

his loving presence; as you, “love one another. As Jesus loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:34,35)

Our Father in Heaven passionately wants you to be his stairway to heaven, as you, in your life, your speech, your actions, your business dealings, you leisure activities, live out a Christ-like life, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Our Father hopes you grow to become not only a stairway to heaven, but that you show others how in Jesus they too can

become stairways to heaven. Just one person left falling into hell is too many.

Let us pray. Jesus thank you for calling us to follow you, to be your disciples. Thank you that in our baptism we were legally adopted as The Father’s children, loved and precious to him. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we grow to become all that our Father has dreamed possible. May we grow to become more and more like you in all we say and do, not leaving out the smallest action. Grow us to love as we are loved. Grow us as individuals and as your

community to be your home, where people can come to get to know you and be saved. Jesus daily be growing us to maturity, grow us as your disciples, who not only know how, but go and do, go and make disciples who go and make disciples to the end of the age. Jesus’ grow me to be more and more like you, to your glory, honour and praise. Let the way we live give you a great reputation and a glimpse of you. Amen.

18 January 2009

## DISCIPLESHIP 1.

John 1:43-51 Jesus’ call to follow



Last week we heard of Jesus baptism, with those wonderful words: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” (Mark 1:11) It’s great to be born part of God’s family through baptism. It’s great to be linked with Jesus through our baptism, so that we too hear The Father saying at our baptism: ‘You are my child, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.’

Today we have Jesus calling his first disciples as recorded in John. “Finding Philip, Jesus said to him, ‘Follow me.’” (John 1:43) That reminds me that baptism is the beginning. When a child is born there is great celebration and joy, but the story has only just begun. The big question is; how

will this child grow and develop? What will they become?

After Jesus’ birth and presentation at the temple we read; “And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.” (Luke 2:40) And later; “...as Jesus grew up, he increased in wisdom and in favour with God and people.” (Luke 2:52) Jesus’ birth isn’t the end of the story but the beginning. How was he going to grow? Was he going to grow to be like – everyone else in Nazareth, a carpenter like Joseph, a chip of the old block? How was Jesus going to grow? What was he going to become?

They’re the sorts of questions most parents have about their child.

What will this child grow to become? Will they grow to be a mature adult? What will they do?

What does our Heavenly Father hope for his precious children?

That we become alcoholics and prostitutes – hardly. That we live self absorbed lives, doing everything we want to – hardly. That we are successful and rich before we’re 40 – hardly.

What does our Heavenly Father hope for his precious, loved children? What sort of people does he want us to grow into? What sort of person does he want you to grow into?

The answer is not a mystery. In our baptism

### 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

we were linked with Jesus, we were covered with Jesus' grace and mercy. What sort of person does your Heavenly Father hope you'll grow into? The answer is simple: Jesus.

Look at Jesus, the way he talks, the way he walks, the way he lives, the way he dresses, the way he relates to people, what he's passionate about. That's precisely what our Heavenly Father dreams for all his children, that we grow to maturity in Christ Jesus, that we grow to become just like Jesus – faithful to our Father's will. Doing what our Father says; because we know we can trust him with our lives, even when everything feels wrong, we can trust him doing his will.

Jesus cries out in agony; "My God, my God why have you abandoned me." (Matthew 27:46). And then we read;

"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." (Luke 23:46) Jesus certainly felt that everything was going wrong, but he still places his life into his Father's hands trusting him with everything.

That's one thing about being a disciple of Jesus, it's all or

### Jesus is after EVERYTHING!

nothing. If we follow Jesus we are called to place our lives in The Father's hands trusting him with everything. Yes, that means our sex life. It definitely means we trust The Father regarding what we watch on TV, and even how we spend the pocket money he so graciously gives us, so that we'll learn how to handle real wealth in the future.

Jesus call on our lives is an all or nothing one.

"Then Jesus said to Simon, 'Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people.' So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him." (Luke 5:10,11) Then Jesus drives the point home even further; "If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and

mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters – yes, even life itself – such a person cannot be my disciple. And

whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:26,27) Jesus is after everything, it's an all or nothing relationship. Jesus isn't interested in half-hearted love. He loves you with his all. "In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples." (Luke 14:33)

I like the way that is paraphrased in the

Message; "Simply put, if you're not willing to take what is dearest to you, whether plans or people, and kiss it good-bye, you can't be my disciple." (Luke 14:33 Msg)

Our Heavenly Father isn't interested in his kids picking up any bad habits. One would be too many. Our Heavenly Father wants his children to grow to maturity in Jesus, reflecting his will in everything they do, growing from his love and mercy for them. Being shaped by the Father's sacrifice in Jesus and not pandering to the whims of the crowd. Our Father desperately doesn't want TV to shape his precious children.

How many hours do you watch TV? How many hours a day do you read the Bible? What's having the most opportunity to shape you?

At the end of the Gospel reading for today we heard; "... Very truly I (Jesus) tell you, you will see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." (John 1:51)

That's a reminder of Jacob, who "had a

### Doorways into his Home

dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. There above it stood the LORD..." (Genesis 28:12,13) When Jacob awoke; "He was afraid and said, 'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.'... He called that place Bethel (House of

God)." (Genesis 28:17,19)

Jesus is saying that the new Bethel, House of God, is now found in him. It's not a place but a person. As people who are now in Jesus we have become, in union with Jesus, God's new Bethel, House of God. What does our

Father hope his precious children will become?

Doorways into his home. His hope and dream is that we not only form the new house of God, people not a place, but that through us others can gain access. That through us others get a glimpse of the LORD, hearing him say; 'Come, follow me'.

Hearing Jesus' call to come, that they too are baptised and have God breath his life giving Spirit into them.

What does our Heavenly Father hope his loved children will become: Doorways into