

perfection. Jesus hates seeing people trapped in all those unreal expectations; do this, don't do that, you should have known better, why can't you be like everyone else, I'd have expected more from you.

Thank God, Jesus hasn't come to show the way to perfection. Jesus has come to live as a human being, so I can get to know God for who he really is, and also so that I can get to know myself, and not feel inadequate, striving for some inhuman expectation of perfection.

Thank God Jesus came so that I might

know the real God, and know his love for me. His love for me as a person, a real flesh and blood person.

Jesus doesn't want any of us to look like Santa, or the 'Bearded lady Jesus image', or the 'saintly Jesus', 'or the 'Spooky Jesus', or any other expression of my imagination. Jesus wants each of you to look human, and to enjoy being what he has made you. Jesus embraced our flesh and blood, so that we also could embrace being human, and have a real down-to-earth relationship with him. Enjoy living life together, with the real person.

Let us Pray.
Jesus, we thank you for coming so that we can know the real you. So that we can know the real us, the real me, as one of the Father's children, whom he loves and is well pleased with. Remove all false images from our minds, and help us to not make you into our image, but may our lives be an ever growing into your image as your disciples. Amen.

25 December 2010
Jesus, The Real God behind the Myth
Christmas Day



Today I'm reminded that Jesus was born that I might get to know the real God, and not some myth people have dreamed up, or simply a reflection of my perceived needs. Of course it is important to get to know the real person if you want to build a meaningful relationship with them.

God definitely wants to build a meaningful relationship with us, both as individuals and as a community. Of course if all God is, is the great fix-it-man in the sky, there is no basis for a real, meaningful relationship. If God is merely a reflection of my perceived needs,

there to do what I can't, there to get me out of trouble, then there is no basis for a real, meaningful relationship. Let alone a loving relationship. It leads to us remaking Jesus in our image, rather than us being moulded to his likeness.

An example of this comes from the movie; 'Talladega Nights'. 'Will Ferrell, in typical over-the-top style, plays the fictional Nascar champion, Ricky Bobby. In one scene Ricky Bobby sits down to dinner with his wife, Carly; his two sons, Walker and Texas Ranger; his father-in-law, Chip; and his racing

partner, Cal, and says grace. Addressing his prayer to "dear Lord baby Jesus," Ricky begins with thanks for the bountiful harvest of Dominoes, KFC, and Taco Bell set before him, as well as for his family and his best friend, Cal. He then asks Jesus to use his 'baby Jesus powers' to heal Chip's bad leg, at which point his wife, Carly, interjects: Carly: You know Jesus did grow up. You don't always have to call him 'baby.' Ricky: I like the Christmas Jesus best and I'm sayin' grace. When you say grace you can say it to grown-up Jesus, teenage Jesus, bearded Jesus, or

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



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

whoever you want... [continues praying] Dear tiny Jesus, with your golden fleece diapers, with your tiny little fat balled-up fist... Chip [yelling]: He was a man! He had a beard. Ricky: Look, I like the baby Jesus version the best. Do you hear me?	eagle's wings, and singin' lead vocals for Lynard Skynard with, like, an angel band, and I'm in the front row, and I'm hammered drunk. After Carly puts an end to the theological discussion by asking Ricky to finish saying	endorsements (he even fulfils his contractual obligation to mention his sponsor Powerade). The whole scene is a farcical reminder of the temptation felt by those who don't read the Gospels to fashion Jesus in their own image." (Re Jesus by Michael Frost & Alan Hirsch p89,90)
Inspired by this discussion about Jesus, Ricky's friend Cal decides to throw in his favourite image as well:	How has Jesus shaped you?	Christmas is all about God,
Cal: I like to picture Jesus in a tuxedo T-shirt, cos it says, like, I wanna be formal, but I'm here to party too. I like to party, so I like my Jesus to party. Walker: I like to picture Jesus as a ninja fighting off evil samurai. Cal :I like to picture Jesus with, like, giant	grace, he continues praying: "Dear eight-pound, six-ounce infant Jesus; don't even know a word yet, just a little infant so cuddly, still omnipotent, we just thank you..." The bulk of Ricky's prayer is an expression of gratitude for his hot wife, his success on the track, and the millions of dollars he's made in	tearing down the veil so that we get to see the real person behind all the hype. So you can have a real relationship, with the real person, and not be left with those false images which I've created, or find acceptable according to my ideas of what God should be like. Each Christmas Jesus calls us back to read his life story, not to fashion him in our

own image, but to see Jesus for who he is, so that he fashions us in his image.	option but to have his executed." (Re Jesus by Michael Frost & Alan Hirsch p95)	At Christmas time we, as a society, have gone so far as to replace Jesus with someone we feel better meets what we want; Santa. That jolly old man who makes us feel good and gives us gifts to enjoy. Santa doesn't rock the boat, we even us him to keep the kids in line, because if you're not good, Santa won't bring you any presents.
The different images we have of Jesus can offer us a glimpse but they can also obscure, they can be as much about us as Jesus. In this picture, "The bearded lady' Jesus exudes an abstracted serenity, gentleness, and peace. And yet the Jesus we meet in the Gospels is at times frustrated, disappointed, annoyed and, worse still angered... He exasperated his rivals, unsettled his friends, and drove his enemies mad. Says Alison Morgan, 'Jesus was a difficult and uncooperative revolutionary who so threatened the established order of the day that there seemed to be no	How has Jesus shaped you that you are such a revolutionary, not content with consumerism, but passionate about	
	To have a real relationship you need to get real.	
	taking a day off, so that relationships can be strengthened and the time given to loving people? How has Jesus shaped you, that you unsettle the established order of this worldly kingdom?	As I read Jesus life story, he doesn't look anything like Santa. Thank God for that. Jesus isn't some fake, jolly old man in a red suit, that simply doesn't suit real life. Jesus is dressed in real flesh and blood, just like me, so that I can celebrate and enjoy being human. So I don't have to try and escape to some mythical world of unbridled success and
	Even the baby Jesus rocked the boat. Herod was sent into a spin, trying to kill him. Herod didn't want to be dethroned.	