

This New Year take a moment to reflect on how Dad's DNA is developing and maturing in your character. Not to make you feel bad, but so you don't miss-out on the best Dad has to offer. Even second best falls way too short. Dad has such great hopes and dreams for his family. Wonderful experiences to discover together, growing in love as you walk with him, talk with him, take on life together with him, even fighting the good fight with him.

Also this New Year take a moment to reflect on how Dad would like his family to share life. Again, not to go on some guilt trip, but so that you don't miss-out, that we don't

miss-out on the best Dad has to offer. How can you and I foster this wonderful family relationship we share? How can we grow in character, not only as individuals but also as Dad's family?

Jesus has birthed a new family, a family that bears the DNA of his Dad. What exciting discoveries we can have this year as we grow to greater maturity as Dad's children, and as his family. What a year of celebration we can have as we chose to live in God's choice of us, living together as the nation Jesus birthed through his birth.

Let us pray.
Jesus, thank you that in you and through you we have been birthed as one of your Father's loved, precious children, who he delights in. Fill us with the Holy Spirit that we grow to greater maturity this year discovering more of the amazing DNA you have implanted in each of us. By the Holy Spirit may we also grow as the family you have birthed us to be. Heal our sibling rivalry when it flares and grow us to be a family that enjoys sharing life together, delighting in each other as you do. Bond us together as we join with you in the good fight this year. 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

3 January 2010

CHRISTMAS 2—A NEW NATION

John 1:10-18



John 1:12,13 "Yet to all who did receive him (that's Jesus), to those who believed in his name (that's Jesus' name), he (that's God the Father) gave the right to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."

Over Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus, but in Jesus we are not only celebrating the birth of one person, we are celebrating the birth of a nation. Jesus is the first born of a new nation, of a new family.

When God called Abraham his name was originally; Abram, which means exalted father. God changed his name to Abraham; which means father of

many nations. God's plan was to grow a nation through Abraham, and it was through the birth of a child which could only have been God's doing. Both Sarah and Abraham were in their nineties when Isaac was born.

Isaac was the result of God's work, and the first of a great nation. When Isaac was born it wasn't the birth of just one person, but the beginning of God's fulfilment of his promise to make a nation out of Abraham. And that nation which can trace it's genealogy back to Abraham numbers in the millions of millions, and is still growing. But without the miracle birth of that first child none of this would have been possible. So Isaac's birth heralded the birth

of a new nation that bore not only Abraham's DNA, but it was also a nation that bore God's DNA of promise.

Isaac means; he laughs, because God had the last laugh. How could one child let alone a nation come from this man and woman who were as good as dead when it came to child birth. But Isaac was born. I'm sure to God's delight and rejoicing.

So today we are reminded that Christmas isn't just the celebration of one person's birth, but the birth of a nation. A nation that now numbers in the millions of millions, and is still growing. Today more people are being birthed into this new family of God.

This family which bears Jesus' DNA. This family which is borne as a direct result of God's decision to love, and to have a family the size of a nation. I stopped at two, but God is after millions upon millions of children to lavish his love on and share life with, rejoicing in each precious child.

The Gospel reading for today definitely emphasises this truth, that in Jesus we have the birth of a nation. So did the second reading from Ephesians; "he (that's God) chose us in him (that's Jesus)... to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship (that means we're 100%, legally binding, no doubt about it, children of God) through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will." (Ephesians 1:4,5)

I love hearing that the birth of this new nation was according to God's 'pleasure and will'. There is real joy in this birth. God is over the moon, in love with his children. This is no mistake, but God's wonderful delight. None of God's children are a mistake, but they are always the result of

Jesus' birth is the birth of a new nation

his 'pleasure and will.' We are always the result of God's love in Jesus. You're definitely a loved child of God in Jesus. No doubt about it.

Of course the whole Old Testament is a living parable about God wanting to have a family that bears his DNA. Abraham and the Israelite nation were, are a living parable about God's burning desire to have a family. A family which bears

the image of their father, because they have his DNA.

I bear the image of my earthly parents not because I chose it but because my DNA is the result of their DNA. If I tried to be somebody else I'd be denying my very core and not living true to who I am. My DNA was gifted to me and shapes me, and helps make me. That's a living parable as well.

In Jesus you are gifted with your Father's DNA. Our family is gifted with our Father's DNA, so we bear the image of our Dad. It's not of my choosing, but it is a gift. I have my Heavenly Father's DNA, through his Son Jesus. Now that's something worth pondering over this week.

So at Christmas we celebrate the birth of a nation, of a nation that bears their fathers

DNA, so they look like him, they walk like him, they talk like him, so that they're a chip off the old block.

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of a nation, because God has chosen to have children, because God has the passionate desire to have a family, a family that bear his image.

Why are we called to act, talk, walk, live in a certain fashion? Because our Father wants us to grow true to our DNA, to grow true to who he has birthed us to be. And he has birthed us to be a nation that reflects their Dad's image. So to be anything else would be a denial of myself and a rejection of the Father who loves me, and has birthed me.

Isn't that interesting, when I break one of the Ten Commandments, I haven't broken a rule, I've broken myself,

because I've started acting contrary to my DNA. I'm not being true to myself, and I'm also breaking my Dad's heart.

So never obey the Ten Commandments because it is the right thing to do, but because you're staying true to who you are, and you

This nation bears Jesus' DNA

love your Dad too much to hate him, rejecting his DNA, his very nature which he birthed in you.

So when you hear that the Church is to live in community, don't hear it as a law, or something we have to do, but how else does a loving family live. If I love my parents, what's more natural than wanting to spend time with them? If I love my brothers and sisters, what's more natural

than to share life with them? It's not a law, it's simply being true to who we are, it's simply being true to Dad's love for us.

Our Dad certainly doesn't like sibling rivalry. He delights in his children playing well together, sharing life together with him.

Families aren't individuals doing their own thing independent of each other, but it is where lives are intertwined, and the hurts and joys of life are shared together. I recon that's Dad's desire for us, his loved, precious family.

A healthy family doesn't live independent of each other, but interdependent. Their lives are intertwined. Which is a good thing. It is good to share life together as Dad's loved, precious children, who he has chosen, and delights in.