

life based on my own power and authority. I'd be in a bit of bother if that were the case for at times I don't even have the power to simply quit a bad habit. I thank God my life isn't based on my power and authority.

Paul in his letter to the people of Philippi spoke of being lead off track. So he wrote; "Stick with me, friends. Keep track of those you see running this same course, headed for this same goal. There are many out there taking other paths, choosing other goals, and trying to get you to go along with them..." (Phil. 3:17 Mess.)

If I view life simply from what I can understand, how well

do you think that will go for me? I don't know about you but I want to view life from Jesus vista. I want to be living life from his power and authority, walking together with him reaching his goal.

I've noticed that when I walk doing it my way I don't live favoured. I'm tempted to live as if I deserve it; after all I worked for it. Or I'm tempted to be depressed because everyone else seems to be going better than me. My vista on life is so small and stunted, and limited. My power and authority really won't get me to where I'd hope to be, let alone where Jesus has dreamed possible for me to be.

As I ponder on the Easter story I see a whole new way of living, a whole new power and authority which does what it says. As I ponder on the Easter story I begin to celebrate being favoured; for in Jesus, I'm truly favoured.

This week I invite you to take a bit of extra time to ponder; to ponder the Easter story, inviting the Spirit to open your heart and mind to all that Jesus has done for you; how favoured you are. Make time to ponder and enjoy Jesus, enjoy his amazing love of you, enjoy discovering God's favour, you are his favoured child.

17 March 2019

FAVoured 2

'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.'

This week in chapters 8 – 14 Peter mulls over the fact that Mary: "was much perplexed by *the angel's* words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God.'" (Luke 1:29-30)

Mary pondered on this greeting, what do you ponder on?

Over this Lenten season I hope people are pondering on what it means to be favoured; favoured by God himself. What does that mean and how is it reflected in the Easter story.

That reminds me of the Third Commandment; which says to me, take time to ponder. Don't be so busy you don't have time to

think, to ponder, to assess, to discern, to talk it over with Jesus. I don't think God wants us too busy to ponder, to reflect, to mull things over with him.

Do you have a place you like to go and ponder on life; on what God is saying to you, on what you're doing and why? Mary was perplexed so she took time to ponder the words spoken to her.

Pondering is one of the goals of the Lenten season; pondering anew the wonders of the Easter story, so we don't take things for granted.

I invite you to ponder Jesus walk to his crucifixion. Today's Gospel reading has Jesus coming to Jerusalem, knowing

he is coming to be crucified.

If you knew people were waiting to kill you, just around the corner, what would your instincts have you do? Mine would have me run away and definitely not go around the corner. Here we find Jesus weeping for the community which is about to kill him. Why does Jesus weep? What does that tell you about Jesus? Why didn't Jesus run, but freely walks to the cross? Lent is a good time to ponder the wonder of Jesus' gracious love toward us as you reflect on his life.

As you ponder Jesus' story one thing is clear, fear doesn't control him. Jesus isn't shaped by fear. What shapes Jesus?

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

What defines his identity?

For Mary her identity is linked to being favoured. "The angel said to her, 'Don't be afraid, Mary, for you **have** found favour with God.'" (Luke 1:30) Why is it important that Mary isn't living to find favour, but living because she has it? The word 'have' indicates a past event which is still good for today. Mary's identity is that of being favoured.

How much more can we celebrate that as part of our identity; we know Jesus has walked freely to the cross out of his passion for us. What favour we have. Jesus wept over Jerusalem, not out of anger, but out of a broken heart. He wanted to shower them in his favour, but they were blinded by their fears, jealousy, crowd hysteria, political ambition.

I wonder what gets in my road of seeing Jesus clearly? I wonder what I do that might have Jesus weeping because I'm shutting him out? I invite Jesus to open my heart and mind so that I might change, for the last thing I would want is to shut Jesus out. I also pray

What do you ponder on?

that Jesus give me the courage to face the answers and not let fear rob me of life with him.

This week as you ponder anew the Easter story, invite the Spirit to reveal how that shapes your identity. One thing the Easter story reminds me of is that I belong. I belong in Jesus' family. In Jesus I belong as a citizen of heaven – I'm not there illegally fearful of being discovered and

expelled. I can openly celebrate being a heavenly man, knowing my Father, seeing his smile, enjoying walking and talking with him in an intimate relationship of love and affection.

This week as you ponder anew the Easter story, invite the Spirit to speak into how this shapes your identity, your belonging.

The reading from Genesis for today reminded us of God's promise to Abram.

Just an aside, did you notice that God hasn't changed his name to Abraham yet. It is still Abram; which means; exalted father. Abraham means; father of many nations.

How many children from Sarah does Abram have when God makes this promise, this covenant? This is more than the sort of

promise I used to make with my kids; for this promise has God committing himself to Abram.

Abram doesn't have to twist God's arm to like him, God has just emphatically told Abram of his love and affection for him. That is the whole point of this story; Abram doesn't need wishful thinking, he has an iron-clad promise from God, and it is God who took the initiative.

It wasn't Abram fishing to get something from God. What a powerful story; God taking the initiative, freely committing himself to Abram to do what he has promises.

As I ponder on the Easter Story, it's the same; God has taken the initiative with us. And he hasn't simply given us a promise, he's committed himself to us. The promise is based on

Jesus giving his life for us, literally. What amazing love; Jesus doesn't talk and talk, but he walks the talk. I don't have to try and twist this guy's arm to get him to do what I want, he's totally committed himself to doing what is best for me.

Who do you think

I invite you to ponder on Father's favour...

knows what is best for me; myself or Jesus?

I know at times I firmly believe I know what is best and get grumpy when things don't happen MY way! Maybe this is an attitude that gets in the road of me seeing Jesus clearly? Could this be an area for growth?

Jesus invites me not to twist his arm but to be open and honest with him; because I trust him with my life.

Can Jesus be trusted? What does the Easter story tell you about trusting Jesus?

Jesus invites me to come and pour out my heart and soul; knowing he weeps when the devil robs me of the life he has dreamed possible. Jesus is still

passionate about you having life in all his fullness. That's what he has committed himself to, giving his life for.

And this relationship is built on Jesus willingly giving his life for you, that you might have life with him in that wonderful relationship of love and affection, that conversational relationship, that relationship where because we are loved by him we get to live out his supernatural love quite naturally, for in him it is who we are.

Wow, that reminds me that I don't live