

home. Many stones, and they're all different, mortared together with Jesus' love makes a home. What an exciting year of growth and development we have together as Jesus builds his church.

One thing I'm doing this year is changing my vocabulary, and replacing the phrase; 'I'm going to Church', with 'I'm going to spend time with Jesus and our sisters and brothers'. So if you hear me say; 'I'm going to Church', help me repent, because I never leave the church, I don't want to be a stone that un-mortars itself to live independently during the week. Jesus' love is 24/7, so I want to remind myself daily

that my bond with you is 24/7 in Jesus' love.

What area in life would you like to be growing in? Invite Jesus to mentor you and grow as you share life together. Actually that's one thing I'm more and more appreciating about Jesus, he doesn't use text book education, but life based learning, where he walks with us and grows us to greater maturity. Jesus' goal in the end isn't knowledge, but character built on being known by him. Knowing deep in our hearts that we are loved, precious children of the Father, through the Son. I certainly want to grow that relationship this new year.

Let us pray. Jesus thankyou for the gift of change, that we can grow and develop to greater maturity in you. Please mentor each of us this year in loving each other as we are loved by you. Grow our character, and also let us enjoy each stage of life you have us in. Thanks for sharing your life with us, so that we can daily be living and enjoying life with you, especially as you lead us in the joy of discovery this new year. Amen.

27 December 2009

CHRISTMAS 1—KEEP GROWING

Luke 2:41-52



Luke 2:52 "And as Jesus grew up, he increased in wisdom and in favour with God and people."

This text first reminds me that Jesus didn't stay a little baby. In fact he now is a grown person. Jesus certainly has moved on from the baby stage, as important a stage as it was.

I only know of two people who bypassed the baby stage to become adults and that's Adam and Eve. Jesus on the other hand went through the baby stage of life, and no doubt enjoyed it. In the reading for today we hear of the teen Jesus. And he even caused his parents some grief. All teens you can breathe a sigh of relief! But we all know Jesus didn't stay at that stage but

we're reminded that he grew up, and increased in wisdom and in favour with God and people.

I find that exciting. I've got new stages of life and growth to discover and enjoy with Jesus. I haven't stopped growing, and the stage I'm at now isn't bad, but necessary, just like Jesus had to be a baby before he became a teen, before he entered adult life and then mid-life, where everything changed. Jesus threw in his job and lived solely by faith as a wandering prophet.

Of course Jesus hasn't stopped there, he's still got a few stages he's looking forward to. One is coming back as the undisputed champion of the world, to judge the living and the dead, and then to enter that

wonderful stage of a new beginning with his bride, the church. There's the wedding ceremony and the honeymoon to look forward to, and then so many more years to enjoy together.

As I was reflecting the question came to me; "Have I stopped growing? Has my growth be stunted? Do I think I know it all, so there's no need to change? Am I simply doing things the same way I always have?"

One of the exciting things about Jesus is that he opens up the possibility of change. That's what repentance is; change. Change where I grow and develop my Christ-like nature. That's the exciting thing about having my sins forgiven; I now can

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am

Pastor: Tim 0427326553

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Reaching Out with the Love of Jesus that All my Know, Worship & Grow in Christ

change by the power of Jesus' loving presence, rather than be locked in to the stifling, crippling, life-sapping nature of sin.

Interestingly there I'm changing, when sin controls, but it isn't the sort of change I want. I don't want to be becoming more cynical with each passing year. I don't want to be growing more bitter and resentful, harbouring the hurts and disappointments of life. Regretting, but being too proud to admit my mistakes so I become the product of them.

One of my key hates in life is when people tell me they have nothing to regret. That's a life sapping belief, because then I can't grow from my mistakes, then I can't be honest and real with myself. There are plenty of things I regret and wish I had done differently. I wish I hadn't been so grumpy this year. Good News,

Jesus is able to help me develop a healthier spirit this new year. I'm looking forward to that.

I wish I'd discovered the habit of reading the bible regularly sooner. I certainly don't want to simply do the best I can, stumbling from one event to the next, I want to be living life

**Jesus changed,
so you can too.**

the best Jesus can. So I enjoy those regular times I now have with him and look forward to growing greater depth in my relationship with Jesus this year as we spend more time hanging out together.

I find Jesus' answer to Mary challenging me this year. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" As I've been spending time with Jesus, listening to him speak through his

word, he's been getting me to reflect on the idea of 'Church'.

Of course in the context Jesus was in the first thing people would have thought about was the building they were in; the temple. The temple was considered to be God's house, the place he resided in in a special way, indicating his special relationship with his chosen people.

But that is no longer the case, things have changed radically. There is no building in Jerusalem, and even if there was we wouldn't us it because Jesus has changed where his Father seeks to dwell. Jesus has been building a new home. Not out of big white rock, but out of flesh and blood. Out of fragile, colourful people.

Jesus is gathering scattered stones, mortaring them together with his love,

building a home for his Father to enjoy. And that is where Jesus has to be, in his Father's house. Thinks certainly have changed, God is building himself a new home.

That leaves me with a wondering reality about church. Church isn't something I go to, but it is something I am. I am one of those living stones Jesus has picked up and mortared with his love into his new home.

Left to myself I'd just be a nuisance, as any farmer will tell you. A field of scattered stones is a nuisance, not a building. But each Sunday when I sit here I see gathered stones, no longer a nuisance but they have been mortared together to form a building. What a change.

So the church isn't a bunch of scattered stone, but stones gathered by Jesus' own

hands and mortared together with his love so that his Father might have a home to enjoy life in. That says something special about our relationship to each other. It's not of my making, but Jesus has handpicked each of us and lovingly mortared us together to be part of his wonderful new

**Invite Jesus to mentor
you, and grow.**

home for his Father.

This year I'm keen to grow and understand more about what it means to be part of this wonderful temple that Jesus is building. I want to grow in wisdom about Jesus' church and in favour, that is in love with his church. Those stones Jesus has handpicked.

As part of this growth I hope to discover more about the relationship principles of Jesus, so

that I can grow in loving other people more and more like Jesus. I have wonderful possibilities for growth in this area. The Good News is, I don't know it all, I've got wonderful new epiphanies waiting for me this coming year.

Wonderful new adventures to share with Jesus as he mentors me, growing my character to be more and more like his. Growing my love to be more and more like his. What an exciting time of growth I can share with Jesus as together we walk through this next year getting our hands dirty enjoying mortaring his home together with his love; as I put into practice his grace, his mercy, his patience, his courage, his wisdom, living it.

Of course I can't do that with just me and Jesus, because one stone doesn't make a