

conversation I won't hear anything.

Jesus is also reminding me that the same is true with all my other relationships. As I grow in being focused and listening to Jesus, in sharing with him from the heart, I'm also developing the basic habits I need for any healthy relationship. After all Jesus wants me to love others as I am loved by him. His dream is that his nature becomes infectious in all of my relationships and that the love he has ripples through into all my relationships, so that they can bring joy.

I'd like to encourage everyone to daily have a focused time with Jesus, for half an hour or an hour, reading his word, listening to him, sharing with him what's on your heart,

especially the people on your heart.

Let's all take time as Jesus disciples to find a quiet place where we can be focused on him, knowing he's focused on us. Why not begin by asking him what to read from the bible, and then as you read, listen, and enjoy being together. And then let this pattern infect all your relationships, making the time to be focused on those people you love, enjoying their company, as together with Jesus you go and create amazing adventures together, as you go as the Father has sent you, to change the world, so that they come to know his love for them. Knowing the

joy of his grace, the joy of sins forgiven, the joy of a living, vibrant, loving relationship with the Father, through the Son, lived out in the Spirit.

Let us pray.
Jesus help me to slow down and spend time with you. There's nothing more I want to do. Help me to also apply this to all those special relationships you've blessed me with that together we might reap the joy of life lived to the full with you, as together we venture into winning the world for the Father. Amen.

Christ Church Lutheran

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



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

7 August 2011

WALKING WITH GOD—2



Last week we began a new series entitled; *Walking with God*. The inspiration being the book, 'Walking with God' by John Eldredge.

John begins by asking the simple question; Does God still speak? In other words, is it possible to have a living relationship with God?

Jesus' answer is, in him, most definitely. Jesus whole goal was to bring us back into a healthy, loving, vibrant relationship with God. That's what Jesus gave his life to create. That's what it means to have our sins forgiven. That which destroyed our relationship with God, which made it impossible to get up close and personal with him has been removed. Our sin has been paid for through Jesus

sacrificial death, and a new relationship has been opened up with Jesus resurrection which we can begin living now, finding its completion when Jesus returns.

John then looks at how this is lived out in the different seasons of life. The first season is 'Summer'. This symbolises the season of joy, of happiness, of life. This reminds me that Jesus' heart's desire is to celebrate life with us, his friends.

He doesn't want to live estranged, alien, remote, but as the best of friends sharing life together, celebrating the joys of life together. Friends are the people we share the adventure of life with, enjoying each other's company, building great memories together.

Jesus uses the imagery of a vine and its branches to describe this intimate, close relationship. He says; "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing... As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love... I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." (John 15:5,9,11)

Jesus most definitely wants to invest himself in us so that we can find the joy of life shared together.

One of the joys of life is business. Have you ever noticed that when life becomes frantic the joy goes out

of it? What does the bible say God did on the seventh day of creation? He rested. He took time to enjoy his creation. How do you take time to enjoy the people around you? How do you take time to enjoy Jesus and his love for you?

I've noticed that when I'm busy I forget to enjoy the people in my life. I've got things to do. I've got dead-lines to meet. I've got important things to get done. All of which don't love me. All of which don't enjoy life with me. God took time to enjoy us, to love us, other things could wait.

Who wants to be loved and enjoy life? Remember the ultimate joy of life comes from the people in your life and the quality of those relationships. If I don't make time for people, for having shared experiences with them, of simply being in their presence and enjoying

their company, the inevitable will happen.

That's what Jesus described. Once a branch no longer remains in the vine it shrivels and dies. That's the last thing Jesus wants. His passion is that our relationship grows and we enjoy discovering

Jesus wants to share his adventure of life with you.

life together, as together we make great life experience to rejoice in.

When I think back on the good old days, it wasn't that they were any better than today, but I remember the shared life experiences I enjoyed with my friends. I remember the fun of holidays together. The adventures we shared.

Jesus wants to share his adventure of life with

you, building great life experiences to rejoice in together. But if I'm frantically busy all the time, what am I endanger of losing?

So it is good to slow down and talk with each other. John's first tip in walking with God is to slow down and talk with him. To focus

on the person you're talking with. Which isn't easy when you're frantically busy, living under the continual pressure of deadlines to meet, things you have to get done.

When I've got to watch the TV I'm definitely not focused on anyone who is talking with me. I'll forget what they said before the next bounce.

Jesus when talking about prayer said; "when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father..." (Matt. 6:6) Be focused on the

person you're talking to. Remove the distractions both physically and mentally.

I'm sure we've all experienced talking to someone whose thoughts were elsewhere, and we didn't have their attention. Not the most rewarding form of communication. I always find it easier to pay attention and actually listen to the other person when I'm not doing something else.

I know in Jesus I've always got God's attention, 100%. At times he doesn't always have my attention, because I get busy with all this other important stuff. But Jesus has promised to give me his full attention. Here's just one of Jesus' promises regarding prayer; "I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to

you... I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit – fruit that will last – and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: Love each other." (Jn 15:15-17)

That's Jesus saying, 'I'm listening, and I

Jesus is listening. Am I too busy?

want your life to be filled with joy. To be filled with fruit that will last. That's first of all a loving relationship with him, where you share the adventure of life together, creating wonderful shared memories and great hopes and dreams together. But not just the two of you, Jesus wants the whole family to be involved. The fruit that Jesus wants is a loving family that shares the adventures of life together, creating

wonderful shared memories as together they go as the Father sends them, to change the world. What great hopes and dreams Dad has to share with his family. To change the world, loving one person at a time, just as we are loved by Jesus; being prepared to die for each other, to give ourselves selflessly for each other, so that the other person benefits according to their needs.

I wonder what the world would look like if we all lived out our Heavenly Father's dream?

Where do you take time in your week to be focused on Jesus, giving him your full attention, listening to what he has to say; reading the bible, asking him questions, quietly listening? Because quite simply if I don't take time to be focused and invest myself in the