

my hope, my desire,
my prayer.

Jesus I daily invite you
to flood my life with
the Spirit that I grow
more and more to be
the person you've
given your life for me
to be. Jesus I want to
be all that you've
dreamed possible. I
invite you to come in
and burn up all the
rubbish that would rob,
steal, kill or destroy
my relationship with
you, stopping me from
being all you desire.

This week for our 4X4
focus I invite you to
ask Jesus to give you
four people to visit, to
encourage, to be
Jesus' presence to.

Invite Jesus to give
you four names; grab
those names, then
invite Jesus to reveal
to you what to do; visit
them, taken them out
for coffee, clean their
home, baby sit, or go
for a drive together.
Invite Jesus to reveal
how you might be his
presence to those
people, then trusting
Jesus do it.

Fear will seek to stop
you. When fear
comes, take it to
Jesus and invite his
fire to consume it so
that your life is an act
of faith, and act of
trust in Jesus. Jesus'
desire is that you live

life to the full in him;
being scared stiff
won't achieve that.

Invite Jesus in, talk
with him, give him
your fears. Enjoy his
presence, and then
risk it. After all you can
only be wrong; which
means you can come
to Jesus and he'll pour
his forgiving love all
over you.

Today I echo God our
heavenly Father's
words; "Jesus is my
dearly loved Son, who
brings me great joy.
Listen to him." Listen
to him!

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

23 February 2020

GROWING IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS

Exodus 24:17, Matthew 17:5



This month we've
been reflecting on
being a welcoming
community. How
welcoming did God
appear in our first
reading for today?

We heard; "To the
Israelites at the foot of
the mountain, the
glory of the LORD
appeared at the
summit like a
consuming fire." (Ex.
24:17) That doesn't
sound all that
welcoming. I think the
Children of Israel were
somewhat intimidated
by God's presence.

That's when they
tamed God down to be
a golden calf. They
sought to make God
suit their agenda.
Does anyone
remember how well
that worked for them?

Guess what, outside
of Jesus, God is
intimidating. We do
face an All Consuming
Fire; and I'd be

shaking in my boots if
I was faced with an All
Consuming Fire. I
certainly wouldn't be
running to embrace it.
I'd be looking at ways
to put it out.

In a sense that's what
Adam and Eve did
when they ran and hid
from God. In their fear
they sought to put out
the fire by hiding. Has
hiding from your fears
ever saved you, or
stopped them shaping
what you do?

Our God is an All
Consuming Fire; like it
or not.

So our fear of being
exposed, our fear of
hurt, guilt, regret, our
fear of what we
believe the fire will do
to us has humanity
thrust that image upon
God. With that image
of God, how appealing
or welcoming does
that make him?

Sadly the Children of
Israel never seem to
get beyond their fear
in their relationship
with God. They are
twisting what he says
and does as they try
and deflect his gaze,
as they try to please
him so he won't
destroy them.

How would you relate
to someone you were
terrified of? Their
presence strikes fear
into you. Would you
want to be around
such a person? Fear
of another person is
such a destroyer of
intimacy, of a healthy
relationship of love
and affection.

Thank God Jesus
came along. Jesus
comes, and do you
notice people aren't
running scared of him.
Jesus is God, the guy
who is supposed to be
so terrifying you have
to keep him at arm's
length.

Jesus comes along to break down our barriers, our fears. Jesus comes to break through those images of our fears that we have projected on to him.

In the Gospel reading for today we find ourselves on another mountain. Moses went up the mountain and encountered God. Now we have Jesus with Peter, James and John going up a mountain.

“As the men watched Jesus’ appearance was transformed so that his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as light. Suddenly, Moses and Elijah appeared and began talking with Jesus.”

Who recalls what happened next?

Peter projects his fear onto the event; he’s out to enshrine it in a memorial. Thank God he didn’t, because that’s not who God is. We don’t need another shrine to put on a

good show for God; walking around quietly, reverently, thinking we’re pleasing this God.

Who thinks walking around a monument in reverent quiet, dressed to impress, putting on a good show pleases God? Does this draw people into an intimate relationship of love

This is my dearly loved Son...LISTEN TO HIM!

and affection with God?
Peter’s response is one of fear. Thank God he then speaks; here are God the Father’s words, “This is my dearly loved Son (that’s Jesus), who brings me great joy. Listen to him.” (Matt. 17:5)

Here is God’s invitation to a relationship of love and affection; not fear. The disciples were fearful, but Jesus touches them and they don’t burn up. The All

Consuming Fire touches them and they don’t burn up. Did you notice that?

Jesus is the same God who appeared to Moses on the mountain. He hasn’t changed.

Jesus touches them; touches all humanity. Then Jesus says to his disciples; “Get up.

Don’t be afraid.” (Matt. 17:7) Jesus is saying to us, to you, ‘Get up. Don’t be afraid’. God doesn’t want you

living from fear, fear of the unknown, fearful of reprimand, guilt created fear, lose created fear, confusion created fear. Jesus doesn’t want your life to be shaped by what you’re fearful of; especially not fear of God.

But when faced with an All Consuming Fire, I’m scared stiff.

The Good News is that this All Consuming Fire hasn’t come to consume me but to consume my fears, my sin. Jesus

comes to burn the rubbish out of my life, out of me. I can come to him with my sin, and he’ll consume it all, burning it up so that I become clean. In Jesus, God hasn’t come to destroy; that’s what sinful humanity has projected onto him. No in Jesus, God has come to set us free; free for life lived in his love and affection. Life lived free, listening to him, feeling his healing touch in our lives.

If I avoid the All Consuming Fire, guess what’s left; my fears. I’m left with my guilt, my regret, my lose, my confusion, my insecurity, my need for a sense of purpose but never knowing if what I’ve done really counts. Death comes to rob life of meaning. My hope turns to hopelessness, what then?

Thank God, he’s an All Consuming Fire, and when he comes in Jesus that fire consumes our sin, consumes our fears,

cleansing our consciences that we can know God for who he really is; our loving heavenly Father, our Brother who has given his life for us, our constant Companion, Counsellor, Friend, there to share all of life with us.

I thank God that he consumes the lies and deception about him

My fears replaced by God’s presence in Jesus

and reveals the truth in Jesus. I thank God that in Jesus he consumes our fear so that he can touch us, personally, that we can now live life in his presence. I get to see God for who he really is, and through God’s eyes I get to see myself for who I really am.

In Jesus I’m not the sum total of my fears. Wouldn’t that be horrific; shaped by your fears, your regrets, your insecurities, your pride, your desire to

please? I thank God that in Jesus I’m not the product of my fears, but of his loving presence, of his life giving presence.

In Jesus I’m forgiven, I’m renewed, I’m redeemed, I’m saved for life with God in a wonderful relationship of love and affection, lived out in an atmosphere of conversation where I naturally live out God’s supernatural love; because in him I’m loved.

What a great exchange; my fears replaced by God’s presence in Jesus, lived out now with the person of the Spirit. In Jesus, I eagerly desire God’s all consuming fire to come and burn all the rubbish out of my life, so that I might grow and mature to be the person he’s given his life for me to be.

Who’d like to be growing in that relationship? Who’d like their life to be a living reflection of that relationship? That’s