

This week when you're challenged to make a stand; stand with Jesus. Take the time to talk with him about the situation. Invite him to give you his wisdom, love and courage to do his will, and then pay the cost, live this most precious relationship. Trust Jesus and walk with him.

Where are you called to take a stand with Jesus this week? Not to hate your enemy. Not to label another person as an enemy. To seek to

love other people as Jesus loves you. To put Jesus' wisdom, love and courage into action, being his representative in a situation?

This week pay the price and live with Jesus; making him personal to other people.

Let us pray. Jesus thank you for coming to us in person. Free us from failing to see another person in need of love and acceptance, and simply reacting to our hurts

and opinions. Jesus thank you for seeing us and building a relationship of love and trust with us. May this always be the foundation for all our actions in life. Help us to live taking our stand with you. Amen.

**Christ Church Lutheran**

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



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



26 June 2011

**IT COSTS TO TAKE A STAND**

Matthew 10:26-42

Today's gospel reading reminded me that it costs to take a stand. When you stand up for what you believe in, when you stand up for the truth, it costs. And as Jesus' disciples are we called to take a stand? I can hear you all saying in your mind; you didn't know I was a mind reader. I can hear everyone saying; 'Yes! A million, billion times yes. Yes we are called to take a stand for Jesus.' We are certainly called to take a stand and be known as Jesus' friends, as Jesus' disciples. And to do that there is always a cost. The cost is your life.

You're asked to be witness. Do you tell what you saw, or do you avoid the situation because it might get messy. What would you do? I can read your

mind again, cause I hear you saying; 'Tell the truth. Tell what you saw. Take a stand for what is right.'

To stand up as a witness and to tell your story will cost you. It will cost you your life; some people won't want to hear. Especially if what you say doesn't fit in with what they want to hear.

I've noticed that I can become selectively deaf when it's something I don't want to hear.

To stand up and follow Jesus always costs. And Jesus does call us to be his witness, to tell our story of life with him.

Some people won't like it. Some people mightn't care. Others might support us. But the reason we take a stand with Jesus and tell our story is simple.

It's the truth, Jesus is the truth. The truth isn't some abstract ideology, but a person.

I find that very interesting. When truth is about some abstract ideology I'm happy to debate it, to think I'm right and you're wrong. This reminds me of our SOAP readings for this week from Timothy. In both letters Paul reminds Timothy not to get involved in such debates; "They have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions and constant friction between people..." (1 Tim. 6:4)

Rather Jesus makes life personal. He came in person. Built personal relationships with his disciples. You can't be

a disciple of an abstract thought. You can be a disciple of a person, walking with them through life, growing in that relationship. Jesus, the person, died on the cross, and rose again, in person. The truth Jesus calls us to live isn't some ideology, but a very personal relationship with him.

A relationship where we develop a character that reflects Jesus.

Jesus takes me away from having debates about abstract ideologies so that I can see a person. One of the legacies of sin is that it leaves me hiding in the bushes. Arguing about some abstract ideology is just another example of me hiding, trying to put up a smoke screen of respectability. I'm right after all, which then justifies my action. I'm right, you're wrong, you need to change.

Jesus comes and sees you, and gives his life

for you, so that you might be loved by God, so that you might find life in a living, loving, relationship of trust based on God's commitment to you. Jesus isn't interested in having theological arguments, he's come to embrace you in his love, in person.

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**If I follow Jesus it costs me my life; and I get?**

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Where are you tempted to demonise people because they hold a different point of view to you? A few situations jump to my mind immediately. This is something to talk over with Jesus.

Because I know Jesus doesn't want me to demonise anyone. What do you think Jesus wants me to do? Does he want me to hate people or to love people as I'm loved by him? I can read your mind

again; 'Jesus definitely wants me to love people as I am loved by him.'

So Jesus says; "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute

you..." (Matthew 5:43) That's part of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Paul echoes the same sentiment in his letter to the

community in Rome; "Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves... Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse." (Rom. 12:10,14)

Whoops! I think I've got a few thoughts to repent of. I know a few swear words and at times I've used them as I've thought about situations that have frustrated me, or angered me, and got me

feeling like giving the whinging sooks a sock in the mouth. That'll shut'm up.

How easily I lose sight of the person, and react to an abstract ideology. Jesus has empowered me to love the person, and that begins by me forgiving any hurtful words spoken. By forgiving I mean, I take that hurt to Jesus, and invite him to replace it with his grace, mercy and love for that person, so that

I can treat them the same way. If I hang onto my hurt, what do you think will happen?

There is a cost when we stand up with Jesus. Part of the cost is me freely giving up any rights I might have to accuse another person. I give up living from the hurt done to me, or threatened against me. I don't hang onto it, or make my decisions based on this hurt. I forgive, I let it go, and ask Jesus to help me

live from the relationship of love and trust I have with him. Because if I build my decisions and actions based on a perceived hurt, or threat to me, what will be shaping my decisions and actions? The hurt done to me, which only has the potential to make me a hurt person, and

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**If I don't follow Jesus it costs me my life; and I get?**

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hurt people hurt. Now that's a huge cost; my life is lost in a myriad of hurts. I'm focused on what's unfair, which only leaves me complaining about how unfair life is.

Have you noticed whichever way you go the cost is your life. If I follow Jesus it will cost me my life; as I seek to walk with him, to live as he lives, to love as I'm loved, to take up my cross and follow

him. It costs me my life, and the result is what?

If I chose not to follow Jesus it also costs me my life. Instead of having a person to share life with, I'm left with an abstract ideology to base my decisions and actions on. Science doesn't give a personal relationship, just the latest theory. What a risk, investing your life in a theory.

Today I'm reminded that whatever you stand for costs your life. When I stand with Jesus and grow as his disciple, that wonderful personal relationship Jesus desires to invest himself in. It cost him his life. It costs me my life, but it reaps a life that is lived person to person in a vibrant, loving relationship based on trust, for I know Jesus will never break his commitment to me. It's cost him his life.