

pressures of life and grow stronger. If you're forced when the pressure comes and you figure there's nothing in it for you, relationships fold. Thank God he isn't motivated by what's in it for him, but simply, and mysteriously, because it comes from the depth of his heart. He wants to love you.

Let us pray. God thank you for wanting to share your life with us. Thank you for wanting to adopt us as your children, that we might live daily knowing we are precious and loved by you, the children you are pleased to share each day with. Fill us with the Holy Spirit so that as we share

life with you we grow to be more and more like you, quite naturally speaker your language of love, picking up your habit of forgiveness, of generosity, so that in all areas of life your characteristics are seen and we are recognized as your children. Amen

## Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am  
 Pastor: Tim 0427326553  
 Edmund 0429041957



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

12 July 2009

## GOD HAS CHOSEN ME

Ephesians 1:3-14



Today we begin looking at Paul's letter to the Christian Community at Ephesus. He addresses his letter; "To God's holy people in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus." (Eph. 1:1b)

With that simple introduction I'm reminded again that the Church is not a building or an organisation, but that the Church is made up of people; holy people. Notice it didn't say perfect people, but holy ones.

Holy means that something is set apart for a special purpose.

We are set apart as a community to share God's life with him. The Church is a

community of people who are living in a special relationship with God.

When I got married I was set apart to share a special relationship with my wife. I didn't become perfect, put the focus of my life

changed. God in Jesus has called us to share his life with him. The focus of our life has changed.

In verse five we read; "In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will." (Eph. 1:5)

This verse reminds me that the Church isn't just a community of people

set apart to share life with God, but amazingly it is because of his love.

Yes it's a love story. God wants to gather a community of people around him who share his love, with him and each other.

That's God's great plan. A community that is united. United in loving each other as they are loved by God himself.

This community isn't united because we are all the same, but because we all have the same Father. Here Paul remind us that we are adopted as the Father's children. The Church is a unique community because it is one family. In God's eyes we are all

sisters and brothers.  
That isn't some nice,  
cute expression, it's  
the truth. In Jesus we  
are in God's eyes his  
children. We are  
sisters and brothers.

Jesus' death was the  
price that was paid  
for this to be a reality.  
And it was according  
to God's pleasure  
and will. Your  
birth into God's  
family isn't some  
quirk of fate, or a  
mistake. It is  
based on God's  
amazing love which  
was lived out in  
person, through  
Jesus.

That's a powerful  
reminder that the  
Church is a  
community of people  
in a special  
relationship with  
Jesus, which puts  
them in a special  
relationship with God  
as their Father, and  
with each other, as  
sisters and brothers.

What makes me a  
Christian isn't that I  
follow a set of moral  
rules. It isn't that I'm  
part of an  
organization. It isn't  
that I've passed  
confirmation, or any  
other course. What  
makes me a Christian  
is that God has

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### Christianity is a personal relationship

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chosen me in Jesus to  
be one of his  
precious, loved  
children with whom  
he is well pleased. At  
the heart of  
Christianity is a  
personal relationship  
with God, through the  
person of Jesus.

I now share God's  
life through Jesus,  
who has poured out  
God's very presence  
in the person of the  
Holy Spirit. That's  
God sharing his life

with us now, today,  
this very moment.

So when someone  
asks me why they  
should go to church  
I'm at bit of a lose.  
It's like asking me  
why should they go  
to their family.  
Church isn't  
something you go to,

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it is a family  
we're part of. We  
don't go to  
church, we share  
God's life,  
knowing he loves

us and we seek to live  
true to our new nature  
as God's children in  
Christ Jesus.

When I grew up I  
didn't go to home, I  
lived there. When I  
grew up I spoke  
English, you know  
why? Because that is  
my parent's native  
language. As a child I  
picked up their habits  
not because I studied  
them in a book, but  
because I shared life  
with them, daily.

That's what our  
Heavenly Father  
wants, not that we go  
to Church, but that  
we daily share his life  
with him. That as we  
daily live with him  
we pick up his native  
language of love, that  
we pick up his habits,  
because we're  
sharing life with  
him, daily.

Personally I don't  
want anyone to go  
to Church, I hope  
as sisters and brothers  
we seek to share life  
together, with each  
other and with Dad,  
on a daily basis.

I'd be really  
disappointed if my  
kids just wanted to  
spend an hour a  
week listening to me,  
and not sharing  
themselves. I'd be  
really disappointed if  
my kids figured that I  
was too boring and  
they were going off  
to look for a different

dad to meet their  
needs. That's just not  
how family, a loving  
committed family  
works.

If I only bothered to  
ring my mother when  
I wanted something  
that would be sad. If I  
only rang her for  
what she had to offer

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### Church is personal relationships

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me and ignored her  
the rest of the time,  
how would you  
describe my  
relationship with my  
mother?

One word that I loved  
in these opening  
verses from  
Ephesians was;  
'pleasure'. God chose  
to love you, why,  
because he wanted to.  
He is incredibly  
pleased to. It is his  
'pleasure and will'.  
How fantastic.

God doesn't have  
someone twisting his  
arm forcing him to  
accept you. He  
doesn't do it  
grudgingly – OK if I  
have to. What a sad  
foundation for a  
loving family – I'll  
talk to them, if I have  
to. Have you noticed

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that forced  
relationships don't  
work real well?  
I've noticed that  
once the force that  
pushes them

together is removed  
the relationships  
inevitably falls apart.  
I'm really ecstatic  
that in Jesus, God  
isn't forced to like  
me, but it comes from  
his heart. It's his  
pleasure. He doesn't  
have to, he wants to.  
That's really 'Good  
News'.

I've noticed that  
when people want to  
be with each other  
their relationships are  
able to withstand the