

sits at the Father's right hand. This Jesus is the one who will return, and then pass judgement on me, on you, on everyone. And we'll spend eternity either celebrating his return or regretting it.

Just like the Children of Israel it doesn't depend on me. This is what Jesus has said he will do, so that's what is going to happen. He's coming ready or not. And he'll hold each of us to account whether we like it or not. This is our world's future. I can live in harmony with it or seek to fight

against it, just like Pharaoh, seeking my own goals. How did Pharaoh end up?

How do I live in harmony with my future? By taking Jesus at his word, living with him now as his disciple, seeking to join with him in building the Father's kingdom. How do we do that? Jesus has told us; 'Go and make disciples', disciples who will love as they are loved by him. That is to be the mark of Jesus' disciples; his character and personality is written all over them for everyone to read; individually and collectively.

Let us pray. Jesus thank you that we now share life with you, walking closely with you, looking forward to that great day we meet face to face, ready to join with you in the Father's celebration of life. As we look around with your eyes we see that the harvest is ripe, send us out, send out workers into your harvest field. And grow us to be the community you gave your life for; a community that loves each other as we are loved by you. Jesus fill us with the Holy Spirit so that we live each day as if you were knocking on the door ready to come in. Amen.

Christ Church Lutheran

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

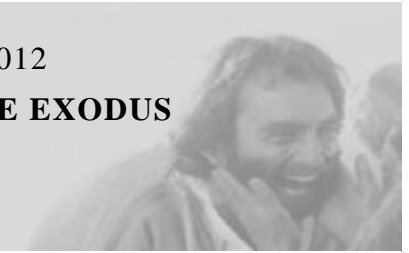


Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

24 June 2012

MOSES AND THE EXODUS

E100



What struck me this week about the Exodus story is what an act of faith it was. God doesn't just motivate one or two people but a whole nation. In the end we are told; "There were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children." (Exodus 12:37) It was this group who collectively celebrated the Passover. How do you go about motivating such a large number of people to take such a huge step of faith?

The LCA is only a small group of people, less than thirty thousand worshipping on any given Sunday, and we spend a small fortune on communication, on trying to walk together. We have boards, magazines, emails, synods as we seek to walk together. But here we have around two million people all acting in unison, living out an act of faith.

I know before I do something I want to have some idea of the outcome, and most definitely how much it will cost. Without this you might not be able to motivate me to action, let alone the rest of the LCA. But what do we see with the Children of Israel?

The LORD through Moses calls the people to get a lamb per family on the tenth day of the month and be ready to eat it on the fourteenth day of the month because the following morning they will be leaving.

And what do you think Pharaoh's response to this was? Not on your life. You're my slaves and you'll do as I say. Nothing has changed, except the LORD has told Moses to get the people ready for the Passover. Nothing has changed; they're still making bricks, Pharaoh hasn't changed his mind. To the naked eye everything

seems the same, but the LORD has spoken.

And we all know that when the LORD makes a promise he does what? He always keeps it. You can risk your life on his word.

So the Children of Israel collectively select a lamb per family; one of their best. And then on the evening four days later they collectively roast the lamb, putting some of it's blood on the top and sides of the door post where they will eat this meal. And they eat it dressed ready to leave; they have their bags packed, their travelling clothes on with their sandals on their feet ready to walk. They even eat in a hurry, there's no time to lose. And to the naked eye, nothing has changed.

They even make plans to celebrate this feast for generations to come; a seven day celebration no less, and it hasn't even happened yet. This is

faith. Their lives are shaped by this word, so they act in accordance with what they know will happen in the future. The LORD has spoken.

Do you notice what hasn't happened yet is shaping what they are doing in the present?

Does that sound back-to-front to you? Usually we make our plans and then set about putting our strategies into action, coming up with the costs and details needed to make it a reality. Usually we seek to have our present shape our future. The Children of Israel were letting their future shape their present.

Notice it wasn't what they did that shaped their future. Whether you got a lamb and put it's blood on your door frames, eating it in a hurry, dressed to leave or not didn't affect whether the angel of death was coming. The LORD had spoken, the angel of death was coming and every first born would die.

Pharaoh went on as if nothing would change. The Hebrews were their

slaves, useful in achieving their economic and political desires. Pharaoh was planning his next building project; laying out the plans, costing how much extra tax was

needed and how it would show him to be the greatest Pharaoh of all. He had his plans. He had his budget. He was ready to shape his future. Just one problem, the LORD had other ideas. The angel of

The Israelites let the LORD'S future shape their present

death came and Pharaoh's planning came to nothing. He wasn't the god he believed himself to be. He wasn't in control

Of course Pharaoh is not there to be seen as the bad guy, but that's me outside of Jesus. Outside of Jesus I'm tempted to believe that I'm in control. If I work hard, if I dream big, then I can achieve what I want. Have you ever heard similar thoughts?

There's even an element of truth mixed in as with all good lies. They're not at first obvious.

The lie doesn't revolve around applying yourself to a task and working hard. Jesus lived totally committed to his Father's will, giving his all that his Father's kingdom might grow. The lie comes when I

replace the Father's will with my own desires and wants. Quite simply I'm not in control and it is delusional to live that way. Actually it is worse that delusional, it is destructive, life threatening.

Pharaoh lived as if the world revolved around himself. That is the sinful nature in me. Pharaoh's son died because he refused to listen,

because he refused to admit he wasn't in control. What would have happened if on the tenth day of the month Pharaoh had gone and got a lamb for his family, and then on the fourteenth roasted it and put it's blood on the door posts of his house? His son would have lived. But no slave was going to tell him what to do; he was in control, it was his life and he did the telling. Such arrogance never ends well.

The Children of Israel trusted what the LORD had said and built their life and their decisions around what the LORD said was going to happen. They let the LORD'S future shape their present. That's faith. A faith which saw a whole community act as one, trusting that

the LORD would be faithful. After all they'd seen him act just recently nine times before.

Did you notice that the nine previous plagues weren't just for Pharaoh, but they were as much for the Children of Israel?

How do you let Jesus' future shape your present?

Could their God be trusted? Or more to the point did he have the power and authority to do what he said. Each time the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, their God was shown to be faithful, and powerful. The gods of Egypt were found wanting.

So now this community of people put their faith in the LORD and do what

he says believing he'll be faithful to this promise as well. They step out in faith, I'm sure much to the frustration of their task masters, they could have made more bricks instead of all this messing around, time was wasted, productivity would have been lowered.

And so I'm left asking myself, am I trying to build a future of my liking, or am I letting Jesus' future shape my living today? Am I living by faith or by my calculations?

What do I know is going to happen in the future? I'll die. Jesus will return to judge the living and the death. The same Jesus who was born at Christmas, died and rose again at Easter, who ascended to heaven and now