

Let us pray.
Jesus open my eyes to where I'm being a kill-joy. Help me stop living that way and replace those actions with down-to-earth actions that produce your joy in all that I say and do. Jesus may we keep growing as your community of disciples who follow you bringing the joy of life lived in your unbridled potential.

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

2 March 2008

Jesus Calls Us to Live Life Together - 5

Sharing Jesus' Life Together



“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to FELLOWSHIP, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

What’s your response to these situations: your friends have a child that they were longing for, you buy a new car, your best friend wins a million dollars, your team win the finals? I recon there would only be one general response – being happy, celebrating the good news.

When I stop and reflect for awhile it strikes me that I have heaps of reasons to be happy, to rejoice: I’ve got food, home, friends, family, wife, just to name a few. Yet there always seem to be some kill-joy that wants to wreck the day.

Today we heard of a person born blind who now can see. What would your response be if it was your son, brother, friend,

yourself? There is only one response – to celebrate and be happy. Yet that’s not what everyone did. We have one group who complain

because it was done on Saturday, and you shouldn’t work on Saturday. Spitting on the ground, making mud and then applying it to the eyes of a blind person was labelled work! What kill-joys.

One thing I know about Jesus is that he’s no kill-joy. Quite the opposite, he’s the one who gave this man sight. Jesus is always giving plenty of reason to throw a party, and celebrate. That’s the sort of life he invites people to share with him. That’s the sort of community he empowers his disciples to be, the life in the party.

So how might we get rid of the kill-joys and replace them with Jesus’ joy of life, life lived to the full?

In the story of the blind man I found at least four ways to remove the kill-joys and replace them with Jesus’ joy.

The first thing is that Jesus gets down-to-earth. That’s one thing I like about Jesus, he’s down-to-earth. He sees a need and he does what? Works out who’s to blame. No, Jesus goes about meeting the need with what he has to offer. Jesus meets one of this person’s most down-to-earth basic needs. He’s blind, so Jesus gives him sight.

His disciples want to enter some empty debate; “Rabbi, who sinned this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” (John 9:2) Guys the bloke is blind, what are you going to do to help. Casting pointless blame doesn’t really help. That’s a kill-joy. Jesus heals, that’s a reason to celebrate.

What situations surround you that need loving action, and not endless debate? Jesus saw an opportunity to care using what he had. When I see a child born blind, I could debate about how unfair it is, or I could get down-to-earth and seek to meet their needs. I could teach that person that they are valued and love by my actions. What a basic need we all have to know that we are valued and loved, not because of what we have to offer, but we are valued and loved for no reason, it's just pure gift.

That's one of the good things that has happened in my life time. We've gone from labelling people according to what they can't do. They're now challenged, and we all have challenges in life to meet. I can be down-to-earth and in my language building people up, encouraging them letting my choice of words show that they are valued and loved.

That's Jesus' way, he always shows that we are valued to him and loved by him. Of course that's

what he speaks out so powerfully in his death. He's labelled friend so sinner, and then asked are they worth dying for? To which Jesus simply opens his hands wide so that he might embrace those he chooses to love. The kill-joys nail his hands to a cross thinking they can stop him loving you, but that just shows even more the depth and intensity of

Jesus isn't a kill-joy

Jesus' decision to love you.

The second way to remove the kill-joys is shown through the group who chose to attack Jesus. Why are they so cranky? Because Jesus heals on their holy day. Jesus has come to love people, and use the resources of the world to do that. I know I've said it a million times but it's good to remember your possessions don't love you. Your bank balance doesn't love you, no matter how big it gets. Hug your credit card all day and it still won't care

anything for you. Thank God Jesus loves people and uses all at his resource to achieve that.

That's the lifestyle he invites us to share in. Loving people using the resources he has places at our disposal. What joy comes when I live out the truth that; 'it is more blessed to give than to receive'. I become invigorated as I use my possession in acts of love. I get joy watching my children play sport and developing their physical co-

ordination. I could say it all costs too much, or the time is all wrong and keep those resources to myself, but then who misses out!

What a sad picture those people are who don't rejoice at seeing the blind man see, all because they value their traditions more than they love another human being.

We grow Jesus' joy as we use the resources he has gifted us with in serving the people around us.

The third kill-joy I noticed was: 'Fear'. "His

parents said this because they were afraid" (John 9:22) Fear certainly is one of the great kill-joys of life. Fear robs us of life. We certainly are surrounded by many fears; agoraphobia, acrophobia, arachnophobia, xenophobia, the world is full of phobias. Fears which kill the joy of living.

Jesus came to replace all fear with love, his perfect love which he lived in his down-to-earth, which lead to his all too real death, because Jesus doesn't exist controlled by fear, but lives to love, and nothing can stop Jesus loving you.

"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life... nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:37,39)

In Jesus we get to the point where; "Perfect love drives out all fear... and

so... We love because he first loved us." (1 John 3:18,19) What a joy, to have a lifestyle that flows from the very source of God's love. Jesus lived it so that we also can live that way to, bringing God's love into every situation of life, chasing away those kill-joys of fear, replacing them with hope, with a warm embrace, with a

Perfect love drives out all fear

refreshing cup of water, with an undeserved word of encouragement. What a fantastic life Jesus invites us to enjoy living with him.

The fourth point that struck me was that the man finishes saying, "Lord, I believe", and he worshipped Jesus." (John 9:38) He worshipped Jesus, that's an act of celebration. That's a shout of joyful freedom, by the liberated. He worshipped Jesus, this joy he has just experienced wasn't going to be a fleeting thing. Here today and gone

tomorrow, longing, looking back to those great days, wishing to have the same experience again. Now that's a real kill-joy, living in the past. Existing on fading experiences.

This man's eyes were opened. This man is loved and precious to Jesus. This man has everything to live for. His future stands open with unbridled opportunity. He is very much looking forward to sharing the joy of life that Jesus' brings.

He's moved from just existing, begging to get by, to living life with unbridled opportunity. Living life from what he has, not fearing what he doesn't have. In Jesus he has God's perfect love. Living life, knowing where he's going and most importantly he's not walking into the future blind, he's following Jesus, the author of life. Jesus who has come that we might enjoy being part of Jesus' life. Enjoy sharing Jesus' life together.