

I love seeing and hearing the changes; where people are seeking to call each other, care for each other, more and more. If nothing else I pray this shaking by Jesus stirs our hearts (that's the core of who we are) and motivates us to worship him by putting his love into action.

Jesus is inviting us to change; to grow into being his community of prayer, where we share from the heart with him and each other. Where we make the time to ask and listen to what Jesus things, wants. And then we do it, in his power and authority. I pray we change and more and more pray for one another; by asking Jesus what he would say, sharing Jesus' words with the person being prayed for.

I pray we continue to grow and change as we discover and journey with

Jesus into his 'Promised Land'; intimacy of life, lived with Father.

I pray we repent of doing things by habit. That we change, and seek passionately to be walking and talking with Jesus, through the Spirit, in all areas of life, in all our relationships.

I pray we change from asking; what do I like, to what does Jesus like, what does Jesus call me to do? What has Jesus given his life for me to be? Then I pray we go be found 'Living It'.

Jesus has shaken his community of faith; will we change, embrace that change. Asking Jesus

what we likes, wants, calls us to do and be. Or will I simply go back to doing what I've always done. Will I follow the pattern of the world around me; seeking my desires and a comfortable, profitable life?

Jesus shake me, so that all that isn't of you falls off. Jesus open my heart and mind to hear and follow you. I want to be living in YOUR 'Promised Land', with you. Send the Spirit to give me the love, wisdom and courage to take up the fight.

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

21 June 2020

CULTIVATING MY PERSONAL TIME WITH JESUS—3

Genesis 12:1-9



Change is in the air; do you sense it? No sooner do I get used to something and there's a change. How do you relate to change; good change, bad change, forced change, unexpected change? With the pandemic it feels to me like I'm getting a dose of them all.

The question asked often of me is what will we do when the pandemic is over? Will we go back to how it was; nothing changed? What do you think?

Will I go back to a Sunday morning ritual; donning my ritual attire? Will I go back to the good old days of preaching from the pulpit as part of a formal service?

This got me thinking about Abraham. What change God brought into his life. God called Abraham to leave everything behind to follow him. Leave the comfort of the place he knew, the people he knew. I wonder what

might have been going through Abraham's mind. I wonder if Abraham resented the disturbance to his comfortable life. I wonder if Abraham complained; 'No God I don't want to leave'. But God was asking Abraham to trust him.

If God asked you to change, to leave the comfort of what you know and enjoy; what then?

Is God asking us to change? Is God asking you to change, to go somewhere new, to do something different, like Abraham?

The thought started to go through my mind, what do I want to do. I was thinking about what I might want, what I might like to do. What was the focus of my thinking?

When thinking about the easing of restrictions are you thinking about what would suit you? What you prefer? What you like? If God asked you to change,

to leave what you like, what you prefer; what then?

Where did God invite Abraham to explore?

Abraham went and explored what would become known as the 'Promised Land'. God promised this land to Abraham and his descendants, a land described as flowing with milk and honey.

What is the 'Promised Land' we are being invited to explore?

Abraham's descendants became known as the 'Children of Israel'. But moving into the 'Promised Land' didn't go all that smoothly. They struggled with change.

The first change was leaving Egypt, where they were slaves. I'd have thought being set free from slavery would have been something to rejoice in. But no sooner did they face a challenge than they wanted to go back to Egypt.

I find it strange how those slave days became the 'Good Old Days'. There was nothing good about them, but the difficulty they faced distorted their view of the past.

What distorted view do I have of the past, for like those people, my focus is on the 'Promised Land'. I've left the land of slavery. We've left the land of slavery; slavery to sin, death and the devil. Our focus is on the 'Promised Land'. My focus is on the 'Promised Land' which Jesus has given his life for us to enjoy and live in, with him.

Is our goal a form of worship, or the one we worship?

