

under the threat of failure doesn't give me any peace.

What a contrast to living loved. Notice Jesus isn't giving us some theory, he has and does live in a relationship of love and affection with us. He has created this state of being through his life, crucifixion and resurrection. It is this relationship of love and affection that we now get to live out.

We don't have to wait till some future time; with the Spirit we have begun living out this relationship. With the Spirit we have a conversational relationship of love and affection. The fullness of this reality will be seen when Jesus returns, but we have begun living it now. In Jesus you are

loved, the Spirit is with you, you now get to be living life with God.

And of course that is what the Old Testament word for peace points to; life lived with God.

In Jesus that is something that cannot be taken away from you. For nothing in all creation is able to separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Isn't that a wonderful promise to be living in, for right now we have the person of the Spirit embracing us in that love and affection, so we might grow and mature, as we live loved.

Isn't it good that in Jesus we don't hope that sometime in the future we might be accepted if we perform well enough? And if

the standard set is perfection, how well are you performing?

Thank Father, he has sent the Spirit as Jesus' representative that you now begin to live as his loved child in whom he delights.

Let us pray.
Jesus fill our hearts and minds with the Spirit this week so that we know the reality of his presence and live out the reality of your love and affection for us. We praise and adore you for coming and embracing us in your love, setting us free for life with you, today, tomorrow and forever. Open our hearts and minds to the Spirit's lead this week so we seek to love as we are loved by you.

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

26 May 2019

PEACE?

John 14:23-29



In the Gospel reading for today we are reminded of Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit. What goes through your mind when you hear that promise?

Are you excited by this promise? Or a bit confused by who or what the Holy Spirit is? Do you wonder why the Father chose to send the Spirit as Jesus representative? Why do we have the Holy Spirit?

In the Old Testament, Moses gave the people two stone tablets with God's rules inscribed on them. Here God had his new nation, a nation that were to be his representative to the world. A nation that would live out his heartbeat. How well did things go?

The Children of Israel had a great set of rules to live by; after all they were God's plan for a community, for a nation. How well did those stone tablets work out?

Unfortunately, even though what was written on those tablets came from God and were great, the Children of Israel crashed and burned. They horribly lost their way. They ended up losing their relationship with the God who birthed them. It wasn't a very pretty story.

They had the two stone tablets from God himself, so what do you think went wrong?

What went so wrong that when Jesus comes on the scene, instead of being God's representative to the people around them

they had become inward looking, cutting themselves off from the people around them. They were simply condemning the people around them, believing that was what God wanted.

How did they ever get to be totally opposite to what God wanted? Jesus; that's God, came into the world, not to isolate himself, but to bring people into a wonderful personal relationship of love and affection, where they could hear his voice, sharing life with him. Jesus wasn't born so that he could isolate himself from people.

If Jesus wanted to isolate himself from people, don't you think he would have stayed in heaven? Rather Jesus takes on the risky business of entering into

relationships. Jesus enters the risky business of revealing his heart and soul, risking being rejected.

What do you think; does Jesus want to get to know people, to build a relationship of love and affection with a person, or does he want to remain separate; totally other? What do you think best describes the Jesus we encounter in our human history?

Jesus obviously wants to know you; wants to be in a living, vibrant, personal relationship with you. Why else would he have been born? Why else would he have loved us, giving his life for us on the cross? Jesus passion is that we know him for who he is and live in relationship with him; a personal relationship.

Maybe that's why the two stone tablets didn't work all that well. Have you ever

hugged stone? If you have I'm sure you didn't encounter a loving embrace. Two stone tablets with true statements engraved doesn't create a personal relationship of love and affection.

If you were out to create a relationship of love and affection what would you do?

Does Jesus want to get to know people?

Would you give the person, mysteriously, two stone tablets with your rules for life inscribed on them?

Or would you seek to speak to them and risk revealing yourself to them. Over time, risk revealing how you felt as you shared from the heart.

That's one of the scariest things in life to do; reveal your heart to another person. The fear of rejection is grounded in the very

real hurt that it has the capacity to inflict.

Who has had love rejected? Who has had their heart crushed? Who has had another person turn to them and through their words and actions say you're not worth knowing?

Rejection is soul destroying; that's why we hide, why we pretend.

Jesus came in person, risking rejection, revealing his heart and soul

so that we could live in that relationship. He risked rejection, taking the initiative; knowing if he didn't, we couldn't.

That's why the Holy Spirit is crucial, for the Spirit isn't a set of rules. The Spirit isn't an impersonal power source. The Spirit is God, in person, seeking to now begin living out the very personal relationship that Jesus risked his life to create.

That's why the world can't give the peace that Jesus gives; it can't give you God in person. That's what we get with the Holy Spirit; God in person, walking with us through life, inviting us to risk being open and honest, just like Jesus, and live out that most wonderful relationship of love and affection that Jesus has made a reality.

Have you ever noticed that we are saved by faith in Jesus, and that is an act of grace? That is all relationship language; you're being invited to trust Jesus; the person, taking him at his word. You're invited to trust that Jesus operates from a position of love toward you; I'd call that grace.

I don't deserve it. I don't try and twist God's arm to get what I want – that's a real love destroyer. No, I simply trust God's promise; and that promise is lived out in Jesus.

Have you ever noticed that God's relationship with the Children of Israel was built on a promise and not two stone tablets? The tablets only came hundreds of years after and were meant to be a gift that showed us how to love one another; as we are loved by God.

Knowing if he didn't, we couldn't.

So Father has sent a personal envoy as Jesus' representative, for that's his passion, that we know his love for us and live in it. So Father has sent the Holy Spirit; that's God in person, to live life with us now.

That is the source of the peace Jesus offers; not a set of rules to obey – or else. No, Jesus' peace is the person of the Spirit with us now; embracing us in that very real love and affection that Jesus

created for us through is life, crucifixion and resurrection.

God wants you to live in the reality of this relationship. God wants you to know it, to experience his presence, living his love and affection into everything you encounter.

Do you think living loved would look and feel different to following a set of rules under the threat of punishment? I'd

hope you can see a world of difference. Jesus certainly intends that we experience a world of difference.

I certainly don't have any peace living under the threat of punishment at the end of my life if I don't pass the ultimate exam. For those who have done exams; did you experience a sense of peace before you sat the exam, or were you under the pressure to perform, to pass. I don't know about you, but living