

When considering the 'One Month to Live' series ask yourself how God's love for you will motivate your response to this opportunity to build community between us, to grow in my relationship with Jesus, and to support others grow as Jesus' disciples.

I'm sure there will be a real positive effect as we collectively spend time together with Jesus, focused together one living life to God's

glory. I'd encourage you to take a small risk and get involved, helping make the most of this opportunity using this resource to grow us as individuals and as Jesus' community.

What motivates you? Let's be like Mary and daily respond to Jesus' love with; 'I am the Lord's servant, may it be to me according to your word.'

Let us pray.  
Jesus, we thank and praise you for being

motivated by your love for us and being prepared to risk losing everything that we might gain. Show us this week what is motivating our actions that we might reflect you more and more as we too live motivated by your love, risking everything believing your right, doing what you've called us to do; to go and make disciples of all people and to love one another as we are love by you. Amen.

21 December 2008

## Advent 4 LOVE.

Luke 1:26-38



I have a brief story to start with. Mary was a girl who had everything going for her. Great friends, wonderful parents – she was the apple of their eye. A wonderful hunk who she was engaged to, and eagerly looking forward to their marriage. Life was good; her future was secure and exciting. What do you think would motivate her to risk it all?

That reminds me of another story; this couple had everything, their home was just paradise, they had a perfect open, trusting relationship – each other's best friend. They enjoyed the best of everything and had a successful, fulfilling career. What do you think would motivate them to risk it all?

If you had everything just right,

what would motivate you to risk everything?

Which reminds me of another person; he had everything; power, position and incredible wealth. He was adored by people. He was successful, Israel's wealthiest. What do you think would motivate him to risk it all?

If you had power, position, wealth to do whatever you wanted, whenever you wanted, what would motivate you to risk everything?

That's the story of King David. He had everything we dream of, then; "One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. (Today he would have turned on the TV) From the roof (on his TV) he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful. (time to turn

off the TV). David sent someone to find out about her – She came to him, and he slept with her." (2 Sam. 11:2ff)

What was David thinking? He risks everything, for what? He's motivated by what? The need to have, lust, just because he could. He eventually kills this woman's husband to cover up things. What could drive a normal person to murder? What was motivating David's action?

God was heartbroken: "I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. I gave your master's house to you, and your master's wives into your arms. I gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if all this had been too little, I would have given you even more.

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### 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

Why did you despise the word of the LORD by doing what is evil in his eyes? (2 Sam. 12:7-9)

What would motivate you to risk losing everything for a momentary experience?

The couple who had everything were Adam and Eve. Their backyard was quite literally paradise.

What would motivate you to risk losing paradise for death?

“The serpent told *Eve*, ‘You won’t die. God knows that the moment you eat from the tree, you’ll see what’s really going on. You’ll be just like God, knowing everything, ranging all the way from good to evil.’ When *Eve* saw that the tree looked like good eating and realized what she would get out of it – she’d know everything! – she took and ate the fruit and then gave some to her husband, and he ate.” (Genesis 3:4-6)

The result was

catastrophic to say the least. They gambled everything on the serpent being right and God being impotent. They lost!

What would motivate you to risk losing everything, to believe God doesn’t mean what he says?

Mary was also faced with the risk of

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losing everything – losing her reputation, casting doubt into her relationship with her parents, and the very real risk of losing her fiancée. Mary’s world is about to be turned on its head. She’s being asked to risk everything.

Let’s hear again Mary’s responds; the angel finishes – “...no word from God will ever fail.’ ‘I am the Lord’s servant,’ Mary answered. ‘May it be to me according to your

word.’ Then the angel left her.” (Luke 1:37,38)

Mary is prepared to risk everything taking God at his word. What do you reckon motivated Mary to take this risk?

What would motivate you to take such a huge risk, a risk that involves your life?

But that’s life isn’t it – were risking our very lives with the decisions we make. That means knowing what motivates us is crucial.

In two out of the three examples the risk wasn’t worth it – what motivated their action was wrong, and the outcomes were catastrophic. What motivates you to action?

I know what motivated Jesus into action; “This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing

in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life. God didn’t go to all the trouble of sending his Son merely to point an accusing finger, telling the world how bad it was. He came to help, to put the world right again.” (John 3:16,17 Message)

God’s motive for sending Jesus was his love for us. That’s what drives him to action, a love which won’t be contained but has to reach out to us that we might be set free from sin and discover life lived with God, loved by God.

That reminds me of Jesus’ words; “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples. If you love one another.” (John 13:35) Jesus is motivated to action because of love, a love he now plants in our hearts that we might also live lives motivated by his love.

I like Luther’s explanation to the first

commandment: “We should honour, love and trust God more than anything else.” Here’s our motivation, to live lives that honour God as we take him at his word; that’s trust, and live out his love in all we say and do.

What motivates me is a powerful thing because that’s how I

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know what my god is! This week I read in the book of James, again and again the warning not to deceive myself. “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.” (James 1:22)

God’s not into lip service, but his goal is a life that is motivated by his loving action for us. Christmas reminds me that God isn’t into lip service, but that his love has motivated him to risk everything that

we might know his love for us.

What would it take for you to risk your comfort, pleasure, security, traditions? At Christmas God puts it all on the line, risking being born your brother, with no guarantee that people will respond in love to his love for them. Jesus was prepared to put his life on the line and risk everything, just because there was a possibility that he might be able to

breakthrough and embrace you in his love.

That’s good news of great joy. Good News that has motivated our lives to risk denying ourselves, taking up our cross and following Jesus, living passionately as his disciples, doing his will that his kingdom comes.

Daily let’s keep asking ourselves; how is God’s love for me in Jesus motivating my action?