

thank God my limitedness, my loss, my insecurity, my pride, doesn't shape who I am, but I can always trust Jesus to be there with me, even in the darkest hours of my betrayal.

He's the one who embraces me and life is possible. He's the one who embraces me and I'm not rejected, I'm the delight of Father's eye. Jesus embraces

me on that cross, his blood covers me, and life comes forth, hope is renewed, I'm painted in Jesus' image. What an amazing life Jesus invites us to live with him. We get to live and be all that he paints, all that he dreams possible; we get to live life to the full with Jesus, joining him in

Father's loving embrace, in Father's affection, hearing his voice, walking through the cool of the day with them; dancing in delight with the Spirit.

What do you see when you see Jesus on the cross?

27 March 2019

PETER DENIES JESUS

Luke 22:54-62



Why do you think we have this story of Peter denying Jesus? I'm sure it isn't to put Peter down. Peter represents me, and you. Peter is me, when I seek to face life from my own self-confidence. Peter is me, when I think it won't happen to me.

Jesus, lovingly, has Peter there representing us, representing me. Peter isn't there to be frowned upon; how terrible of Peter to deny Jesus and three times, of course I'd never have done that.

Do you know what the sad reality is? The sad reality is that I have denied Jesus, and more than three times in my life. I'd also guess that the sad reality is that we all at some time or

other have denied Jesus.

I've denied Jesus by keeping quiet. I've denied Jesus as I've sought to win another's approval. I didn't want to be rejected. I've denied Jesus in my pride, condemning others. I've denied Jesus, going along with the crowd, everyone else was doing it so why shouldn't I! I've denied Jesus as I've self-justified my actions.

Why do we have this story? What is Jesus seeking to say to you through this story?

I live in a world of deniers. If Jesus was to condemn all deniers, he might as well have stayed at home; we're all deniers.

Left to our own devices humanity always denies God, for we end up painting him in our image. We imagine him to be frightening so we paint him as an intimidating figure. Is that really what God is like?

We imagine we have to please God, we have to do something to get him to like is. So we paint him in the image of one who rewards a job well done, but condemns us when we fail. Is that really what God is like?

I'd say the majority of people I run across paint God as irrelevant; after all life is about being happy. God is just the figment of an over active imagination. Is that really what God is?

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

The simple reality of life is outside of Jesus we have no idea who God is, let alone what he is like. When I look at the world around me I get the impression that the most common image of God is that he is to be feared; thunder bolts and lightning, he'll strike you dead, he is to be feared.

What do we see in Jesus? Especially at Easter. How many people does Jesus strike dead? How many people are terrified of Jesus that first Easter?

That first Easter Peter is more terrified of a slave girl that he is of Jesus. The soldiers simply see Jesus as a fool to be made fun of; no thunder bolts and lightning there.

What does Jesus reveal about himself, about God that first Easter?

Instead of seeing someone to be frightened of, I see someone who takes the worst humanity has to offer, but still seeks to give the best he has to offer.

Jesus paints a picture of someone I can trust. Jesus paints a picture of someone who is safe

What do you see in Jesus?

to be around. Jesus paints a picture of someone who really knows what love is and seeks to live it.

To live it out to me. To me, of all people, a person who has denied him.

You see my denial doesn't determine who Jesus is. Wouldn't that be a sad reality; my betrayal determining God! Not a chance; Jesus isn't shaped by me, he's not made in my image, thankfully he has come that I

might be made in his image. Jesus paints the picture of who I am and what I can be, of what I can do. Jesus paints the picture, not me.

The bullies don't paint the picture of who I am, anymore than their brutality determined Jesus. Not a chance; Jesus isn't a product of bullies. Not a chance. Jesus comes to heal bullies, to free them from their fears and insecurities. Jesus does come to put his heart within them that they might use their strength to bless and not curse.

Why is this story of Peter recorded? So I don't run and hide.

Sadly that's the tragic part of the story we see Judas playing. Judas betrayed Jesus and felt condemned. Judas could only see the judge and executioner. What

did that lead Judas to do? Execute himself! Is Jesus the judge and executioner or the only hope we have?

What do you see when you look at Jesus through the Easter story? A man arrested because of other people's fears and envy. Jesus, a man allowed to die because it was better than a riot. Jesus, an innocent man condemned to die and the rebel Barabbas is set free. Jesus hung on a cross so everyone might believe he was cursed of God. What do you see when you look at Jesus through the Easter story?

Jesus didn't go through all this just so he could be our judge and executioner. That's a lie we have firmly placed on God. That's our image of God, the image fallen humanity believes.

Jesus never saw his Father that way. Jesus always lived in the confident knowledge of Father's love for him as Father expressed at his baptism; 'You're my Son, chosen and marked by my love, the delight of my life'.

Is that how you see

I'm Peter. I'm Judas. I'm the soldier. I fear what I'm capable of.

God; through the eyes of a loved child, the delight of his life?

Sin has had us paint God almost as the enemy to be feared; when the reality is he is the rescuer to be embraced.

I'm Peter. I'm Judas. I'm the soldiers. I fear what I'm capable of; thank God he is my rescuer. Thank God he has broken through to embrace me, to embrace you in his love and affection. What

wonderful healing is ours in Jesus!

Jesus is the judge and executioner of the lies that want to kill and steal and destroy our lives. That's what Jesus puts to death on the cross, so that we might be liberated for life with him, with Father, joining them in their wonderful intimate, loving relationship.

On the cross I see, hope, and victory. I see Jesus reaching out for me. I see Jesus plunging into the depth of my despair, rescuing me for life with him and Father, enjoying the love and affection they share.

I thank God that he didn't wait for me to get my act together before he acted. I thank God he came down into my betrayal with his faithfulness and trustworthiness, so that I might grow to be all that he has dreamed possible. I