

firsthand, everything I once thought I had going for me is insignificant – dog dung. I've dumped it all in the trash so that I could embrace Christ and be embraced by him." (Philippians 3:8,9 Message)

I pray that we all can be like Paul and see life through Jesus' glasses. That as we look at life through God's favour for us in Jesus, God's very character and nature is magnified and we see through the lies

and confusion. That we see where life is found, where life is lived to the full, where Jesus is leading us to live life with him.

This week I invite you to take some time to reflect on God's favour to you. Begin with the Easter story, making time to ponder God's favour to us through Jesus crucifixion and resurrection. Then invite the Spirit to lead you to see where in your life Jesus favour has been at work seeking

to magnify God's character as he's shared his life with you. Invite the Spirit to help you see clearly, so you can rejoice and praise God, see clearly how he has been sharing his life with you, for no other reason that you are special to him. In Jesus, he favours you. Invite the Spirit to open the eyes of your heart that you enjoy living this week in Father's favour. Don't miss it; seek to be like Mary and live out the love he places on your heart extravagantly.

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

7 April 2019

FAVORED 5

'My soul magnifies the Lord...' Luke 1:46-49



This week in 'Favoured' Peter looks at how God's favour helps us see him clearly; chapters 29-35. Peter begins by using the image of reading glasses. The glasses don't change anything on the page they just bring things into clarity.

It's great when you can actually read what's on the page, not so great when you don't have your reading glasses and need them. Everything is right there on the page but it's not accessible, it's just a blurry mess.

Mary sees God more clearly through his favour to her. She experiences his loving presence, that he is faithful to his promises. Mary's heart is ransomed through God's favour.

What stories can you recall from the bible that help clarify God, so you see him for who he is. Then we can worship him for who he is and not be left making things up because we're not really sure of what he's doing, let alone who he is.

The reading from Isaiah for today got the people to reflect on their history with God and how he had rescued them out of Egypt. This nation isn't the result of some War-Lord who was able to kill all his enemies. This nation is the result of a promise; and their God keeps his promises.

Their God not only keeps his promises, he has the power and authority to keep his promises. He doesn't promise what he

can't deliver; so he is praised. The might of Egypt, that super power of the day, couldn't stop God from keeping his promises. They actually became the means for God to show how dependable he is.

In the midst of strife, or upheaval in life, I'm tempted to forget how dependable God is. Sometimes I'm tempted to feel defeated, that everything is too hard, that the world is falling apart.

Is the world falling apart?

It might be, or it might not be, but one thing I know for sure, the God who revealed himself through Jesus isn't. The God whose favour lead Jesus to be born my brother, suffered and

died on the cross rather than deny me, burst out of the tomb that Sunday. This God isn't falling apart; he's bringing his promises to completion, as he always has.

What does the story of Mary anointing Jesus' feet with perfume magnify about God for you? What does it say about his character? What does it reveal about this person that we might have otherwise missed?

The way Jesus deals with Judas reveals to me that Jesus is about people and not profits. Isn't that good; Jesus is invested in you, not obsessed with making a profit.

I love the way Jesus isn't manipulated by guilt. 'Such a waste Jesus, you could have feed the poor'. I think I would have ended up feeling guilty, not Jesus.

Jesus honours Mary's gift of love. Jesus graciously accepts Mary's extravagant expression of her love for him. And then, for those listening, points to his crucifixion, where he will pour the perfume of his life over us. Then our lives will be a sweet smelling

Mary's act magnifies Jesus.

incense to God.

Mary's act magnifies for us what Jesus is doing. His favour toward her magnifies his favour toward us, through his death and resurrection.

Jesus is setting this woman free so that she might have the freedom in his love to live loved and not be manipulated by other people's opinions. Not manipulated by the profit margin.

Just imagine if Jesus had been sucked in by Judas and criticized Mary. That might well have crushed her spirit and put an end to her giving expression to the love God had placed in her heart. Fear could have taken control; the fear of criticism, the fear of guilt, and the life Jesus came to save would have been lost.

Thank God Jesus wasn't sucked in; but in accepting her gift he liberated her heart. Now when Mary felt moved by the Spirit to give expression to the love in her heart, she'll remember Jesus act toward her and be emboldened.

From what you know of Jesus which fits his character; crippling people with fear or liberating people to love extravagantly?

Isn't it great that God's favour to you in Jesus has

revealed, has magnified, God's heart of love. Jesus came, no comes, to liberate, to set people's hearts free that they might love extravagantly as he did on the cross.

The cross magnifies what love is. There I see God's love for you and me the clearest. Jesus willingly dies so that I might live. Jesus won't be deterred but trusts his Father, so that we might be liberated to trust Father, just like Jesus.

Actually I've noticed at times that my emotions, which are a good gift from God, but outside of Jesus, my emotions at times blur the picture.

I'm sure Jesus wasn't feel all that great, having been abandoned by his mates, had justice denied him, had been beaten, spat upon, and finally the total indignation and pain

of crucifixion. Somehow I don't think Jesus would have been singing a happy little song. He was in pain. He was in agony of body and soul.

My emotions would have been telling me; 'it's all wrong'. Jesus willingly gives his life, takes the pain,

The cross magnifies what love is.

because that's love. He's 100% committed to you, and nothing will make him change his mind. Nothing will stop him from living out his love for you; and so he goes to the cross.

Not because he was forced against his will, but precisely because that was his will. His will was to give his life for you, that you might be liberated and set free from sin, death and the devil. That you might have life in all

God's fullness; experiencing Father's love and affection, living daily in a conversational relationship where you get to live out this supernatural love, which is God's very nature, living it out quite naturally.

Where has God used pain, lose, discomfort and challenge in your life to magnify his love, to grow your trust that you might know deeper in your heart his love for you, the hope he offers, how to live free and not be manipulated.

Paul writing to the community of faith in Philippi celebrates how Jesus' favour has liberated him, allowing him to see God and his saving grace clearly.

Paul's view was cloudy and fuzzy to start. He wrote; "Compared to the high privilege of knowing Christ Jesus as my Master,