

Let us pray.
 Jesus when we see other people may we always see them as you do. May we seek to love them as you do. Jesus, please cultivate in us your passion for people, for building healthy relationships with people. Jesus, please use us, not to condemn, but to walk into people's lives with you and bring your life, real life. To bring love, your real eternal love. Jesus use us, as your human beings, as your community of love that many, many, many others might be saved to celebrate life with you, today, tomorrow and forever. 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

8 June 2008

Building Healthy Relationships 3.

Cultivating Mission



Matthew 9:9-13
 "As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew, sitting at the tax collector's booth. 'Follow me', he told him and Matthew got up and followed him."

"Jesus went on from there and he saw", – what? He saw a man. When I look at others what do I see? People to be feared. People whose favour I need to win. Someone to meet my needs, or who has something to offer. What do I see? Jesus saw a man, another human being just like himself. He saw another person whom he sought to build a relationship with.

Jesus saw a man whose name was

'Matthew'. Jesus gets personal. He knows this man by name – 'Matthew'. Jesus wants to get personal, that's why he's told us his name – 'Jesus'. That's two first names, because Jesus wants to be in a first name relationship with us. That's close. That's personal. That's intimate.

Matthew was sitting at the tax collector's booth. This could really have coloured Jesus' view of Matthew, so instead of seeing a man he could have been tempted to see; a traitor, a scum bag who had sold his soul for wealth, someone not worthy of his time. When we see a person and their

occupation, what are we tempted to think? Doctor, must be a good bloke. Dairy Farmer, must be a hard worker. Young unemployed on drugs, I'd never do that.

Jesus saw a man. A man named Matthew. A man trapped, who needed to be set free. Free to be the man Jesus dreamt he could be. The name Matthew means; 'Gift from God'. Jesus looked at Matthew and saw a gift from God, not a tax collector, but a person who God desperately wanted to embrace in his love.

When Jesus looks at you, what does he see?

Then Jesus did something amazing. He said; 'Follow me'. There was no moral lecture. He didn't give Matthew a clip behind the ears and tell him to shape up. Jesus comes to this lost and trapped man and offers to lead him to safety, to where Matthew can find a life that will fill him.

horrific story about a girl by the name of Lauren. She was beautiful and hand the world ahead of her, till one day she was brutally bashed, her skull resembled a jigsaw puzzle. And then this brut set the shed on fire she was in and left her there to dehumanising him for profit. They were feeding the same twisted mindset that had brutally attacked their daughter. They were dehumanising another person for their self-gratification. That's the sort of society that creates beasts out of people. They were feeding the very thing that had almost killed their daughter.

When you look at another person what do you see?

I'm sure Matthew became a tax collector assuming wealth, luxury and good times were the way to a full and contented life. But it wasn't. I don't think Matthew would have followed Jesus if his deepest needs were being meet.

burn to death. The story was a celebration of her recovery, but it also left you asking, how someone could do this to another person. What sick twisted beast could do such a horrid act?

When we look at another person what do we see?

Thanks God that in Jesus when he looks at you and me he sees a person. A person he knows by name and is willing to give his life for. When Jesus was born it wasn't so he could exploit us for his own profit, dehumanizing us, but so that we might know what it is to be truly human. When

When we look at another person what do we see?

Then they flicked to Lauren's twenty-first, and the focus was a male stripper. They weren't beating him with an iron bar, they were just

Recently on 60 Minutes there was an

Jesus died on the cross, dehumanized by us, it was so we could know what real love is. So that we might really be loved, and freed from dehumanizing each other to meet our unfulfilled needs.

to introduce people to Jesus, that they might experience his humanity, that they might know to the depth of their being his love, and be set free to become all that Jesus has dreamt they can be.

selfishness. So he comes, a man. A man named Jesus, and walks right into our humanity, right up to our tax collecting booth – where we expect our rights to be paid up – and invites us to follow him.

Thank God that Jesus calls us, me to follow him. To follow in Jesus' humanity and self-less love for others. To follow

How do we cultivate

When Jesus looks at you, what does he see?

mission?

By following Jesus, discovering what it means to be human, knowing that we are love and wanting to share that relationship, that hope, that love, that future with others.

Jesus couldn't sit back and watch as we dehumanized each other growing a festering mess of horror and

And then we find Matthew celebrating life with Jesus, inviting his friends to come and join in. To join in Jesus' celebration of life. That's the church – Jesus' community celebrating life with him, 24/7, eagerly inviting other people to join in and celebrate their humanity in Jesus, to rejoice in being loved by Jesus, discovering life beyond our wildest dreams, becoming all that Jesus dreams possible.