

life at home with Dad, celebrating life together. Talking heart to heart in a wonderful bond of trust and affection. That's a picture of the future Jesus will bring in; ready or not.

This description does not do justice in any way to what God is offering you. The future he has for you to celebrate with him. We have such a huge, wonderful, exciting, relationship of love and affection, where we literally live out God's supernatural love, quite naturally. This

is our future, the future we get to begin living today as we spend time sharing with Jesus, heart to heart.

We have the joy of talking things over with Jesus, inviting him into every situation, listening to his opinion. Listening, not being told, but actually being in such a precious relationship we are free to listen and take in what Jesus says;

about everything and anything.

Buying a new car, ask Jesus his opinion. Not sure if you should travel, ask Jesus his opinion. What to do for the rest of the day, ask Jesus his opinion. Ask Jesus what he's keen to share with you today, listen, grab that thought and go for it. Be living your future, tasting your future today.

16 Augusts 2020
WE LIVE FROM THE FUTURE BACKWARDS

Isaiah 56:1,6-8



Today I'd like to reflect on our reading from Isaiah. The reading began; "This is what the Lord says". To me, that's an invitation to trust. If the Lord says it, I'll build my life on it, it will happen. It WILL happen!

This reminds me that our faith has us living from the future backward. Does that sound strange? I know I've often been told what I do today is what will shape my future; so I'm encouraged to be building the sort of future I want, based on what I can achieve today. I'm often told the past determines the future. But no, our future in Jesus is to shape what we do today, for Jesus future WILL happen.

One of the things the Covid-19 pandemic has reminded me, is just how easily my plans for the future can come to nothing, or at least be thrown into complete confusion.

But the Covid-19 pandemic hasn't altered the future Jesus is bringing. The pandemic has served to remind me to build my life on Jesus' promises; on Jesus' future.

Isaiah reminded his hearers and now us; "our salvation is close at hand and the Lord's righteousness will soon be revealed". (Isa. 56:6) My salvation is close at hand; the first thought I got was that of Jesus' return.

Jesus will return.

Is that dependent on what you do? Will Jesus only return when I'm ready, or if it is in my plan for the future? No, Jesus has let us in on the future. He WILL return, ready or not.

That means I can be living now in harmony with the future, with my future, because it is in Jesus' hands. Jesus will return soon, he's close at hand. Straight away I now know how to priorities what I do. I can be doing that which will last, that which will flourish in the future.

When I'm reflecting on Jesus return, I get the image of being offered two sorts of stocks to invest in; one is going broke, but looks good at the present. The other is going to go through the roof, but doesn't

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

glitter at the present. I know which one I'd be investing in, the one that will go through the roof. I certainly wouldn't waste my life investing in a certain dud; coming up empty handed.

Investing yourself in Jesus is the safest investment; he will return. In Jesus your life will go, out of the grave, bursting into new life, life beyond your wildest dreams as you live in God the Father's heart.

My adoption as Father's child, whom he loves, will grow and flourish. I'll become all that I am in Jesus; living life in Father's love and affection, the delight of his life. I'll be living true to who I am, all fears, doubts, hurts, lies gone.

In Isaiah's words, did you hear God's invitation to begin living that reality now? In Jesus your

future begins to break in now. The fullness of what Jesus will do might only come when he returns, but we get a taster now. We get to be living with Jesus now; growing into all that he has dreamed possible.

So when Isaiah says 'Maintain justice and

Jesus WILL return, ready or not.

do what is right' that isn't so we'll get into God's good books, but that gives us a taste of our future in Jesus. You can be living true to who you are in Jesus, today. You are a person of justice; live true to who you are. In Jesus you are able to discern right from wrong. In Jesus you have the gift of knowing the right thing to do.

I've discovered in life that doing the wrong thing, whether it is

deliberate or unintentionally, destroys the joy of living, it hurts, it sucks, the people I seek to love get hurt, I get depressed, angry, resentful, bitter, greedy, just to mention a few outcomes of doing the wrong thing.

Is that what you want for your life, for the life of those you love? Of course not; thank God in Jesus I can make right decisions; actions that bless others, build up others, express God's love to others, freeing other people to be all that Jesus has given his life for them to be.

I thank God that in Jesus he has revealed his righteousness; we got a look at right living from today's Gospel reading (Matt. 15:10-28). I'd encourage you to have another look at it when you get home. Jesus has revealed his

righteousness ; that means a way of living that reflects God's very nature. And God's nature is that of love.

Which reminds me of these words of Jesus; "I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love." (John 15:9) 'Remain in my love' means live in it, let it be your reality. There is no other place I'd rather be. Jesus continues; "I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you." (John 15:11,12)

Do you notice Jesus invites you to live in his love and discover the joy he has in life with Father. This is our future, which we are invited to begin living now.

I don't know about you but I find no joy in making dumb decisions. Decisions which cause physical and emotional pain. Decisions which destroy my health. I find not joy in making decisions just to impress other people so I can feel good about myself. There is just no joy in

Jesus invites you to live in his love and discover...

making bad decisions. Broken promises bring no joy. Greed brings no joy. Immorality brings no joy.

Jesus has come that we might be made in his image; living loved as he is loved. Having the power and wisdom to act in love, to do justice, to bind the broken hearted. These things echo the future Jesus is bringing. And you are invited to begin living that reality now; to get a

taste of the joy Jesus brings; brings with his return.

Isaiah invites us into this wonderful life with God; "these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer." (Isa. 56:7)

Isn't it great that Jesus invites us to live with him, today, in a relationship of love and affection. So conversation is essential. I don't just have a book to read, I have a person to share life with, to talk with, to walk with. Through the Spirit I get to listen to Jesus, so that I can live intimately with him.

I love that image; "my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations." (Isa. 56:7) We are invited to live in Father's home; a home of conversation. And not just for some but the offer is out there for everyone. That is our future; the joy of