That got me thinking; what do I need to repent of? In other words, what changes has Jesus brought to mind? Repentance is the great gift Jesus gives, where we can change, where we can grow into all that he's dreamt possible.

As I look at the baptismal font I recall how the 'Children of Israel' had to go through the waters of the Jordan river to gain access to the 'Promised Land'. That wasn't

something they did by their own power and might. No, God, created the path, and they followed.

In baptism, Jesus, through his power and might has created a way through the waters into the 'Promised Land' for us.

What's the 'Promised Land'?

Jesus is inviting us to live

Is our goal a form of worship, or the one we worship?

an amazing change. You and I are citizens of the 'Promised Land'. What is that 'Promised Land' that Jesus has brought us into?

Does a formalised ritual describe our 'Promised Land'? How would you describe the 'Promised Land' Jesus has opened up for us to live in?

For the 'Children of Israel' to live in the 'Promised Land' they had to change. They had to give up living as slaves; with a slave mind set.

They weren't slaves; they were God's loved children, whom he sought to share his life with.

Through Moses, he walked and talked with them, quite literally.

In the waters of baptism Jesus brought you into his 'Promised Land'. There he freed you from sin, death and the devil; birthing you as one of Father's loved children, in whom he delights.

Would a slave mind set have you walking freely up to the owner of the house? Freely talking with them, without any fear. Living expectantly of their love and affection. We are invited through Jesus to live in an intimate

relationship of love and affection, in a conversation atmosphere, where we live out Father's super-natural love, naturally.

What a change!

I want to be living and growing in that change, in the reality that Jesus has given his life for us, for me, to enjoy and share with him.

So I sit and focus on the baptismal font and ask myself; will I simply go back to what I've always done, pre pandemic? Will I put on my ritual, formal

gowns, and play the role designated for me?

Is that going to be the result of all this shaking that Jesus has done through this virus?

I feel as though he's shaken us out of the building. Not that the building is bad, but the people Jesus would have you pray for, be his presence to, don't live in the building. Jesus has empowered you to love, for you are dearly loved by Father in the Son. Jesus has empowered you to be his life giving presence to the people you meet.

The building and the rituals aren't bad, but the people Jesus would have you bring his love to don't live there. They don't pour out their souls there. They don't seek to share their life with you there.

Jesus' 'Promised Land' isn't a place, but a relationship where we don't fear but live forgiven, live knowing we are loved and precious to Father. Jesus' 'Promised Land' you are invited to discover, to explore, is a relationship where you know God personally,

where you are known intimately, where you rejoice in being loved, precious, forgiven.

What would have happened if Abraham didn't change; didn't live in the promise? What changes is Jesus asking of us, today, as he invites us to live life with him?

I sit and look at the baptismal font and feel Jesus inviting me to

Jesus' Promised Land isn't a place, but a relationship

follow him. To follow him exploring his 'Promised Land'.

Not only exploring the 'Promised Land'; what did the 'Children of Israel' do when they entered the 'Promised Land'?

They took possession of it. They went to war; destroying the enemy, claiming what God had promised them.

Jesus has shaken us, his community, why? Does he also want us to go to war and fight for the people of this community?

Or will I simply go back to being comfortable, doing what I've always done, nothing changed?

Am I going to simply seek out what I like, and do that? If I like the service then I'll go. If I don't like the service then I won't go. Because it's all about me, isn't it!

Wonderfully Jesus has shaken his community of faith; you and me. He's shaken us, not to destroy us but to grow us, to mature us, to know him more intimately. To trust him in the face of fear and uncertainty; because we know it's all about Jesus.

And Jesus trusted his Father, doing what he wanted, even when it didn't feel that great to Jesus. Remember his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane prior to being crucified. I'm sure being crucified wasn't a picnic either. But Jesus trusted his Father, and went boldly into the unknown, so you and I could live in Father's 'Promised Land'. Father's amazing love, grace, mercy, forgiveness; his very presence, in an intimate relationship of love and affection.