

It's sad to think of the alternative. Letting go of Dad's hand and getting lost. Lost in a big bad world. Making choices that lead to death. Being motivated by fear, by what's in it for me – greed.

Have you ever been tempted to think that we live in a big bad world? A place full of fear, intimidation, feeling hopeless at times, wondering if things will be worse. Have you ever felt yourself thinking something like this?

Thank God in Jesus you're not abandoned in a big bad world. But Jesus has come that we might take hold of Dad's hand, listening to him, walking with him, living life in the joy of his laughter, laughing and celebrating with him, knowing that right now we have the Spirit with us. We're not orphans, but the Father's love, precious children with whom he is well pleased.

What motivates you?

Let's pray. Jesus thank you for giving your life that we might have life with God as our 'Abba, Father'. When doubts arise in our minds bind them up and throw them out. Jesus flood our minds and our hearts with the Holy Spirit that we live trusting Dad with our money, our pain, our play, with every aspect of life and every decision we make. Reveal to us when the devil is sowing the seeds of doubt, and strength our trust that we don't get led astray. By your power keep us holding tight to Dad's hand following him, enjoying life together. Amen.

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## 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

7 June 2009

## WHAT MOTIVATES YOU?

Trinity Sunday



The reading from Romans for today began; "Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation..." (Rom. 8:12) I stopped at the word obligation. At first it came across as a negative motivation – I'm obligated, so I have to do it whether I want to or not. But then it could equally be read as a positive motivation – I'm obligated because I just can't keep this 'Good News' to myself. It would be wrong of me not to share the hope I have in Jesus. It got me reflecting on; what motivates me.

Paul continues in his letter to Jesus' people in Rome talking about the sinful

nature, which leads to death, and our new nature as adopted children of God, who we now affectionately call 'Abba', Dad. In Jesus God ceases to be someone I'm trying to impress, trying to get on the good side of because I'm not sure of what he's thinking. In Jesus, my brother, God adopts me as his love, precious child with whom he is well pleased.

Paul reminds us that we now act, not out of fear but out of trust. I know that my Heavenly Father can be trusted. Trusted with my life.

When Adam and Eve sinned it was an act

that showed they couldn't trust God with their lives. They wanted to take control. They believed the serpent, believing that their creator was withholding something good from them. So they reached out and took it. They couldn't trust God, and they died. Which is precisely what God said would happen if they ate the fruit.

God said; "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will certainly die." (Genesis 2:16,17) Now that's

pretty clear, wouldn't you say?

But the serpent came to cause doubt: "Did God really say..." (Genesis 3:1) Notice how he phrases his question. He's not interested in learning what God said, but he is sowing the seed of doubt.

Then he builds on this doubt: "You will not certainly die... For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Genesis 3:4)

Eve was faced with a choice – trust God or not. What was her thought process?

Doubt had been sown and built on, then she thought; "that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for

gaining wisdom." (Genesis 3:6) Her thought process was; 'What's in it for me'. And it appeared that she was getting a good deal so Eve took the fruit and died. She didn't gain but lost. She became a slave to fear.

What's in it for me?

Adam and Eve's slavery is symbolised by their hiding. They hide from each other, sewing fig leaves together. They hide from God, jumping into a bush, then blaming others for their choice.

Can we trust God? Can we trust 'Abba' Father? Jesus has given his life that we might be adopted as God's children. That we might bear his

DNA, that our lives might reflect his character, that we might live knowing we are loved, precious, that Dad is pleased with us, before we do anything.

Jesus comes to change us from slaves to fear to be people led by the Spirit. "The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather the Spirit you received brought about your adoption as children of God. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father'" (Rom. 8:15)

What motivates me? When I look at the world around me do I see the gift of a loving Creator? Do I see Dad at work, and recognize his creative spirit within me?

In Jesus that is what we are now able to see; the hand of our loving Dad at work, inviting us to join him being creative, being true to who we are. And as I live out this relationship of Father and child, I'm bring great joy to Dad.

Jesus wants to free me from only acting because there's something in it for me. As a Father I find it sad when the only way I can get cooperation with a task is by offering a bribe. But what joy there is when help is offered from a heart of love.

Jesus acts from a heart of love. A heart of love that trusted his Father even when there wasn't anything in it for him, only the opportunity to bring great joy to his Dad,

trusting him, when it didn't appear good, wasn't pleasing to the eye, and not desirable for gain. The exact opposite of Eve, but Jesus dies places his life into the Father's hands.

The depth of Jesus' pain is those words;

TRUST

'My God, my God, why.' 'Why have you forsaken me'. And then in complete trust Jesus gives his life into the Father's hands and dies. What motivated Jesus – complete trust in his Father. It didn't look good. It didn't feel good. And there wasn't anything in it for him. But in this act of trust Jesus wins life.

Eve's choice brought what? Death. Jesus trust in his Father produces what? Life. Life or Death, which would you prefer? LIFE we all cry. Thank God that in Jesus we have the gift of life, and not the curse of death.

Isn't that great, that now as the Father's children, each choice we make has the power of life in it as we live taking our Dad by the hand, trusting him, enjoying him, knowing he enjoys you.

I feel obligated to tell others of this wonderful 'Abba, Father', that they might also be adopted as his children, enjoying life with him, taking him by the hand, trusting him and finding life.