

springboard to growing disciples for the rest of the year.

Let's pray.

Jesus thank you for being born our king. Thank you that we are part of your kingdom and secure under your rule and authority. Help us grow as your disciples and fill us with the Holy Spirit that we might overcome any fear and timidity which would inhibit us from discovering the full joy of living your hopes and dreams. Lead us to those people you want as part of the group we'll be in for the 'One Month to Live' opportunity as we join with others in growing as your disciple this year. Show us how we can be making disciples who make disciple – to the end of the age. Amen.

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 December 2008

Advent 2 HOPE.

Mark 1:1-8



In life what are you hoping for? What do you hope for?

A friend of mine was in Amway and on his fridge was the picture of a wonderful mansion. He took me to an Amway meeting where the presenter put up the picture of a wonderful sports car, which he hoped to own. But their great hope was to become free. Financially free to do what they wanted to, rather than be dictated to by their financial needs and their employer.

My friend dreamed of having time for his family, bonding with his boys and having exciting adventures together with his wife. Free of the

constraints of financial dependency. What do you hope for?

The nation of Israel in Jesus' time was hoping for freedom too. Free of Roman occupation. Free to be the people they believed God had called them to be. Part of that dream was their hope of a coming Messiah. The Messiah would be the King of Israel, a king like David, strong and powerful able to lead his people to freedom by defeating the Roman invaders and establishing God's rule. Then Israel would take back their rightful place in the world – God's chosen people, number one of all the

nations. That was their hope, what do you hope for?

Mark starts his Gospel with what he is hoping for; "the good news about Jesus the Messiah." (Mark 1:1) Mark too is hoping for a Messiah, a king who would establish the Kingdom of God. Mark's hope is that we might join him in living under this Messiah, in his kingdom, under his rule as king.

Mark too is passionate about freedom. He wants people to be set free to become all that Jesus hopes they can be, no longer dictated to by insecurity, greed, envy, no longer slaves to their own desires and wants. But secure in Jesus' kingdom, free to become all that he wants them to be. Empowered by their Messiah to go beyond their wildest dreams and discover God's amazing hopes and dreams.

Mark's hope isn't just for some future paradise but that we can NOW start living in Jesus' kingdom, trusting his rule and relying on his power, living Jesus' exciting adventure together. Notice he said; "The **Beginning** of the Good News..." (Mark 1:1) The Kingdom of God has well and truly begun.

This week I heard a story about two young men in America going to start a ministry at a university. One felt Jesus was telling them to worship and preach out in the centre of the campus.

The other wasn't so sure, he'd experienced hundreds of open-air preachers and his experience wasn't good. So a little concerned he asked; 'What results do you expect from this preaching? My experience has taught me that preaching the gospel to strangers, void of relational context, yields minimal results.'

His friend wasn't slow in responding. He said, 'Oh, we're not preaching for evangelism, though

people could come to Christ. We're preaching for two reasons. First, it is for spiritual warfare on campus. The enemy has held that ground for years now, and we need to announce that the Kingdom of God has come. The second reason I feel the Lord leading us to do this is because I sense some fear and timidity in the few students that want to work

What do you hope for?

with us, and I think this will address that fear head-on.'

Wow! When was the last time I declared that the Kingdom of God HAS COME? When was the last time I declared it publicly facing my fears and timidity head-on?

What's your hope? That the King has come. That the Kingdom of God is here, NOW. What's your hope?

These two guys knew that where Christ rules, things change. Christianity is not

a set of facts to believe, it is a change of allegiance. I'm not king, Jesus is. I dance to his tune. I trust him with my life, enough to do what he decrees.

And what has Jesus decreed? Where does Jesus use his power and authority? "Jesus said, 'ALL authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore

GO and MAKE DISCIPLES of all nation... and surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'" (Matthew 28:18-20)

How much authority has Jesus got? The lot. Imagine what we could do with such authority filling our sails.

What are you hoping for? Disciples who will make disciples – to the end of the age?

These were Jesus' last words to his disciples. What do you reckon Jesus is hoping for?

Piles of gold in the bank. A beach house on the Gold Coast. Enough money to do whatever he

likes. What is Jesus' hoping for?

Jesus sent his disciples out with 'Good News', the Kingdom of Heaven has come. The Messiah is here. We are now under his rule, empowered to do his will. And Jesus is the one with all authority. What 'Good News' we have to proclaim; the Kingdom of God has come. Life isn't what I can make of it, rather now my life is what Jesus can make of it – now that's exciting. What amazing potential we have as citizens of Jesus' kingdom.

When was the last time I got excited about Jesus' kingdom and declared it calming territory for Jesus, boldly believing that Jesus' claims are true and I can risk my life doing what he says? He is trustworthy and won't lead me up the proverbial garden path or leave me high and dry. I can trust my King to deliver – he has all authority and is passionate about all people coming under his rule that they might discover the joy of life with him.

Christmas is a season where we celebrate the birth of the King – the Kingdom has come, Jesus has been born. What 'Good News', we're not left to do our best but Jesus our king has come and has fought for us, and has won. We now live in the Kingdom of Jesus, under his wonderful power and authority. We are now sent to declare

What does Jesus reign for?

this 'Good News', the Kingdom of Jesus is here, proclaiming and claiming territory for our King, using his power and authority.

What are you hoping for? Jesus' kingdom extending territory as more and more people come under Jesus undisputed rule.

What are you hoping for? Disciples who will make disciples – to the end of the age.

That's certainly my hope. Hold me to it and ask me; Tim, when was the last

time you went and declared that the Kingdom of Jesus is here. Ask me how I'm growing as a disciple and more importantly who are the people I'm helping grow as disciples, disciples whose number one passion is to grow disciples for Jesus – till the end of the age. My hope is to live true to my King, being obedient to his decree, because I

know I can trust Jesus with my life – I'm going to go and live it.

If this is your hope, I was going to ask you

to stand up but that could just be me manipulating you. If this is your hope send me an email or write me a note or send me a letter this week pledging yourself to growing as a disciple, and committing yourself to get together with me and everyone else who responds in discovering how we can grow as a disciple and grow disciples who grow disciples. Pledge yourself to invite people to join you in the 'One Month to Live' campaign and declare in your home that the 'Kingdom of Jesus' has come, using this as a