

other gods because Our Father has shown us that He can and should be feared above all other things.

This fear of God does not need to be an afraid fear, nor does it need to be a worried fear. It is a reverential fear, a fear that brings us to worship and devotion before our God. And it is a fear that we are given by Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

### **Freed to Fear so we can Free the Fearful**

After Jesus had revealed himself to the disciples and has given them His peace, he charged them with a great responsibility.

This is the same responsibility that He gives to us today. That we pronounce the forgiveness of sins. Why do we have this responsibility? It is because we have been forgiven. We have received the peace of God, so why wouldn't we want to give this peace to all those around us? The overflowing joy that we receive at the knowledge of our eternal life is one that does exactly that, overflow. We have been given the joy that overflows, the overflowing of this joy flows over into those around us, infecting them with the peace and joy which the Holy Spirit brings.

Today as we celebrate pentecost, we remember the moment when Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit into our lives. When He gave us the responsibility of proclaiming the forgiveness of sins to all those around us. When he gave us the opportunity to receive His great peace and joy. And when He made us free from fear, so that we could truly fear, love and trust in God above all things.

And the peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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## **Christ Church Lutheran**

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



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

12 June 2011

## **PENTECOST**

James Leech



### **“!!!FEAR!!!”**

Grace and Peace to you from God our Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. Amen

### **Fear**

Have you ever thought about the word fear? Not the feeling of fear but just what the word fear means? Does its meaning look at the action of “shaking in your boots”, scared of someone or something? Does it mean worrying about the things that you need, like food, clothing, savings or health? Or does it mean holding something in a very high regard and even ‘idolizing’ or worshipping

something or someone?

The disciples in today's Gospel reading did exactly these things. They feared. They were shaking in their boots, afraid of what the Jews might do to them. They worried about their lives; about what would happen to them now that Jesus had died. And they devoted their time and energy to their fear of the Jewish leaders, as is seen by the fact that they were hiding behind a locked door rather than spending time helping the sick and the poor and the needy.

But is it only the apostles that are guilty of these things?

We too fear things that are beyond our control. We fear for the safety of our selves and for those close to us, we worry about what we will eat and wear, and we hold in high regard and even idolize those things that we want or possess. Are we really that different to the apostles?

One fear that many people have is the fear of isolation. The fear of being alone. When I think of that room where the disciples hid behind the locked door, I imagine an image of total isolation. Yes

they had each other, but each of them would have been in their own world of loss, mourning and fearing. We too at times feel alone, even when we have people around us. Maybe we are in mourning, or are fearful of those things that burden us. Maybe it is guilt of things that we have done, or those things left undone.

This morning we heard that "Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy on us, and has given his only Son to die for us, and for his sake forgives us all our sins." But do we believe it? Do you truly believe that because Jesus died for you, and that because you are baptised into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, that you

are clean, that all sin has been washed away from you, and that you are now the child of God?

### **Freed from Fear**

When Jesus entered the room that the disciples were in; He said "Peace be with

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Jesus' goal is to create a healthy, loving relationship

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you". This ordinary Jewish greeting "Shalom" is used in the most amazing extraordinary way. Not only is Jesus Christ greeting them. He is announcing himself as present among them. And He is giving them the ability to have peace.

Remember the disciples were full of fear, they were afraid and they had locked the door.

Then Jesus appears before them. The one who they had lost had appeared to them and this by itself gave them peace. But Jesus did more than appear to them. He gave them true peace. He gave them their focus back. They were no longer looking within themselves and looking at what they had lost, and what the future might bring

them. But they focused once more of that which was most important, namely, Jesus Christ and the forgiveness that he brings. What joy must have been the disciples when they saw and knew that Christ had been risen. When his peace that passed their understanding was brought to them.

The bible verse here says that they were overflowing with joy. And we too overflow with joy when we hear, and see, and know that our sins are forgiven.

Have you ever felt like the things that you have done are so bad that you don't want to go out side, or even go to church. Or maybe there is guilt for the things that you

haven't done or the people you haven't spoken to. Maybe you feel like this today. Maybe the reason you are hearing this right now is that God wants you to hear that your sins are forgiven, and that because of God's great love for you, He sent His son to die for you so that your sin could be forgiven. The fear of your sin is gone. It has been washed away in the

blood of your saviour. And as we said after the absolution this morning. The peace of the Lord is with you. **We have been freed, by the forgiveness of Christ which brings us His peace.**

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The Holy Spirit is God living that relationship NOW

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### **Freed to Fear**

Earlier I asked about the meaning of 'fear' and looked at what the definition actually meant. We looked at the trembling fear, or the "shaking in the boots fear"; we looked at the worry for material needs; and we looked at fear being an idolization, or worship of someone or something. When we look at the First

Commandment "You shall have no other God's except me" in light of the word fear; we remember what Luther said this meant: "You should FEAR, love and trust in God above all things". We have been freed from worldly fears (as we heard earlier), by the forgiveness of our sins. But why are we freed from fear? We are freed from fear, **so that**

**we can fear,** love and trust in God above all other things. We no longer fear what others may do to us, because we love God and know that God loves us and has promised us eternal life. We no longer worry about what we will eat or wear, because we trust in God to provide us with everything we need. And we do not fear those things we want, or worship