

of faith. That we are changed to love from the core of who we are in him. That's true for us as individuals as much as it is true for us as a community.

Devoid of this love, devoid of this core we have lost our way. Jesus doesn't want you, us to be lost, but to be living true to who we are in him, true to our new nature, that we love from the core of who we are in him.

Let us pray.
Jesus your love is truly amazing, wonderful, beautiful.
Daily grow us to live out of the core of who we are in you.
Remove anything in us that prevents this, and fan into flame all those habits and actions we do that reflect you, that reflect you nature.
Jesus grow your character in us, to your glory, honour and praise. Amen.

Christ Church Lutheran

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

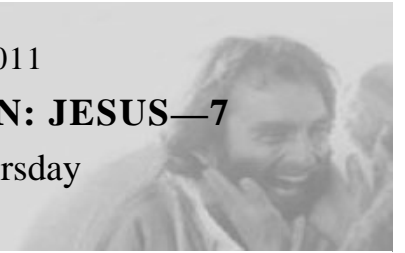


Jesus' Disciples, who grow disciples, who grow disciples, who grow disciples...

21 April 2011

WHO IS THIS MAN: JESUS—7

Maundy Thursday



Tonight we see a beautiful side to Jesus' personality. Jesus graciously and humbly goes and serves his disciples by washing their feet. What a beautiful act of love.

As I watch Jesus, I learn that love doesn't always smell like roses. I'm sure the disciple's feet had a different aroma! Jesus lives out that love often smells like sweat, like hard work where you end up feeling tired.

As I watch Jesus I'm also reminded of something I know; love involves action and not just a lot of nice sounding, but empty words. I always find it

interesting that I don't find the words; 'I love you' on Jesus' lips. But his life shouts it loud and clear. We all know the truth in the old saying; 'Words are cheap'.

Notice I didn't say words are unimportant. The way we speak is very powerful. Through our words we can encourage and build up another person, or we can criticize and pull them down. Our words are powerful tools for showing love.

I also notice from this story that Jesus' character knows how to love unconditionally.

When I hear these words I'm often sceptical, feeling that people interpret this to mean I'll let you do whatever you like, because to confront them on an issue wouldn't be nice. That's definitely not what Jesus does. Jesus speaks the truth in love; to benefit those who listen, for their good.

Jesus loves unconditionally because his love isn't motivated by my action. It's who he is. God is love (1 John 4:7-21) Jesus' love is unconditional because it comes from the core of his being.

So when I read Jesus new commandment I

don't find a threatening motive. Rather Jesus says; "Love one another. As I HAVE loved you, so you must love one another." (John 13:34)

Thankfully Jesus love for me isn't conditional on me being loveable. I love the word; HAVE. That means what Jesus has done in the past is still good today. It's already done, and still in action. Jesus love for you has been lived out in our history, and is still in action today. Because Jesus hasn't changed; he still is love, love personified.

So I can rely on Jesus. I can trust him implicitly, because his character isn't going to change. 'As I HAVE loved you' will stay the same.

And now Jesus has empowered us to live as he does; from who we are, loved children of God the Father. So as with Jesus we can love from the core of our being.

That's part of the

**As I HAVE
Loved You.**

wonderful Good News of Easter. I'm no longer motivated by the curse of sin and the fear it creates. Through Jesus' death and resurrection I am now part of his kingdom. I now can live motivated by his grace, based on Jesus sacrifice on the cross, living out his love in his new creation.

To love unconditionally in Jesus means my

motive is sown up. I love because I'm loved, not because I'm more loveable than anyone else. Not because you're totally irresistible, that just makes it easier.

But easy or hard, my new nature in Jesus stays the same.

Which I also notice about Jesus, the circumstance he finds himself in doesn't determine his action, it gives an environment for his loving character to find expression. So much so that circumstances don't shape Jesus, his character shapes the circumstances and so shapes the environment.

So to love unconditionally means to love from the core of who you are in Jesus. Then we too can begin to

shape the environment we live in, rather than being putty in the hands of the crowd.

For Jesus unconditional love doesn't mean we can simply keep on doing whatever we want. That is actually the problem; me simply doing whatever I want, when I want, how I want. That's not unconditional love. And it's not unconditional love to let me keep living that way. That's the way of death, not life. Please stop me living that way if you see me doing it.

Jesus' unconditional love actually seeks to change me. Did you notice the word 'must' in Jesus' new commandment? That's not a conditional clause which determine

whether Jesus will love me or not. How ridiculous for me to believe I can shape Jesus character, his very nature. For me to believe that would be total arrogance. And in the face of that arrogance Jesus would stay true to who he is and live

Jesus Is after change.

from the core of who he is. I don't shape Jesus, he does hope to shape me. To shape me so that I live from his core of love.

Yes Jesus is after a change. Jesus doesn't suffer the hell of the cross for nothing to change. Jesus doesn't go to hell so we can go on treating each other poorly, lovelessly. Jesus is after change. Jesus has the power to

change people, to grow us to greater maturity, becoming more and more like him. Thank God for that!!!

That's the emphasis within the must; Jesus saying; 'Let my love change you. Let my love free you. Let my love shape you'.

Shape your decisions, your choices, your finances, your sexuality, your response to hurt and pain. Yes Jesus wants to change us so that we can be a glowing reflection of his nature. So that we can love from the core of who we are in him. Beautiful!

So as you once again hear the Easter story let is remind you of the wonderful changes that Jesus has come to make in your life, and in the life of his community