

and run with it;  
putting it into action?

Does Jesus want to shine his light on your life or leave you in the dark? Does Jesus want your life to be a shipwreck or a salvation-garden?

I certainly believe Jesus wants to shine his presence into my life so that I flourish and become all that he's dreamed possible. So I read his word expecting to be guided, to be drawn closer to him, to grow in an intimate, loving, affectionate relationship with Father through Jesus. A relationship where he is daily speaking into my life.

Isn't that truly wonderful. I'm not left simply doing the best I can, I'm now invited to walk with Jesus

discovering the best he can.

Where would you want to be; doing your best, or living, discovering God's best for you?

I invite you this week to invite Jesus to speak to you through this letter of James, asking him to shine his life giving light into your life this week; and then take what you get and live it.

This week I invite you to spend time chatting with Jesus about life, about something specific that is happening. Inviting him to shine his light into that area, grab what comes, the very first thought, image, idea, prompt and do it, believing it's Jesus' lead. And keep talking with him about

it as things unfold. For Jesus wants your life to be a salvation-garden and not a shipwreck.

Let us pray.  
Jesus, thank you for shining your light into my life. I want to live in your light, directed by you, so that I might grow into all you've given your life for. Jesus as you lead me this week let me recognise its you and then step out and do it. Jesus, I want my life to be a living, vibrant relationship of love and affection, where we chat about everything throughout the day. Thank you for revealing that, that is your dream, come in, and fill my heart with your presence, that my life is a garden that blooms bringing glory to you as the gardener.

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## Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

2 September 2018

## STAY ON COURSE

James 1:17-27



The first words we heard read from James' letter were these; "So, my dear friends, don't get thrown off course." (James 1:17) Which obviously means we can be thrown off course. And being thrown off course isn't a good thing.

Being thrown off course gets me thinking of old sailing ships, when in a storm got thrown off course and thrown onto the rocks. That was never a good outcome. I don't like the idea of my life being smashed on the rocks; how about you?

To prevent this crashing on the rocks people put up lighthouses and the light from them kept the ships safe. They could then navigate

safely to their destination.

So James invites us to live by the light of God in Jesus. For me that's good news, I'm not left in the dark simply doing the best I can.

I'm sure many shipwrecked captains did the best they could! I don't want my life to be a shipwreck.

So we have these gifts from God our Father, like rivers of light cascading down that we reach the destination of life lived in our heavenly Father's loving embrace. So we live in the destination of an identity that no-one can rob off us, because it is secure in the light of Jesus death, resurrection and promised return.

If I'm unsure of who I am and what I'm here for, I'm navigating life in the dark. I'm a shipwreck waiting to happen. Which isn't our heavenly Father's desired outcome.

He shines his light into our life so that we can see clearly and therefore navigate safely through life. Navigate to an identity which is found in him. An identity that won't change with the seasons, or wilt under pressure, for our Father's love for us is not two-faced or fickle.

After Jesus has gone to the extent of being born; flesh and blood, with you. After Jesus has gone to the extreme extent of dying for you; he isn't going to change his mind. You can rely on him, you can trust him. You can take

him at his word; you are Father's child, chosen and marked by his love, the delight of his life. You can walk secure in knowing this is you.

In life I've had people tell me all sorts of things; like I'll never amount to much, or they loved the way I did things, or they didn't want to know me and walked away because I wasn't with the cool set. I've had people tell me all sorts of things about who I am and what I do.

If I believed those who said I'd amount to nothing, where would that have got me? If I believed those who puffed up my ego telling me how wonderful I was, where would that have got me? If I'd gone off and felt rejected, where would that have got me?

How do I know what to believe about what people say? There

was some truth when the teacher told me I needed to try harder. There was some truth in those people's words of praise? How do you work out what to believe in all that people say and what you experience in life, so that you don't get thrown off course?

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### Does God want your life to be a shipwreck?

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Jesus claims to be the light from our heavenly Father. It is in this relationship that we get to navigate safely and successfully through life, living in that wonderful destination of being Father's loved child with whom he is well pleased.

In Jesus I get to see that I'm forgiven, and I'm not the sum total of my mistakes. So in Jesus I get to grow and learn through my

mistakes rather than just keep on repeating them. In Jesus I'm forgiven, so I can look at myself through those eyes, and live out that forgiveness.

I liked this phrase from today's reading; "So throw all spoiled virtue and cancerous evil in the garbage. In simple humility, let our gardener, God, landscape you with the Word, making a salvation-garden of your life." (James 1:21)

I like this image of Jesus making a salvation-garden of my life. Jesus is able to direct me so that I pull up the weeds and not the flowers. Jesus is able to direct me so I know what to plant; when and where, so that my garden grows and flourishes. That's an image of what God is seeking for your life.

I don't know about you but I'm not much of a gardener, so if it

was left to me, it wouldn't be much of a garden. For one thing I only know of a few plant species, so there'd be thousands I'd be miss-out on planting. And I know I'd be pulling up plenty of flowers thinking they're weeds. So I thank God, when it comes to my life, I'm not left to myself, but he's the gardener. And he enjoys getting me to join him in the process of creating a wonderful garden out of what he's dreamed possible.

God shines his light, so I have the understanding and wisdom to know what to do. God not only shines his light but also, through the Spirit, empowers me to do what he says.

I've noticed that simply recognising that a weed is growing in my garden doesn't achieve much; I've got to tell Yolette to put them out!

Actually God's light would have me do what? Treat my wife like a servant or get up and pull out the weed myself. God's light shows that marriage is a partnership, where each person seeks to do their best for the other, so that the other person benefits

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### Does God want your life to be a salvation garden?

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according to their needs, and I get the wonderful privilege of paying with my life.

Somehow I don't think treating other people as my servants grows the salvation garden of love that Jesus has dreamed possible. That way of living sounds like a shipwreck in the making.

James reminds me today; "*Tim, don't fool yourself, don't fool yourself into thinking*

that you're a listener when you are anything but, letting the Word go in one ear and out the other. *Act on what you hear!*" (James 1:22)

I definitely hear the Spirit saying to me; 'Tim, I've revealed those weeds in your garden for you to pull out.'

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So when I pray asking for wisdom or direction from Jesus and get a prompt, a thought, a picture, someone calling to talk about that very thing, what do you reckon I should do? Respond to what I've been given or wait for the answer I'm looking for.

When I'm talking with Jesus, through the Spirit, about life, about my garden, which he's seeking to make into a salvation-garden, why would that thought, that picture, that response not be Jesus in action. Why shouldn't I take what he says