

way we give life and vitality to his love. Then it's not a theory, but life in action.

Our heavenly Father certainly is keen to enjoy the harvest with us, his children whom he loves and delights in.

As we spend time together, allowing Father to express his love for us as family, we are reaping the harvest with Father.

Let me encourage everyone to be part of a small group, giving expression to our family unity. There we'll have the opportunity to care for one another, forgive one another, carry one another's burdens, pray for one another, which

means we'll be loving one another.

What joy that will bring to Father. What life we get to share with him, and each other. I pray we all take the opportunity to love one another as we spend time together in small family groupings.

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

4 October 2020

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

Matthew 21:33-46



The reading from Matthew's account of Jesus life intensifies the conflict between Jesus and the establishment. Jesus ramps up the conflict, he's not smoothing things over.

He's ridden into town as king. Then he's kicked the merchants out of the temple. Talk about conflict, and bad for business. Then Jesus challenges their authority accusing them of not doing what God has called them to do. To say relationships were tense would be an understatement.

Then Jesus ramps things up with a parable about tenant farmers who refuse to give the owner his rent. Jesus accuses them of killing the owner's son. Jesus has just labelled the

establishment thieves and murderers, in public. Jesus then goes a step further as he declares God's judgement on them.

How would you have felt if this was Jesus in your face, challenging you, out right saying you've got it all wrong?

To simply condemn the establishment and see myself as the good guy would be to miss the whole point of Jesus story. In the parable Jesus is talking to me, through each character.

I can be one of the renters who keeps the profits for himself. I too can reject God's call on my life, even to the point of ignoring Jesus.

I could simply figure, 'I've worked hard for

what I have, so it is mine to do with as I please'. That's one way I can reject God's call on my life.

Of course Jesus isn't seeking to get us to go on a guilt trip, but rather alerting us to the subtle deceptions of the devil, so we can avoid them. Jesus wants us to enjoy the fruit HIS vineyard.

Wine is a symbol of joy. The vineyard is a symbol for God's chosen people. Put them together and God is saying he wants his chosen people to enjoy life with him. That is Jesus passion, that you rejoice in living life intimately with him, just as he shares life with his Father.

This got me wondering, how do I

give the owner of the vineyard his fruit at harvest time? Physically it is obvious; you give the person some of the grapes or some of the wine from the grapes. This got me wondering what is the 'fruit of the harvest' that our heavenly Father is after?

I invite you to talk this over with Jesus during the week and see what he places on your heart.

Here's a few thoughts I received. I saw the vineyard as representing God's chosen people. At this point in time, that's us, we're God's chosen people. Jesus gave his life that you might be a legal citizen of heaven, part of his kingdom, having the joy of living with him as your king.

I reckon this king would want us to live in his love; to know it, to experience it, to

live it. Jesus wants you to live in his love. Jesus wants you to experience his love and affection, for it to be the very air you breathe. Actually Jesus has created you in his own image, so now in him it is your nature to love as he does.

Jesus doesn't want

How do we give Jesus the fruit of the harvest?

you simply to live in his love. Which is fantastic in itself. There's more. Jesus has empowered you, recreated you to live out his love. Jesus has empowered you to love as you are loved by him. We are empowered to love one another.

That springs to my mind the 'one another' passages of the bible. Like; 'forgive one another', 'care for one another', 'bear one another's burdens',

'pray for one another'. They're all expressions of love. Which in Jesus is our new nature. You are recreated in Jesus' image; your new nature is to love as he does, as you are loved.

So when Jesus was asked what is the most important

commandment his response is; "You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your

mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important; 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments." (Matt. 22:37-40)

I see this as some of the fruit our heavenly Father seeks to harvest; his loving nature pulsating through his children, quite naturally

because they're HIS children, so they have HIS DNA.

I don't think Jesus command to love is a new rule to follow, or else you'll be punished. Then it wouldn't be love, it wouldn't be you, it would be fear masquerading as love. That isn't the fruit your heavenly Father is seeking to harvest.

No, Jesus comes to love you with all his heart, soul and mind, so that you have a transformed heart, soul and mind. Transformed to beat to the rhythms of his love.

For love to find living expression it needs other people. I need to know what is happening in other people's lives. I need to interact with other people, getting to know them. That is why we are inviting you to be part of a home group, a place where you get to

know people, so you can love people.

Once you get to know people you'll discover they're not perfect and then you have the opportunity to practice forgiveness, or be forgiven. Not because they deserve it but because we all need

Our heavenly Father comes to reap a harvest of his love.

it, and in Jesus that's your new nature.

Outside of Jesus I'm tempted to sit off a bit aloof and condemn people for the mistakes they make. That's a bit like the establishment of Jesus' day. They condemned, remained aloof, and didn't forgive.

Thank God he's come in person, Jesus; to forgive. Not because I deserve it, but because he knows I need it to be

set free, to be set free to become all that Jesus has dreamed possible. Forgiveness sets me free, free to love, free to care, free to forgive for no other reason that it is my new DNA in Jesus. What joy this fruit brings. Our Father eagerly seeks to harvest this fruit and rejoice in it with us.

Our heavenly Father comes to reap a harvest of his love; his love pulsating through his family.

One way we can reap this harvest and enjoy it with Father is when we gather together in small groups, giving the time and spending the effort needed to love each other. When we gather as his community of faith, intentionally focused on God, inviting him to be present with us; I'd say that is one way we let God enjoy his harvest. That's one