

When Jesus returns I definitely want to be found listening to him, talking with him, sharing heart to heart, doing life with him.

Have you noticed I've been talking about what we label as prayer; that's the communication side of our relationship, or should I say, the way we get to live it out. That's why the Holy Spirit is so important; God with us, with me, right now. We've begun living out that relationship.

I'm not just going out there doing the best I know how. I'm walking and talking with Jesus, via the Spirit, growing into his future. I'm looking forward to meeting Jesus face to face, where our relationship will take a quantum leap.

Jesus is returning; talk to him today. Share with Jesus heart to

heart today. Invite him into everything you do, think, say. Let him be a part of what you do because he's brought you into what he's doing. He's made you a partner in his great mission, bringing people in from the dark to live in the light and warmth of his loving presence, rejoicing in him.

I pray that Jesus gives you the discernment to grow and mature in this relationship. Daily make time to share heart to heart with Jesus. Invest in spending time listening; whether that be in a moment of crisis – stop and listen to him, or part of your daily pattern – stopping and listening. Jesus obviously is keen to be involved, that's why we have the third commandment, as a reminder that Jesus is available, and gave us time to listen, to talk, to enjoy him.

I pray that when Jesus returns you'll be found talking with him. That reminds of a lady I buried. She was found kneeling next to her bed in prayer. I thought, how perfect, talking with Jesus and them feeling the reality of his embrace seeing the smile on his face. I pray we all live out this reality and celebrate living life in all Jesus fullness now and always.

Jesus is returning; what a promise to build life on. Let your future shape what you do this week. Let Jesus' future shape you today.

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

15 November 2020

THE FUTURE SHAPES THE PRESENT

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11



At this time of year, in the Church Calendar, we take time to focus on Jesus return. Jesus parting words where, 'I'll be back'. Jesus is coming back to judge the living and the dead. And at Jesus return the world as we know it will cease.

That says to me that the goal of life is Jesus. Life as we know it finds its completion at his feet, (that's an expression of worship). When Jesus returns; "every knee shall bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2:10,11)

Have you noticed in life how the goal determines your actions? In sport the goal is to win the grand final. Everything then it tailored to that goal,

even if it is a five year rebuilt; it's to win the grand final.

The goal determines your action, what you do, what you value, how you invest you time and money. The goal determines your action. The future shapes the present.

That is true of life. What I do today won't alter the future, Jesus will return. Jesus will return to judge the living and the dead.

What will be Jesus' basis for judgement?

Will it be how many holidays you've been on? Not that there is anything wrong with holidays, they're just not the reason you are alive. Will Jesus pull out the Ten Commandments and see how well you've done; no doubt using his interpretation, like if

you've looked lustfully you're guilty. Or if you've rejected someone, not even hated just rejected, you're guilty of killing them. I think I might be in a spot of bother, how about you?

What will be Jesus basis for judgement?

Jesus is returning to judge the living and the dead. I'm sure that includes me and you. Actually that is humanities future, like it or not. I don't determine the future, and neither do you. Jesus is returning to judge all people.

Jesus after performing a miracle asked this question; 'when the Son of Man returns will he find faith'. That's what Jesus is after; people who trust him with their lives. People who take Jesus at his word, doing what he

says, not because of fear, or because they feel there is something in it for them, but because they know him. They know of his love for them. They know he is totally trustworthy. They place their lives in his power and authority.

Jesus is looking for people who are in a relationship of love and affection with him. After all that is the relationship he has created through his life, crucifixion and resurrection.

Jesus has opened the way into life with God as one of his loved children in whom he delights.

Jesus has created an intimate relationship of love and affection, in a conversational atmosphere. It is this relationship we get to live in, grow in. It is this relationship that is the goal of life.

This is Jesus goal of life; that you get to spend eternity with him in this wonderful relationship. It is a

relationship of love, not convenience, not profit, not exploitation. Jesus has created an intimate relationship of love and affection.

I'm more than glad that the goal of life is this relationship. And we get to begin living that relationship now. Living it now, looking forward to the day Jesus

Jesus will return. Jesus will judge the living and the dead

returns and we get to enjoy the main course.

Paul encouraged those he was writing to, to be living now, in harmony with this goal, so that when it happened they'd be found ready.

The best way to be ready for Jesus return is to be living with him now. Talking to him now. Walking with him now. Sharing life with him now in this wonderful relationship of love and affection that he has created. A personal relationship

where we know him by name, and he knows us by name. You're not a number, you're a loved brother, sister of Jesus. Jesus isn't just the 'fix-it man', we know him for who he is. We know Jesus is worth loving for himself, not because of what he offers or can do for us.

Sadly outside of Jesus there is no hope to create a relationship of love. We always move into relationships of performance, and that performance is

judged by how it benefits me. If you benefit me, live up to my standards, all is good. If you don't live up to my ideals, then you are rejected.

No wonder there is so much insecurity in the world; nobody is able to find love and acceptance under such a regime. You'll always be left wondering if you've done enough. You're only ever as good as your last performance. You're existing a slave to other's opinions.

Performance never produces love and affection, just insecurity and arrogance.

Paul reminds us that; "We don't belong to the night or to the darkness." (1 Thess. 5:5) In Jesus, we are; 'children of the light and children of the day.' (1 Thess. 5:5) In other words we know Jesus.

We know his plan and purpose for the world. We're not stumbling around in the dark, just doing what we think is the right thing. No, in Jesus, we know the goal. We know Jesus, intimately, personally, conversationally.

All my hard work and effort can't create this wonderful relationship of intimacy. Left to myself I'll end up working hard, believing that I can create my own future. If I work hard I can make something of myself. If I discover myself I'll find peace and purpose in life. If I have great belief in myself then I'll be able to do whatever I want. After all we're told

that we can do anything.

All such statements are simply examples of stumbling around in the dark. The image that comes to my mind is training day and night at netball hoping to be the greatest footballer ever. All that effort is missing the point. Life has never been about

What will you be doing when Jesus returns?

what you can make out of it. Life has always and will always be about God and what he's gifted you with. It's all about what he's making out of life, out of you.

In Jesus he's made you a citizen of heaven. In Jesus you are a loved child of God, in whom he delights. In Jesus you live in a relationship of love and affection in a conversational atmosphere. This is what Jesus has made and seeks to share with

you, inviting you to join him in that exciting adventure of life. Jesus invites you to risk loving him and one another, in his power and authority.

It's all about what he's making possible, we get to live in his kingdom. What a wonderful future Jesus has created.

When Jesus returns, that's what I want to be found doing, living with him, discovering life according to his wildest dreams, in his power and authority. I think that will far, far, far exceed anything I could dream up or do.

That is why talking and listening to Jesus is so vital. That's how you live out a relationship.

Note I'm not creating it, I living out the relationship Jesus has already created. Relationships are for living; living through listening, talking, sharing heart to heart, doing life together.