

we could never have dreamed of.

The Children of Israel in their own strength crashed and burned. Thank God that we can live in Jesus' strength and by his power and authority. Here we don't crash and burn, but we get to see Jesus at work bringing life and vitality in people. We even get to join with Jesus in bringing about this wonderful change in people's lives. A change that will have an eternal outcome that far

exceeds my wildest dreams.

In Jesus we don't crash and burn, but breathe his life into people that they love as never before, that they love as Jesus does, that they share life with Jesus, living as his disciple, empowered to make disciples, who are empowered to make disciples changing the world.

Today step out into life empowered by Jesus to live from his strength, to live in his

enthusiasm, that his passion is given birth through you.

Let us pray.
Jesus, thank you for giving your life for us, so that we might live life with you, in your power and authority. Thank you for sending us as the Father sent to, going and making an eternal difference in people's lives. Thank you for the wonderful privilege of living in your strength and enthusiasm, going and making disciples of you. 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

6 November 2011

IN JESUS, YES WE CAN.

Joshua 24:14-25



In the reading from Joshua for today the Children of Israel are given a challenge. Who likes a challenge?

Here they are ready to enter the Promised Land. It's been a long time in coming. Forty years have passed since they left Egypt. Now they're ready to go; and Joshua issues then a challenge; "But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD." The people replied, "We would never forsake the LORD and worship other gods. For the LORD our God is the one who rescued us... So we, too, will serve the LORD, for he alone is our God." (Joshua 24:15-18)

They're enthusiastic, ready to take on the challenge. What came of their enthusiasm?

They crashed and burned! Such high goals, such enthusiasm, such desire to do the right thing, but it doesn't last long. Joshua served the LORD, but I don't know about his family. I do know that the Children of Israel eventually go off and look to other things to get them through the day. They crash and burn.

What can we learn from this story for our life today?

The first thing that jumps out at me is that I need more, much more, than good intentions. I can be enthusiastic, even totally committed to doing the right thing, but that's no guarantee of success. Every New Year I have resolutions, good ones, which I'm

going to do, but you haven't seen me riding my bike yet, have you.

Today I'm reminded that I need much, much more than my good intentions, my enthusiasm and my commitment to fulfil Jesus' goals. On my own I'll crash and burn.

When I look at the story of the Children of Israel I notice that two things tend to happen when I go forward in my own strength, using my ability and energy. I become either legalistic or liberal.

The Pharisees of Jesus day are an example of people becoming legalistic. They had good intent and great passion; they wanted to stay true to the Lord and not go back into exile. So you had to do this and this and this, or

God would come crashing down on you. They became so rigid, so fixated on the rules, that when the God they didn't want to go into exile from came and stood among them they didn't recognise him.

Or we tend to go the opposite direction, where we don't want to be rigid, legalistic that in the end anything goes. We don't stand for anything and fall for everything.

Today I'm reminded by the Children of Israel that I need to go in Jesus' power and strength, following him, listening to him, putting into place his plan. Jesus gives the power and authority that is needed to do his will. I simply don't have what it takes on my own.

So Jesus commanded his followers; "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised... in a few days you will be

baptised with the Holy Spirit." (Acts 1:4,5) Now this is Good News, I'm not destined to fail as the Children of Israel did. I've got far more than my good intentions and enthusiasm to draw on. I've got the wonderful promise of having God personally present with me in the person of the

The Children of Israel Crash and Burn

Holy Spirit.

I run out of energy, he doesn't. I get sick and tired, he doesn't. I get lost and confused, he doesn't. I can feel down and out, he doesn't. I might feel distant from Jesus, he isn't. I get puffed up with pride, he doesn't.

What a change we see in the disciples. They waited behind closed doors out of fear, but in the power of the Holy Spirit they boldly

proclaim the Good News of Jesus' kingdom, and in one day 3000 people come to faith.

When you read Peter's sermon it wasn't all that brilliant, could have even been boring to some, but the Holy Spirit was at work. At work in people's hearts convicting them of sin, of their need for a saviour, of the fact that in and off themselves they didn't have what it took to make the

changes they see needed in the word.

The Holy Spirit convicted them of sin and then pointed them to Jesus. To his death and resurrection which gives forgiveness, life and a healthy relationship with God. And through the power of the Holy Spirit people's hearts are changed and they come to faith in Jesus, trusting him with their lives.

No longer trusting their own energy and endeavour, but trusting Jesus with their life, living in his kingdom, no longer seeking to make their own.

I love the fact that I can join with Joshua and say; 'as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD Jesus.' And in Jesus I have the power and authority for this to become a reality. In Jesus I'm not destined for failure, like the Children of Israel, rather I'm guaranteed his blessing.

For if I went off in my own power and strength, when what is perceived as success comes along who gets the credit? I do, and Jesus is robbed of any praise, glory or honour.

Quite the opposite happens when I go out in Jesus' power and authority. When what Jesus has promised comes about all praise, glory and honour go to

him. And I'm also saved from getting a big head or burning myself out thinking everything depends on me.

Of course thinking that I'm needed and it depends on my abilities is probably the greatest form of idolatry there is. Life doesn't depend

Jesus creates Life and Love

on me, it depends on Jesus who graciously invites me to participate in his great adventure of life, using his power and strength to achieve his goal.

I don't have to come up with a mission statement and then ask Jesus to bless it. Jesus has a mission statement and I'm part of it; thank God.

Jesus' mission is to save the world. Jesus' mission is to save us so

that we can become children of his Father. His Father's loved children in whom he delights. Jesus' mission is to go and make disciples; that's a community of people following him, reflecting his character and personality in all that they do. That's what Jesus has invested

his life in and continues to invest himself in. That's what he's passionate and enthusiastic about, and wonderfully

he's invited us to become part of his passion, to be part of what he's enthusiastic about. That's what Jesus is blessing, and that's where he's calling us to live. Right in the middle of what he's pouring out his blessing on. What a wonderful privilege.

Isn't that a wonderful privilege that we can invest our energy and enthusiasm in Jesus and see it flourish in ways