

themselves; it's not about me. To take up our cross, or crib. To take up Jesus' lifestyle, his way of sacrificial love, which chooses to be loving because that's who we are, and to follow Jesus because we know we can trust him. Trust him with our lives.

What will it be the money or the crib? Where will you risk your life?

Let us Pray.
Jesus, we gratefully accept your invitation to share life with you. Thank you. Help us daily to live true to who we are in you; that we deny ourselves take up our crib and follow you, enjoying life with you, your way. Amen

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

11 December 2011

HOW DO WE PRIORITISE? - 4

Luke 1:26-38



How do we Prioritise? – 4 JESUS IS BORN IN PERSON

When I was growing up there was a quiz show where the contestant got to the point of either choosing a known sum of money or picking a box with an unknown prize. Were they going to take the money or the box?

Today we are faced with a similar dilemma, but it's not the money or the box, we're faced with the money or the crib?

Money holds the illusion that we can control the future. With a large sum of money we could travel, help the poor,

become financially independent. A large sum of money could meet many of our priorities. Do we go for what seems the sure thing or risk it all.

Life is an act of risk.

We're faced with options, that's why knowing how to prioritise is crucial. For what is at stake are our lives. This isn't some games show where the consequences aren't life or death. We daily risk our lives with the choices we make. And the choices we make are influenced by the priorities we have.

What do we find in the crib?

A person. Will they make me rich? Will they keep me from ill health? Will they ensure my life to be trouble free and enjoyable? Did you notice that all of these questions have made the assumption that my decisions revolve around me.

The person in the crib reminds me that life doesn't revolve around me. In fact if I was to die tonight, the world would go on without missing a beat. The world doesn't revolve around you or I. To hold this priority will certainly lead to faulty decision making, missing the mark.

The world does revolve around the baby born of Mary. The baby whose first bed was a crib; a feed trough. He is the one on whom the world depends. The one the world needs to feed on if it is to live.

If Jesus was to call an end to the world tonight, there wouldn't be a tomorrow for the world as we know it. The world revolves around Jesus. The world depends on Jesus. The world belongs to Jesus. It exists for Jesus, not the other way around.

Of course when we don't choose the crib but the money we're turning reality upside down. We're acting as if the world exists for me and for my enjoyment. We live making decisions based on what I want,

and how this world can meet my perceived needs. It's so easy to live as if the world exists for me, that it owes me, rather than I'm part of the world and I exist for God, for Jesus.

I live in a world that

What do you choose: the money or the crib?

will always choose the money, will always ask the question; 'What's in it for me?' If it doesn't profit me, why bother! We live in a world ruled by the profit margin. But when we look inside the crib, we don't find a profit margin.

So if my priorities are based around the question; whatever form it might take – 'What's in it for me?'

My priorities will always end up wrong!

What does Jesus call his disciples to do? "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will

lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it." (Luke 9:23,24)

What strange thoughts; deny yourself, lose your life so that Jesus might profit! This is Jesus' framework for healthy priorities; and it appears to be upside down, but in reality we're the ones looking at life the wrong way round.

Video Clip: Upside Down
Jesus doesn't come offering a great

windfall, a huge profit. In fact following Jesus cost most of the apostles their lives, being martyred because they were known as Jesus' followers.

Often in the Gospels you'll read of Jesus commanding someone he has healed not to tell anyone. If I was healed of a terrible disease my first instinct would be to tell everyone. Maybe even get it on the news so everyone could be drawn to Jesus and be healed. I believe Jesus commands these people not to speak because it will only reinforce what he has come to break down. People will be tempted to look at Jesus as the greatest pot of gold, for them to use and be set free

to get back to their lives.

Jesus doesn't want us to get back to our lives. He wants us to become part of his. That's the Good News, Jesus wants you and I to become personally part of his life. Not the other

In the crib we see; profit or a person?

way around. If we live graciously letting Jesus be involved in our lives we're simply using him to get what we want. And who really wants to be in that sort of a relationship. Nobody!

When I look in the crib I'm not after a commodity to be consumed. A consumer society only leaves people

feeling empty and used. And who wants that? Nobody!

Thankfully when we look in the crib we see a face. A face that belongs to the God of the Universe.

Looking back at me, that I might be loved by him, simply because that's who he is. Jesus doesn't love from the motive; what's in it for me. Jesus gives himself

totally, denies himself, takes up the life the Father set before him and follows the Father's will. Jesus loves because that who he is, and Jesus refuses to be anything other than true to himself. So Jesus denies himself takes up his crib and follows the Father's will.

Which is the lifestyle he calls his disciples to. To deny