

In the third temptation the devil tries to muddy the waters with is by quoting the bible. Just because someone, even me, quotes the bible don't swallow it till you check it out. Read the verse in its context, test what the person has said with Jesus' clear revelation about himself.

The devil cleverly twists the bible to want us to believe we have to do something to prove we trust God. Don't ever get sucked in by a dare, because the moment you take on any dare you've just proved you doubt yourself, that you doubt what the other person is saying. If Jesus had jumped all he would have done was prove he doubted the Father's clear word. After all it was the Father who said; "You are my Son, whom I love;

with you I am well pleased." (Luke 3:22)

And those are the same words, in Christ, that the Father spoke over you at your baptism. Don't get sucked in trying to get God to prove himself, rather enjoy being his loved child and be living it.

This week remember to listen as you read the Scriptures, and give Dad the space to speak his words of love to you. Don't read it as a text book, read it with an open heart expecting the Holy Spirit to communicate with you, growing you as Jesus' disciple.

Let us pray.

Jesus, show us where the devil is trying to deceive us. Help us support and encourage each other in reading the bible, giving you space in our lives so you can communicate with us. So that we can test what we believe you are saying with your clear word. Jesus speak to us and show us what you want this your community of faith to be and to do. Amen.

21 February 2010

SCRIPTURE

Luke 4:1-13



This is the third Sunday in our 40 days of Listening. Week one we were reminded of the centrality of Jesus. He is our Leader, so whatever he says goes. So it's not about me coming up with a good idea and then asking Jesus to bless it, but it is all about me, us, understanding what Jesus is already blessing and knowing that together we have the privilege of being part of it as we faithfully follow Jesus, doing what he says.

Last week we were reminded of the importance of being made in the image of Jesus. That is the goal of us as individuals and as Jesus' community. We conform to his image, Jesus isn't to be made in the shape of our imagination. We fit his image as we listen to what Jesus reveals.

Which is our focus for this week, listening to what Jesus reveals. Now this isn't some mystery, for we have God's clear

words revealed to us in the Scriptures.

When I hear the word; 'revelation' it always makes me reflect on how essential self-revelation is to any healthy relationship. Without someone telling you about themselves you can't really get to know them. Relationships don't work all that well when based on guess work, we need to listen to what people reveal about themselves.

In today's Gospel reading we have the account of Jesus' temptation, which comes straight after Jesus' baptism and before his public ministry. Why is it important for this temptation to be revealed to us? I'm sure throughout Jesus life he faced many temptations, why does he choose to reveal this one to us?

Two things come to my mind; the first is it shows that Jesus' ministry is based on the Father's

will. Jesus has not come to do something he's dreamed up, or to push his own barrow. How does Jesus stay on track? He quotes his Father's clear words. The devil tries to muddy the waters so that things look confusing, but Jesus sticks to the clear revelation of his Father's will and doesn't get sucked in. Jesus hasn't come to do his own thing, but he has come seeking to follow what the Father wants.

The second thought that come to my mind, is that Jesus shows us how we too can stay on track as we keep ourselves focused on God's clear revelation about himself.

The devil tries to make things look complicated, tries to get our focus onto anything other than what God wants. But Jesus keeps his focus on the Father's clear revealed will. He doesn't pick some obscure passage that no one has

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

read, but he uses the clear revelation of God that all Jews would have known.

I reckon that is one of the devil's favourite tricks, to make things feel more complicated than they really are. Jesus focused on his Father's clear word in the bible and is able to navigate his way through.

Jesus is hungry, so the devil comes to muddy the waters. He focuses on Jesus' needs. Trick one, life isn't about my needs being met, no matter how pressing they feel. Once I focus on my needs, I'm in muddy water.

There is an interesting thing about our needs, I reckon mine have the habit of growing. I always seem to need more. In the end I become a slave to my felt needs.

Jesus doesn't focus on his needs being done, but on his Father's needs being met! "Jesus answered, 'It is written: "People do not live by bread alone."' (Luke 4:4) Which comes from Deuteronomy 8:3, where the history of the Children of Israel is recorded, where they were fed by

God for 40yrs in the wilderness. Something any of the Jews would have been aware of. Life is way more than food. Life for Jesus is simply about that wonderful rich, loving relationship he has with his Father. Jesus lives to do his Father's will. And the Father's will is known, he has revealed himself.

The second

What has Jesus called his community of faith to do?

temptation the devil tries to muddy the waters by offering what looks like a better, less painful and quicker way of achieving the Father's will. After all Jesus' goal is to win the world, and that's what the devil offers. And all without the pain of the cross. In fact the devil is offering, not fast food, but fast salvation. You can have it now, without all the nonsense of a wandering ministry. Without the annoying crowds, the back-biting Pharisees always out there playing their political games. Jesus you can

avoid all this and have it all in one simple step.

What was the one simple, painless thing Jesus was asked to do? "If you worship me, it will all be yours." (Luke 4:7) 'It will all be yours', doesn't that sound enticing. But it is a lie.

Jesus keeps his focus on the Father's clearly revealed will; "Jesus answered, 'It is written: "Worship the Lord your God and serve him only."' (Luke 4:8) Now that is certainly one thing God has clearly revealed about

himself, he's not interested in anything other than a faithful, monogamous relationship. We are to have only 'ONE' god. And we are to be faithful to him through thick and thin. We are to listen to what he says, and then out of trust, go and do it, just as he has called us to.

What has Jesus called his community of faith to do? Fill this church to overflowing. To attract a huge crowd, so that we have to have four services every Sunday and then still not have enough room. Jesus wants us to

gather all people to him. Is that what Jesus has called his community of faith to do?

I reckon I could attract a large crowd here every Sunday. I could put on a free keg. I could have a lucky door prize of \$500 a week. I could have slick music, good food, and all for free. Just come and enjoy, so that you're refreshed to face a new week. I could have a slick advertising campaign, with attractive people, smiling and happy about life. Come and be part of this successful group.

But what has Jesus called his community of faith to do? It is importantly Jesus' idea, that is backed by his power and authority, that we are to do what? "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:18-20)

This reminds me of the pumpkins we

planted. Mine came up and looked great. They set heaps of fruit. I was excited, looking forward to a good harvest. But one by one they all stopped growing, went brown, shrivelled up and died. Talk about disappointing. Someone told me it was because they hadn't set properly.

That's what this temptation of the devil is

Go—make disciples, who make disciples, who make disciples...

all about, the quick fix, doing it our way, because then our faith hasn't been set properly, and we won't bear the fruit Jesus wants to produce. Actually Jesus didn't ask us to fill this building, but to make disciples. We are to be making disciples; people who follow Jesus as their leader, growing daily in reflecting his image by faithfully doing what he says, by obeying what Jesus calls us to do.

One thing Jesus calls us to do is to be "devoted to the apostles' teaching..." Acts 2:42 Notice Jesus calls us to;

'obey everything I have commanded you.'

I couldn't believe it this week when I heard that a Christian of many years only this week realised that Jesus was coming back!!!

How are we doing in the disciple making stakes? Are we making disciples, who make disciples, who make disciples, ad infinitum?

Cause that's what Jesus has called us to do.

Do we send out disciples who when they come to a new area look to

make new disciples of Jesus and start off this process anew? Cause that's what Jesus has called each one of us to do, and to do it as his community of faith.

Jesus doesn't get sucked in but keeps his focus on doing his Father's will. I reckon that's what it really means to; 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.' I reckon it means doing Jesus' will in every aspect of life, seeking to grow to greater maturity in the way I live Jesus image in all I say and do.