

probably the devil getting you to doubt what you've heard in answer to your conversation with Jesus.

Notice that the Spirit involves you in a conversation. He's not like a teenager; How are you? good. What are you doing today? nothing? The Spirit seeks a back and forth conversation; 'Who should I visit today?' 'Delton'. 'When, before or after lunch?' 'Why not now?' 'What am I to talk about?' 'Wait and see'.

The point is that it is a conversation, it isn't one way, or just one statement or demand. Jesus, through the Spirit, invites you into conversation with him, as together you walk in the cool of the evening.

'Maybe that's when I should visit Delton; BBQ time?'

I know Jesus, through the Spirit, is talking, sharing from his heart, so that you might be living heart to heart with him. So I encourage you to practice listening; asking a question and grabbing the first thought and then carrying on the conversation.

He's keen to write his love, his identity, his passion all over your clean slate so that it grows into a wonderful story of hope, faith and love for others to read and be inspired, encourage, drawn closer to him through

the story you share with Jesus.

Not sure what to ask, then begin with; 'Jesus, what do you want to talk about?' Listen, grab that first thought and go for it. Ring the person who came to mind, discuss the topic, buy the product. Listen and then go for it; Jesus is inviting you to live life to the full with him. Jesus is inviting you to let him write his passion all over your clean slate so it becomes a wonderful art work of him. Beautiful!

23 June 2019

BLANK-BLANK-BLANK?

Acts 2:1-14



On Pentecost Sunday I thought it would be good to not just talk about the Spirit but be open to his lead. I don't want to be talking about God; I want to be in a living relationship where we are in a conversation. So why not ask God a question and be open to his lead.

The thought came to me; why not invite everyone to take a few moments to ask the Spirit to bring to their mind a question they'd love to ask God.

Why wouldn't that have been God? Why wouldn't that thought have been God seeing I was just asking him what to do?

It sounded like a great idea to me, so Pentecost Sunday at Christ Church you were invited to write down a question you

felt the Spirit brought to your mind. We prayed, you wrote, and then at the second service I got two young boys to pick out six questions.

At the time I was excited to see what questions the Spirit had brought to your minds. I had to use my will power not to open them till the worship team meeting that Tuesday night.

What excitement; we took our six question and eagerly opened the first one. And we were greeted with a blank! Not to be deterred we opened the next one and it was, a blank!

I began thinking this wasn't such a good idea.

And guess what, we got another blank! Talk about

disappointment, mixed with a bit of frustration and anger. Three blanks.

I went to the box and got out three new pieces of paper. But then Delton, in his wisdom, asked; 'Didn't we ask God to act, why are we ignoring his answer.' (Or words to that effect).

Which struck me. I hadn't shown a lot of faith. Given up quickly. And I didn't listen. We'd asked, and this was God's answer. I just didn't like God's answer because I had been expecting something else.

I wonder how often I've done that; totally missed God's answer because I was wanting something else. That reminds me of the Children of Israel, waiting for a Messiah, and they totally

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

missed him because he didn't fit their expectations.

Thanks to Delton we stopped and listened. And then it began to dawn on me, on us, that God was making a strong point. We didn't draw just one or two blank pages, we drew out three. That's half! I think God was, is, wanting to make a point.

In the story of Joseph God only gave two dreams to Pharaoh to make his point, here he'd given us three blanks to emphasize his point.

The three of us stopped and reflected, wanting to know what God was seeking to say to us. Three blank pages; 'What are you trying to say to us God?'

By this time God had washed away my negative thoughts, my disappointment, frustration and anger. The Spirit had replaced it with a new

expectance, a new hope.

Instead of seeing a blank we began to see a new beginning. God was inviting us into a new beginning. Not bringing the rubbish of the past with us, but we have the hope of a new beginning.

Isn't that what

Stop. Listen. Act.

happens when Jesus forgives; when he wipes the slate clean. We get a new start, where we are not shaped by our past failures, mistakes, misunderstandings, frustrations, anger, resentment, pride. The list could go on, and on, but in Jesus we are forgiven, we are washed clean. The blood of the Lamb; that's Jesus, washes us clean, we are as white as snow, that's also another biblical image to describe how Jesus wipes our slate

clean, and we get a fresh new start.

We get to live life shaped by Jesus, not anything else, especially not our hurts, frustrations, anger and envy.

So the first thought that we settled on looking at was how this clean slate is a wonderful gift to us personally from Jesus. Your sins are forgiven; he has wiped the slate clean.

Next week we'll reflect on what this clean slate, this fresh start, might mean for us as a community. There's something to be talking with Jesus over the coming week. This week invite the Spirit to speak; and if you get a negative, condemning voice, remember Jesus did say; 'I haven't come to condemn but to bring you life in all God's fullness'. I think God wants us to live life to the full with him, in him, through him. Walking in the cool of

the garden with him; that's the thought I've been getting. But that's for next week.

Back to reflecting on what the Spirit is saying to us individually.

The next thought I had was; 'What will I now write on my clean slate?' I have a clean slate, but I'm sure God doesn't want it to remain empty, I'm sure he wants to write his love into my life. And have me write his love into the lives of the people he brings across my path.

In Jesus our slate is wiped clean, again and again and again. What a wonderful gift. Not to keep a clean slate but that might write on it Jesus' story in our lives.

We are forgiven; thank God for that. But that is only getting us ready, ready for life lived up-close and personal with God, or should I say Abba, Dad.

Being forgiven gets us ready for life. The big question is what are we now going to do with this wonderful gift? How are you going to live it? We're not repeating the past, though forgiveness allows us to learn from the past. How are you going to live this new life Jesus has created

The Spirit is alive and well in you; listen to him.

for you to share with him? We have the Spirit, with us now. I'd say one of the most important steps is listening to God. Being in a conversational relationship with him; and in Jesus that is what we have.

That's why we took the time to ask the Spirit to reveal what questions to ask. And he revealed listening; being open to be led by him. The Spirit is speaking. Jesus is

speaking through the Spirit, without a shadow of doubt.

Our three blanks remind me to be listening, to be open to those prompts he put on my heart, those image that he places in my mind, those names he drops into my consciousness. How super important, and what a fantastic gift, listening to the Spirit is.

Actually I don't think we could have a conversational relationship if the Spirit wasn't speaking and able to be heard. What a gift we have through Pentecost; God with us in the person of the Spirit. God speaking into our lives, seek to make his love real, down-to-earth.

The Spirit isn't a blank. The Spirit is alive and well in you; listen to him. Invite him to speak and then be quite and grab that first thought that comes to your mind. The second thought is