

potential going to waste.

But what a risk?

Love involves huge risk. That certainly is evident in Jesus' life. He risked everything, so that we might have everything we need. So that we might be loved children of God, our Father, in whom he delights. And in Jesus that is what we are.

Jesus has given us an example, the example of love, that we might go and do likewise. And Jesus is reminding me this

year that the blessing is reaped in the doing.

Let us pray.

Jesus thank you for loving me, for loving us. Thank you that we can never out give your love. Thank you that we have love to give. Fill us with the Holy Spirit that we go and do, that we go and love as we are loved by you, especially within our families. Especially within your family, the community of people you call church. Jesus forgive us and fill us with the Holy Spirit that we

not only talk the talk but walk the walk. Amen.

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

5 April 2012

BLESSED IF YOU DO.

Maundy Thursday



As you heard the story again of Jesus' farewell meal with his disciples, what struck you? What did Jesus bring to your mind?

Jesus struck me with two points. I don't know if I liked what was brought to my mind.

The first part of the reading which was highlighted for me was; "Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them." (Jn 13:17) The emphasis being on the 'Doing'. I looked back at the preceding verses and the word do appeared quite prominently. "I have set you an example that you should do as I have

done for you." (Jn 13:15) What do you think Jesus is trying to tell me?

This reminded me of the Kindy graduation, where I had an Easter egg, which was still wrapped up in the box. That reminded me of Jesus in the cave, but he didn't stay in the cave, Jesus burst forth. To leave Jesus in the grave would have been a waste of all that he won for us. A waste of his forgiveness, a waste of his promise of resurrection.

To enjoy the Easter egg I needed to take it out of the box, unwrap it and eat it. The blessing came with the eating. The

potential for enjoyment was there all the time, but I had to open the box, unwrap the egg and then eat it to enjoy it.

The children were then each given a bible and the same thought came to my mind. The bible was like the Easter egg. The potential for joy was there in their hands. But if the book stayed closed, unread and not digested the great store of blessing it contains wouldn't be accessed. You needed to open the book and read it, then you could begin to live it, and there God's blessings would flow. Just like the Easter egg the enjoyment would come with the eating.

That reminded me of a young man I knew. One Easter I went around to his family's home, as I'd done often, and there was this wonderful Easter bunny. I was having covetous thoughts – I wanted to eat that bunny. I'd assumed he'd only got the bunny that morning, so he must have had heaps of eggs for this one to still be all wrapped up. But much to my surprise I learned the Easter bunny was years old, and nobody was at all interested in eating it now. The chocolate was well passed its use by date. What a waste I thought to myself; all the potential joy, wasted.

Is Jesus being manipulative or putting strings on his promises when he says I'll be blessed if

I do what he's said. If I do, by following his example. Is this putting conditions on Jesus' love? Is this me becoming all legalistic? Of course not. Jesus is simply reminding me to unwrap his gift so that I can enjoy it to the full.

What am I doing?

So I'm left with the question; 'What am I doing?'

I know Jesus' example. And I know that if I follow his example I'll be growing to greater maturity, enjoying life Jesus' style. I know it, but what am I doing? Am I like that young man, leaving the gift all nicely wrapped up, enjoying the

wrapping but missing the real gift, missing the intended joy of the giver?

This year as a community at our AGM we accepted the challenge of reading through the bible in a year. Why? Because to enjoy all that Jesus wants to give we need to unwrap his present and eat it.

The second part of the reading that struck me was; "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples. If you love one another." (Jn 13:34,35)

'If you love one another'. How do we do that? Jesus has shown us what his

love looks like. In fact he's gone beyond showing us, he's done it. Jesus didn't come to earth to give a lecture on love and leave us with a perfect definition of the word. Jesus does it. Jesus loves us. He loves us as he serves us with his life, hanging on the cross, taking our place. Jesus doesn't ask the question; 'Who would you die for?' He does it. He loves us with his very life. This is no nice theory, the reality of Jesus death is confronting, messy, violent, filled with envy and greed. It's not a pretty picture. But this is Jesus loving us, giving him life for us. This is love; Jesus in person, personally gifting us with his life.

Now we are commanded to love

the same way. Not to talk about it. Not to theorise about it. But to go and do as Jesus has done. To love as we are loved by him. And he loves us to death. Jesus loves us extravagantly. Jesus loves us at his own expense, even if it means he's the one

Love One Another.

who misses out. When I focus on Jesus' love for me, for us, I'm blown away.

What am I going to do?

It's not an option, it's a command, which empowers me to love. In Jesus I have all the power and authority I need to do what he says. What am I doing?

This is when I begin to feel uncomfortable; it's easy to talk the talk, we're called to walk the walk. To empty our pockets for those in need who Jesus brings across our paths. To go without that they don't.

Does that seem logical to you; to go without so that someone else won't?

Jesus goes without that we might gain. Jesus suffers total loss, he dies, so that we might gain life, to the full. Jesus' love is beyond me. Thankfully it doesn't depend on me, it depends on Jesus, and he hasn't stopped loving me. This means I have all I need to love you; I just need to do it, otherwise all I have is massive amounts of