

To together share the ups and downs of life, and as we share life we grow closer together and build a deeper more intimate relationship. That's definitely Jesus' passion. That's why he sent the Holy Spirit, so we could be living together in the ups and downs of life; in sickness and in health, for rich or poorer, for better or worse. Together facing what comes in a committed loving relationship where we trust each other with our lives. Living closely, as far

away from being acquaintances or strangers as is possible. The Father's kingdom definitely grows as we actively live out this relationship. As we share our story of life with God, in Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, so that other people's lives might be written into God's story. So people might move from hearing about God, to be living with him in the person of the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray. Jesus we thank you for opening up this wonderful relationship

that we can now share life with you. Open our ears and our hearts to be aware of the Holy Spirit, to listen to him and to share our hopes and dreams, being open and vulnerable with him, so that our relationship with you grows healthy and strong. Especially help us to make time to spend with you, letting everything else take second place, cause we don't want to be a stranger, we don't want you as an acquaintance, we want to be living closely with you. Thank you for the Holy Spirit so we don't just have a dream but a reality to live and enjoy 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...

8 May 2011

## WHO IS THIS HOLY SPIRIT—1

Acts 2:36-41



What would you prefer; simply to read about something or to experience it? Would you just want to hear about something fantastic or do it? I think we all believe that life is for living not merely observing. I like moving from hearing a good story to actually living it, to doing it, to it becoming real.

In the reading from Acts today I see people moving from being observers to being participants.

Peter's sermon cuts them to the heart. This is no longer an interesting story, they're involved. It's cut them to the heart. What now?

Peter says; "Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the

forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38)

Here Peter leads these people from hearing an interesting story, a story which strikes a chord with them, to being people who are now living the story. It becomes the reality they now live. What a huge change.

The huge change is receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. That's God's personal presence with them. Now they are a living part of God's story, not merely observers, but participants. Which is 'Good News', I want to be involved with God and not looking in from a distance.

Jesus has opened the way for us to share life

with God, in person. Jesus has opened the way to pour out the Holy Spirit, God's presence with us now. So in baptism I don't receive a nice certificate, and good set of morals to live by, my life is now woven into God's life story. I'm not being told about who God is and what he likes and being filled with interesting facts about him, I'm actually sharing life with him, person to person through the person of the Holy Spirit.

If I was to turn the Holy Spirit into some impersonal force that gave me the power to do what is right I'd no longer be living God's story, but I'd be tempted to continue writing my own story. But now I'd have the power to do superhuman things. Of

course that mindset is part of the problem and not part of the solution.

Jesus didn't give his life so that I could be a better person, but so that I could share life with him. So that I could be a living part of his story. It's important to remember that the Holy Spirit is a person. God in person, writing us into God's story of life. In the person of the Holy Spirit the dream becomes the reality.

Jesus has created a relationship for us to live, to enjoy, to grow in, to be part of. This far exceeds any moral code that we are to follow in the hope of living a better life. My hope isn't to be living a better life, but to be living life with God, NOW! Now, in the person of the Holy Spirit.

And what does our heart long for the most; better rules to live by or

to be loved and to love? Jesus longs to be loved and to love. And so he pours out the Holy Spirit, God in person with us now, so that we can be living a personal relationship with him now. Not reading about it. Not talking about it, but doing it, living it.

The three thousand who

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### The Holy Spirit is a Person

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were saved that day joined the disciples in living life together with God, in the person of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit whom Jesus poured out, so that we might be living life with him. Jesus' story hasn't ended but new chapters are being written each day, as we are in personal contact with him through the person of the Holy Spirit.

The other day I heard a familiar saying; 'I don't

have to go to church to be a Christian'. Which is the same as me saying; 'I don't have to visit my mother to be her son'. Which is quite true, but what sort of a son would I be if I never went to see my mother, if I became an absent son and not one who is involved in her life. What would my mother prefer; to spend time with her son, with her family, or simply to know she has children and have nothing to do with them?

Jesus wants to share his life with us, with his sisters and brothers. He doesn't want to be an absent brother who we know we have but never talk to let alone invite to join us in family celebrations.

What happens to people who stop spending time together, who stop sharing their hopes and dreams with each other? They slowly become strangers,

which isn't the mark of a healthy family or a healthy relationship. So Jesus pours out the Holy Spirit, because he doesn't want to be a stranger, but he wants us to be involved in his life. Jesus is after a person to person relationship that is lived out now through the person of the Holy Spirit.

Sometimes though I know I'm tempted to treat the Holy Spirit not as a person I'm in a loving relationship with, but as my rich and powerful acquaintance who I can use to get what I want. Does that describe a healthy relationship to you? If someone only hung around you for what they could get how would that make you feel? How would you describe that relationship?

The Holy Spirit's job isn't to give us amazing powers, so we can heal the sick, tell the future,

always be right. That doesn't describe a healthy relationship, one that is based on love for each other. Jesus goal is to be living a healthy, loving relationship with us, today, till death do us part. And Jesus has no intension of dying again, so what does that say about this most

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### Person to Person

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precious relationship we are living now? Over the next weeks as we lead up to Pentecost Sunday we'll be looking at the person of the Holy Spirit. The simple point of this address is to remember that the Holy Spirit is a person who has come for a person to person relationship. A relationship with the Living Lord Jesus, through the person of the Holy Spirit.

So in baptism we received the Holy Spirit, for baptism links me with Jesus' death and resurrection. Baptism links me with Jesus' forgiveness, and clothes me in Jesus' righteousness. I now can live in a healthy relationship with God, through Jesus, in the person of the Holy Spirit. Here I'm written into God's story, his love story, his story of life, life lived to the full, together with him. I do have the Holy Spirit, not so I can do supernatural things, but so I can live life with God now and not merely talk about it, but actually live it.

Of course with any relationship the real challenge is in the living it. With not taking others for granted. With not getting too busy, but building in time for each other. Taking the time to listen to each other, to share our hopes and our dreams.