

What other people say about us can be such a powerful thing in our lives. What we perceive as success can shape how we see ourselves and the people around us.

When I was a teen I was very much labelled, not cool, not one of the in crowd. I didn't have a great deal of confidence. I was scrawny and didn't

have any fashion sense. I wasn't a great scholar or a great athlete. I was made fun of. Nobody wanted to be like me.

Though I wanted to be like the popular kids. Which I find funny now; thinking that these teens were so with it, when in reality we were all naïve. Yet I would be more influenced by what my peers thought than what God thought.

Who do you reckon new more about life; my peers – those totally cool 15 year olds, or Jesus?

It took me a long time to learn what Paul wrote to the people at Corinth all those years ago; 'we don't evaluate people by what they have or how they look. We looked at the Messiah that way once and got it all wrong.'

I looked at myself that way and got to all wrong!

I'll let you in on a little secret, life isn't about

being successful or a failure. Life is all about knowing you're loved. And that only happens in a loving relationship.

And guess who the author of love is; not just the author of love, but the very personification of love? Jesus not only defines what love is; for every action he did was love,

Stop; Talk it over with Jesus; Do it!

Jesus is love. It is his very character, it is his very being, he can't act any other way; it just who he is.

Would that be great if the same thing could be said about you? Or is that just a stupid thought?

Amazingly it's not; we just read Paul saying; 'Anyone united with the Messiah gets a fresh start, is created new. The old life is gone; a new life burgeons!' In Jesus you have a new core; and that is being

a loved child of God the Father, who delights in you, who seeks to daily pour his life into you. In Jesus, you are a life giving tree. In Jesus, you are loved. And loved people can do what?

Hurt people hurt. Lost people run around in circles. Fearful people hide. Insecure people pretend.

People loved by God in Jesus, now have a core to love from, a core that won't become empty. I can always come back to Jesus and find the one who loves me, the one who breathes life into me. In his power and authority that totally unnatural love of God is becoming my new natural.

Unfortunately I'm still sucked in at times comparing myself with other people, playing the winner, looser game. But when I find myself doing that I no longer condemn myself, but I go back to Jesus and invite him to show