

to pick up on this year's 4 by 4 initiative. That's finding three other people to share with; pray with; encouraging each other in growing to greater maturity in Jesus. For commitment to grow, action is needed, so this is presented as an opportunity to put action into practice.

Hopefully it will feel a little inconvenient; asking God, then approaching someone. The fear of rejection is always inconvenient. But I'd like to encourage each person to risk finding three others to pray with this year, to encourage this year, to wrestle with God together this year.

I'd encourage you to ask God for four people to be praying for over this month.

Jesus might surprise you with people you hadn't thought of; and it might take some time, it probably will be inconvenient to stop, find that quiet place and talk with Jesus about these people, being open to what he has to say. I know we're all busy, but let's seek to grow in commitment as we give priority to praying for four other people, as we give priority to meeting in groups of four.

I pray you enjoy being inconvenienced because you're growing your commitment muscle, which means you're not all talk and no action. I pray you experience Jesus commitment to you as he leads you in these two initiatives this month.

What has convenience got to do with commitment? Inconvenience helps grow commitment, the sort of commitment Jesus has for you. I pray you experience some inconvenience this week as you grow in loving one another as Jesus loves you; as you risk doing something you haven't done before, as you step out committing yourself to another person for their benefit without any reward for yourself.

Let's seek to grow in commitment this week. Jesus, we invite you to grow our commitment muscle this week; place four names on our hearts to pray for, and lead us to three other people to share this year with.

12 January 2020
COMMITMENT
 Matthew 3:13-17



What does commitment and convenience have in common? Nothing.

If Jesus had sought his own convenience his life would have looked very different, and so would have ours. Jesus would have stayed in heaven enjoying himself. We would have been left to fend for ourselves, no sins forgiven, no hope of new life, no loving embrace of God, no Spirit to be with us in all of life. We'd be left inadequate to face the challenges of living.

Daily advertising is telling me that the goal of life is my convenience; I've got to be happy. Now there's nothing wrong with being happy; but I'd hope your life amounts to much, much, much more

than a few moments of happiness.

Jesus is committed to walking in harmony with his Father. Jesus is committed to us, that we might have the power needed to face life and be all that God has dreamed possible.

At Jesus baptism we see his commitment being lived out. Jesus doesn't go off as some self-appointed Messiah. Jesus is anointed by John as the Messiah. That's Jesus walking in harmony with his Father and not just doing his own thing.

I'm sure if anyone could have gone off and done their own thing it was Jesus. After all being God, the creator of the universe, he's got the qualifications. But no,

Jesus deliberately seeks to walk in harmony with Father, having Father's prophet anoint him as the Messiah. I see that as commitment in action. Commitment is action.

What happens in life when you have groups of people all going off doing their own thing?

Of course the power of Jesus baptism is that we get included. When you were baptised you were baptised into Jesus. Jesus made it possible for you to walk in harmony with himself, to grow to be like him, to reflect his image. Jesus commitment empowers you to walk out the same sort of commitment.

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

In Jesus your life isn't simply made up by what happens to you. In Jesus you are not the result of life's happenings; good or bad.

That doesn't sound very appealing to me; being life's bunching bag. Jesus' passion is that we shape life, not that it shapes us.

Jesus' passion is that his love, grace, mercy, his very presence shapes who we are and how we face life. Jesus comes and is committed to shaping us, rather than leaving us to the whim of what might or might not happen.

At your baptism, in Jesus, God the Father has committed himself to you. That means you can rely on him; you can take him at his word, and let that shape who you are and what you do. Life's happenings aren't in control of who you are; Jesus is.

When Jesus was baptised we are told that the Spirit came to dwell with him. So that means the Spirit has come to dwell with you; God is committed to you. You're not a casual acquaintance. The Spirit lives with you, daily, in that wonderful

What does commitment and convenience have in common?

relationship of love and affections that Jesus has created.

Now I have the power to live a life of commitment, and not be life's bunching bag, just reacting to what may or may not happen to me. What a blessing; you have the Spirit's presence, that like Jesus you can live a life committed to walking in harmony with God. Walking in harmony with God as you heavenly Father.

In Jesus, God is committed to being your Father, which means you're his child. No shadow of doubt, Jesus' commitment gives me confidence. He's totally committed himself to us; his birth, life, death, resurrection, promised return all tell of his commitment to us. I'm not dreaming.

We have eye witness accounts of Jesus. Peter, one of Jesus' closest mates; "We were those who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. And he ordered us to preach everywhere and to testify that Jesus is the one appointed by God to be the judge of all – the living and the dead. He is the one all the prophets testified about, saying that everyone who believes in him will have their sins forgiven through his name." (Acts 10:42,43)

My commitment to Jesus isn't baseless. I have eye witness accounts of Jesus commitment to us. And those accounts remind me that Jesus, right now, is totally committed to us, to me, to you. He holds the future in his hands; he is the future. Jesus will return to judge the living and the dead. I think that includes everyone. No-one is left out or forgotten, for Jesus desire is for all people to live in his presence knowing Father's love and affection for them.

And without commitment love doesn't exist. If God talked and talked and talked about his love for us, but never showed up, would you have called that commitment, let alone love?

In Jesus, God has shown up, personally. In Jesus, God has put his life

on the line for us; literally dying to love us. In Jesus, God's commitment to you is lived out; and will be lived out when he returns. You can risk your life on him; he does what he says, even when its not convenient.

I don't think Jesus birth was convenient.

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I don't think Jesus life was convenient. I don't think Jesus crucifixion was convenient. But he wouldn't have it any other way; that's commitment. A commitment that can fuel our commitment. Our commitment to God and to each other; as we seek to do what is best for the other person according to their needs at our expense.

Jesus commitment won forgiveness for

us; it wasn't convenient for him. And he was the one who was offended. Jesus could have stood on his rights waiting for those who offended him to admit it. If he'd have done that, Jesus would still be waiting today. I can be stubborn, or sometimes just a bit too insensitive. Jesus didn't wait for a convenient time when he didn't have anything else on; rather he prioritised our relationship and acted, taking the initiative. All totally inconvenient to him. I don't think crucifixion is ever convenient.

But Jesus acted because he wants what is best for us; and when it comes to living loved one key component is commitment. To love another means committing myself to them; especially when it is inconvenient.

So I'd like to encourage everyone