

that I beat in rhythm with him.

Then get really risky and invite Jesus to speak; to reveal areas he's keen to see you grow in. Invite Jesus to speak. Grab that first thought. Unwrap it with him. Invite Jesus to reveal how you might live out what he's revealed. Then do it; trusting him.

After all, what's the worst that could happen? You make a mistake!

Obviously there are some things Jesus would never ask you to do; so if they jump into your mind, it wasn't Jesus. Invite Jesus to come and clean house; bind up the rubbish and take

it to his tip and enjoy his house cleaning.

When you make a mistake you have the wonderful opportunity to go to Jesus, being open and honest, confess it to him, ask for forgiveness, be re-energised for life, and trusting Jesus step out and have another go.

This year as we take our pilgrimage through Lent I invite you to find three or four other people to walk with. Take up the weekly study and go through them together. Invite Jesus to reveal himself because your desire it to know him more

intimately. Seek to put into practice what he says because you trust him.

That's living heart to heart. That's the goal of repentance.

I pray the Spirit inspires you to have a go; find those four people, make that time, grab that first thought, do it. I pray the Spirit grows you in living heart to heart with Jesus as you risk opening your heart to him. His heart is definitely an open book to you.

26 February 2020

HEART TO HEART

Ashe Wednesday



Ash Wednesday leads us into a season of repentance. We heard these words from the prophet Joel: "That is why the LORD says, 'Turn to me now, while there is time. Give me your hearts. Come with fasting, weeping, and mourning. Don't tear your clothing in your grief, but tear your hearts instead.'" (Joel 2:12,13 NLT)

The first word that jumped out to me was 'heart'. God says, 'Give me your; what? It wasn't money. It wasn't mind. God says, 'Give me your hearts.'

God is inviting you to trust him, to be passionate about him, to be all in with him; not half-hearted. What a wonderful invitation.

I know that God has given me his heart; Jesus has been born, has given his life on the cross and is now in heaven keeping you and me at the forefront of God's attention. You haven't been forgotten; Jesus has sent the Spirit to be with us personally.

The Old Testament got rock, with rules chilled on it. In Jesus we have flesh and blood, God's heart beating for us. In Jesus we have God's presence with us through the person of the Holy Spirit. God has given us his heart. God is daily giving you his heart. It is open to you in Jesus.

In Jesus, God is inviting you into a heart to heart relationship.

What would you prefer a heart to heart relationship or one based on rules and regulations? Keep the rules and you get prosperity. Break the rules and you get punished. Or be open to God so that your heart beats in rhythm with his heart. Living in an intimate relationship of love and affection, in an atmosphere of conversation where you naturally live out his supernatural love.

Which one would you prefer?

It is easy to say; 'I want the heart to heart relationship'. That's definitely where I want to be.

Of course the same offer is in the Old Testament. People are invited to trust God's promises to

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

them. To take him at his word, living trusting that he knows what he's talking about. Trusting God with their economics to the point of not working on the Sabbath, to resting the land every seventh year, to cancelling all debts, returning all land, freeing slave in the 50th year, the year of Jubilee.

This wasn't meant to be a law sent in stone; do this or else. This is God's plan for a healthy community; trust him. Trust him, taking him at his word, doing it.

Sadly by the time Jesus is born God's invitation has become sent in stone; a fear agenda. Do this or else. The Pharisee movement of Jesus' day was based on a fear agenda. They were scared of going back into exile, so everyone had better toe the line.

Then this Jesus guy comes along healing on the Sabbath.

I'm still mystified how they construed that to be equal to work!

These guys were working hard to keep the rules; then God would like them, maybe even accept them, giving them

I want God's HEART

prosperity. These guys were passionate but it wasn't a heart to heart relationship. It resembled more of a business deal; they would work hard and then God would give them their nation. God would give them prosperity.

Who's working so that God will bless them with prosperity?

I was somewhat dumb-founded many years ago when a mother complained to

me about how unfair it was that her son wasn't being blessed with an easy life and prosperity. After all he was a good Christian boy; why wasn't God looking after him with an easy life and prosperity?

Who's working so that God will bless them? Then you're living the rules and regulation way. Keep the rules and you get prosperity. Break the rules and you get punished.

Does anyone see the major flaw with this way of living?

The major flaw is that even if you did keep all the rules perfectly you get a reward, you don't get God's heart. God's heart isn't for sale.

I want God's heart. I want to be living in a heart to heart relationship with God. If all we have is intellectual

agreement that might feel rather cold and distant. I want God's heart; to experience the reality of his loving presence. Not for a reward, I just want to know God for who he is, and live heart to heart with him.

Of course the Good News is that this is precisely what God is after. That is what Jesus has made possible. In Jesus this is the living reality we get to enjoy, to grow in, to discover. In Jesus we have the amazing joy of discovering God, the person, for who he really is; his thoughts, his loves, his hates, his passions. In Jesus we get to live with God heart to heart, for Jesus is God opening up his heart to us, inviting us in.

So this season of Lent I pray we all take the time and make the effort to open our hearts to God, in Jesus.

Have you noticed that you can't have a heart to heart relationship if one heart is closed off? The legacy of sin is that our hearts are closed off to God, and we simply treat him as a commodity to meet our wants. And if he doesn't work according to our

Invite Jesus In

wants he quickly traded in for what we perceive to be a better model. Which isn't the way to build a heart to heart relationship.

Actually building a heart to heart relationship involves risk; me risking being open, trusting God, letting him in.

Which is what our time of 'Confession and Absolution' is all about; risking being open, letting God in, into where I'm most

vulnerable. What a risk, to be open about your mistakes, to expose yourself warts and all. That's risky business, but that's what Jesus did. And that's what he's inviting us to do.

Risk inviting him in, taking what he says and then doing it.

During the season of Lent that is what I'm inviting you to do; live heart to heart with Jesus. Find time to be alone with Jesus. Be open and honest with him about the areas in life you are struggling with, confused about, feeling puffed up with pride. And as you reflect on these areas invite Jesus in.

Invite Jesus in so that you might follow him, so that your life more and more grows to be a living reflection of him. So that your life is lived from the heart, from Jesus heart. Jesus heart shaping my heart, so