

world as we know it is coming. There is nothing more certain, God has spoken, it is happening. When he comes what is he going to be looking for? When Jesus returns to judge the world what do you think he'll be hoping to find?

Dreamworld, or maybe my football team having the most premiership pennants, or he'll be looking for the successful, the cool, the hip, the fun crowd. When Jesus returns to judge the world what do you think he'll be looking to celebrate and declare worth living for?

I'm sure we know the answer is people. Jesus will come to celebrate the people; his sisters and brothers, who he's been sharing his life

with through the Holy Spirit. Jesus will be looking for these people to tell the world of his love for them. Jesus will hold up these people he gave his life for, proud to be declared their brother. Jesus' passion is you and I. Jesus' passion is loving people to death. No, to life!

So Jesus today says to us; "Watch out that no one deceives you." (Mk 13:5) Don't be deceived as the disciples were by the large, impressive, successful looking, structure and miss seeing the people Jesus had come to give his life for. Thank God Jesus didn't lose sight of us, hasn't lost sight of us.

Daily the world is screaming at me; the

end is coming, time is running out. Follow Jesus and deny yourself, take up your cross that other people might live. That other people might be adopted as Jesus' sisters and brothers. Everything else is will just end up a pile of rubble, even the impressive.

Let us Pray.
Jesus, thank you for giving your life for us and not grandeur, celebrity status or anything else. Open our ears to hear you. Open our eyes so that we are not deceived, but that daily we share life with you, introducing others to you that they too might share life with you, today, tomorrow, forever.

15 November 2009
THE END TIMES
Mark 13:1-8



The Gospel for today starts with Jesus' disciples feeling good about the grandeur of the temple that Herod was building. It was for very good reason considered one of the architectural marvels of the ancient world. It would have produced great pride. A feeling of security as people looked at it daily, there dominating the skyline.

Surely this was a sign that God had not abandoned his people. Surely God had let this temple be built to give hope. Hope that the Messiah would come and rule his kingdom as the kings of the past had done.

But for all its grandeur there were a few signs that maybe all wasn't well, and maybe this temple was actually a sign of their rebellion

rather than God's blessing. It looked spectacular.

But Herod didn't build the temple in response to God's leading. It was an edifice to himself. I'm sure he would have loved being known as Herod – 'The Great'. The temple would have been the envy of many.

To rebuild the temple Herod would have had to have knocked down the one built by God's leading when the Children of Israel returned from exile. They went into exile because of their rebellion. They stopped listening to God and lived simply for luxury and comfort, using the best current practices to achieve their goal.

Another problem was that Herod drew his power from Rome.

Herod was a good politician who through shrewd dealings had secured for himself the title of king.

How did David become king? Was it through shrewd political dealings or a call from God? We all know that David was anointed as King by God through the prophet Samuel.

The word 'Christ' or 'Messiah' means the anointed one, not the self appointed one. Herod was self appointed. Good at what he did. A brilliant architect. He'd brought a degree of peace and prosperity but he wasn't the anointed one.

What was the Sanhedrin; which was the Jewish ruling council, frightened that Jesus might lose for

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am

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

them? They feared that the Romans; the real political power, would come in and destroy their temple, their grand, majestic, beautiful temple. They couldn't let that happen. Even though God hadn't commissioned it, it was built by an unbeliever, who was a political schemer, who killed anyone who tried to take his title.

The disciples looked at the temple and felt pride, maybe hope that Jesus would soon rule from there. But when Jesus looked at this temple he saw a different sign. He didn't see massive stones, a magnificent building. Jesus saw the temple as a sign of rebellion. A sign of what people could achieve by their own strength and ability. A sign of how far God's people had gone from their God. The temple was a beautiful image but a deceptive one. One that was exposed

as empty not long after it was finished.

How's that Herod didn't even get to see his temple finished. And when it was finished the Romans came and destroyed it leaving the Jewish nation under no illusions who was the boss. They rebelled and

Not hearing from God. What advice would you give?

were mercilessly crushed and all that was left was a pile of rubble. A pile of broken dreams and lost hopes. People had not bothered to listen to God, actually for 500yrs there had been no prophets till John the Baptist. They hadn't listened to God and had done what seemed right to them.

They weren't hearing from God. What advice would you have given?

They believed surely God would want a wonderful temple. Surely God would want the daily sacrifice. Surely God would want his people politically free and prosperous. Their logic seemed good, except nobody was asking God about his plans. It all seemed right; but the temple was demolished, the daily sacrifices were no more and there was no political prosperity. God as we know had a different plan.

Even today there are many who seek to rebuild the temple. They are planning a new even more glorious building. There's only one problem, in the new Jerusalem there isn't any temple, why? In Revelation Jesus tells us why; "Then I (John) saw 'a new heaven and a new earth' for the first heaven and the first earth has passed away... I saw the Holy City, the new

Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people and he will dwell with them. They will be his people and God himself will be with them and be their God'... I did not see a temple in the city because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple." Rev. 21:1-3,22)

We don't need a symbol when we've got the real thing. That's why as Christians we don't call any building a temple. We don't need reminders of God when we've got the real thing. At Pentecost who did Jesus sent to live with us; the Holy Spirit. That's God himself in the person of the Holy Spirit coming that we might live with God,

that we might share his life with him.

So the new temple that Jesus builds is one of flesh and blood. One of relationship. A relationship where we are loved by God in Jesus and fill his temple, his community of faith with that love. This is Jesus' goal. This

Living expressions of Jesus' love.

is the temple he has built to be worshipped in. Our lives as living expressions of Jesus' love, as he shares his life with us.

When we think of wars what are most of them about? Loving people sacrificially, or gaining power and wealth? I find difficult hoping they'll eventually see I'm right and change their ways, or because I trust Jesus enough to give myself away and

not expect anything back. After all in Jesus I've got everything. I've got a loving relationship that I can build my life on knowing it will never become a pile of rubble. Nothing can ever separate me from the love of God which is mine in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The disciples were miss reading the signs. Jesus hadn't come to build a bigger, better, grander temple, he'd come down to earth to love us and build a down-to-earth relationship, where we could share his life with him.

That's God's temple; the people he loves, Jesus' disciples growing together that the very image of God is expressed in them through the way they love one another as they are loved by Jesus.

Today we're reminded that the end of the