

to build an empire, but not that sort. Definitely not one that is forced, and not one that is located in any particular location.

Jesus' plan is to win people's trust. He has won their souls and has the right, the power and authority to judge them. To judge them forgiven. To judge them a child of God, whom he loves, and is enthusiastic about sharing his life with them. Jesus' plan is to win people's trust, inviting them to share life with him, person to person. Starting now living person to person through the Holy Spirit, and later living in peace and

celebration when Jesus returns. Jesus' plan is to build relationships of trust, which are open and honest, where all fear is gone, and true love finds the right sort of ground to grow and flourish in. Where people aren't competing against each other to get what they want, but are working together, following Jesus' plan, living out the wonderful detail he gives, building a community that reflects Jesus very nature and personality, which embodies Jesus character. So I have one simple message today; build your life on Jesus'

plan. Build your life on Jesus' plan, and grow as a mature citizen of his kingdom, always seeking his will, so that his kingdom comes.

Let us pray. Jesus thank you for revealing the Father's plan so that we can build our lives according to it. Show us where we've got it right so we can strengthen those areas. And show us where we have wondered off so we can get back on track. Jesus we trust you with our lives, and there is no-one else we'd rather share life with. Amen.

26 December 2010

Jesus' Plan

Christmas 1—Matthew 2:13-23



Who likes it when a plan you've made comes together? In the opening chapters of Matthew, which we've been reflecting on over this Christmas season, we are reminded of God's plan and the fact that it is coming together.

Admittedly Herod had other ideas. His plan was to be King of the Jews. And Herod was pretty good at scheming and planning to get his own way. In fact he was very accustomed to getting his own way, and reacted badly when his will was challenged. As was witnessed by his brutality, killing babies, because one of them threatened

his plan, threatened him getting his own way. And he had worked hard, he'd planned strategically to get where he was, and nobody was going to take it from him.

Herod mightn't have liked God's plan, but he couldn't stop it. From the moment of Jesus' birth he was on his way to be crowned, 'King of the Jews'. That was a title that Herod could not have, no matter how much planning and scheming and skilful political manoeuvring he did.

This reveals the backdrop to God's plan. We have a power struggle. There is only room for one

King, but we have many contenders. The result is conflict. That certainly can be seen in our world today. We have competing ideas on how best to do things. We have competing kingdoms, wrestling to get supremacy, and each believing they have the right. The backdrop in which God's plan is being played out is this struggle for power, for control, to be the boss.

Isn't it interesting that when we look at world history we see countless examples of people seeking to get power and authority, so that their will is done. People out to get their own way, so that their will is done,

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

that their kingdom comes.

Matthew begins by reflecting on how God’s perfect plan has been at work; “there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.” (Matt. 1:17) God’s plan has been coming together beautifully.

And then Matthew points to how God’s plan is being fulfilled in all its detail. “All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet. ‘The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel (which means God with us).’” Matt. 1:22/Isa. 7:14.

When Herod inquired about where the Messiah was to be born the Priests replied; “In Bethlehem in Judea for this is what the prophet has written: ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of

Jesus’ Plan being fulfilled.

Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.” Matt. 2:5/Micah 5:2,4
And this morning we heard; “And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: ‘Out of Egypt I called my son.’” Matt. 2:14/Hosea 11:1.

“Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was

fulfilled: ‘A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.’” Matt. 2:18/ Jer. 31:15.

“So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: ‘He will be called a Nazarene.’” Matt. 2:23

Here we are privileged to witness God’s plan coming together in all its detail. This isn’t just something that happened, it was planned, and God’s plan is still being implemented today, in all its detail.

Which I’m thankful for, because I’m part of that detail, and not

some mishap of nature.

This is part of the Good News. We know God’s plan and have been invited to be a living part of it. Living in harmony with God’s plan for the world, what a wonderful privilege. Not to be fighting against God’s plan but enjoying seeing it come about, being part of that wonderful plan.

Herod kicked against God’s plan in Jesus, and what a horrid mess he became. I’m sure he wanted to be loved, accepted, to leave a lasting legacy, having lived a life of purpose and meaning. But in his plan to be king he put himself at odds with Jesus, the rightful king. And Herod ended up a twisted mess, never becoming the special

unique individual he could have become, he could be now, in Jesus’ kingdom.

Jesus’ great passion is that we live his plan. That we live with him as King, so that we grow and develop into that special unique individual he

Jesus’ Plan Expansion phase

has planned for us to be in his kingdom. Jesus’ plan is now in an expansion phase; claiming more and more people for his kingdom. That also means we’re in a time of conflict, for there are other kingdoms also seeking to expand, wanting to capture all the power and influence they can have, enslaving people to their regimes.

In Jesus’ plan this certainly isn’t the time to settle down and be comfortable. That’s coming latter. I know I’d like to take it easy, sit down and relax, but then I’d be out of sink with Jesus’ plan, now we are at war. And the stakes are high.

We’re not fighting for land or wealth, but the people we love. Jesus’ plan certainly reveals that this conflict is over people. Over those we love, those he loves with his life. That’s why the stakes are so high, we’re not losing things, they can always be replaced, people can’t.

Jesus’ plan isn’t to build a political empire, to capture land, and impose his kingdom’s rules on that land. Jesus is out