

with Jesus will keep growing. How do we as church fuss around with things that won't last; building, money, constitutions, and neglect Jesus, just like Martha.

Community is one of the essentials, for Jesus has come to gather people together, that they might reflect his love together. Heaven will be a community centred on Jesus, loving each other as they are loved. It'll be a great place. Let's be leaving a legacy of Christian Community, where we live with Jesus as the centre, calling the shots, as we love one another as we are loved by Him.

In short we leave a positive legacy when

we live a life based on God's word, living it. When that word shapes us to become more and more like Jesus in our character. When that word shapes us to become a community who have Jesus at their centre, calling the shots so that we love one another as we are loved by him.

That's such a great legacy because it's the pattern of eternity. As we live building a close relationship with God through his word, Jesus, growing Christ-like character, loving one another as we are loved by Jesus in community, we've started living eternity with God. Now that will last.

Let us pray.

Jesus please show us the things we are doing now that are a waste of time. Show us what we are doing that doesn't reflect you. Show us what is stopping us being your community. Jesus please grow us as we seek to listen to you, doing what you say, trusting our lives on your word. Jesus please grow us to reflect your character as your disciples. Jesus please grow us as your community, letting you call the shots, loving one another as we are loved by you.

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

22 March 2009

LEAVE BOLDLY.

One Month to Live—5



Today's theme in our 'One Month to Live' challenge is to 'Leave Boldly'.

I read this quote by Harold Kushner: "I am convinced that it is not the fear of death... that haunts us... so much as the fear... that as far as the world is concerned, we might as well never have lived." I think we all have a desire to feel that our lives matter, that we leave a positive legacy.

What's the legacy you are leaving?

Paul in his letter to the people in Corinth wrote; "If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will

be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. If what has been built survives the

builder will receive a reward." (1 Cor. 3:12-14 NIV)

In other words you can build your life with things that will leave a lasting legacy, or you just become a distant memory, with no lasting positive legacy. We can build our life with quality materials that will have a lasting benefit, or shonky material which won't produce a life that is lasting and beneficial.

What are the quality materials we can build our life with?

I don't know about you but I want my life to have a positive influence on my kids, on my wife, to benefit

them, as well as having a positive benefit on the people I encounter in life.

This week I read of three quality building materials. The first was labelled, 'Convictions'. Conviction was defined as those core values from God's Word, that's the bible, that never change. Convictions are eternal. Isaiah 40:8 says, "The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of our God stands forever."

Trends and styles come and go, but God's Word, who is Jesus, never changes.

Of course all people have convictions. Hitler was convinced that his destiny was to rule all of Europe. What I'm talking about is building my life based

on God's conviction which is personified in Jesus. God's convictions in Jesus don't change. What wonderfully precious material to build your life with.

But one thing about these convictions of God, if we don't use them, if I don't live them, they'll do me no good. That's the very point Jesus made at the end of the Sermon on the Mount. He said;

"But if you just use My words in Bible studies and don't work them into your life, you are like a stupid carpenter who built his house on the sandy beach." (Matt. 7:26) So when the inevitable storm came it all crashed, a real messed up life.

The second quality building product in life is 'Character'. God cares about my character because when I die I don't take anything with me

except my character, who I am. Paul in his letter to Rome wrote; "God knew what He was doing from the very beginning. He decided from the outset to shape the lives of those who love Him along the same lines as the life of His Son (Jesus)..."

What will your life legacy be?

God's plan is to make me more and more like Christ Jesus, his Son. His plan is to put into your life the very character traits of Christ.

What are Christ's character traits? Here's some of the character traits Jesus seeks to grow in us; "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." (Gal. 5:22)

The character traits which don't build a quality life are also mentioned; "It is obvious what kind of life develops out of trying to get your own way all the time: repetitive, loveless, cheap sex; a stinking accumulation of mental and emotional garbage;

frenzied and joyless grabs for happiness; trinket gods; magic-show religion; paranoid loneliness; cutthroat

competition; all-consuming-yet-never-satisfying wants; a brutal temper; an impotence to love or be loved; divided homes and divided lives; small-minded and lopsided pursuits; the vicious habit of depersonalizing everyone into a rival; uncontrolled and uncontrollable addictions; ugly parodies of community: I could go on." (Gal. 5:19-21)

I'd much rather be growing the other

character traits and thankfully so would Jesus.

Three tools that God uses to grow my character are first, problems. Sometimes God allows little problems into your life, those little irritations that kind of rub off the rough edges. Other times he allows huge problems, which jackhammer away those chunks that don't look at all like Jesus.

Second he uses pressures. We learn patience under pressure. Every one of us have people in our lives who are hard to love. Every one of us have people in our lives that irritate us, that get under our skin, that rub us the wrong way, and sometimes I do it to myself. That's the third way God builds character, through other people.

A Christ-like character will last and will leave

a positive legacy. We call that discipleship.

The third quality product I'm seeking to build in life is community. Not just any old type of community, but a community that has Jesus at the centre, leading us, with his love flowing out and

The Word Discipleship Christ's Community

through us. A community that together reflects the very character of Jesus.

That's why it is so important to be in relationships with other believers in a small group growing together, people who are gathered around Jesus, not who have it all together but gather together with the guy who does.

Of course you can't be in community on your own?

One thing that kills community is business. One night Jesus went over to dinner at Mary and Martha's place. Martha was running around in a frenzy trying to make sure everything was right.

But Mary, she just sat there talking to Jesus, listening to what he had to say. Martha got feed-up and complained to Jesus, how unfair it was, she's doing all the work and Mary and Jesus were just talking.

To which Jesus replied; "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; but there is need of only one thing and Mary has chosen the better part..." (Luke 10:41) And then Jesus added; it won't be taken from her.

All this fussing of Martha will evaporate but Mary's relationship