

seem more in tune,
what's wrong with me!

But there's nothing
wrong with me, I'm a
child of the Father,
whom he loves and
delights to share his life
with. What a beautiful
relationship Jesus has
created for me to enjoy.
I just need to spend
time enjoying it.

Then I looked back
over the week and
guess what, I saw God
had been speaking to
me all the time, I only
recognised it Friday
morning.

Let us pray.

Jesus thank you for that
wonderful intimate
relationship of love we
live with the Father
through you. Thank you
for sending the Spirit so
that we can live this
relationship today, in
person. Fill us with a
passionate desire to
spend time with you, to
invite you into
everything we do, to
chat with you about
everything we do,
especially making the
time to talk over the big
issues in our lives.
Jesus we want to be
living more and more
intimately with you,
knowing you more
intimately so that in all
areas of life we see
your presence.

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

18 November 2012

HOW DO YOU LISTEN TO GOD?

1 Samuel 1:4-20

This weeks Old
Testament reading
introduces the story of
Samuel. Interestingly
on Tuesday when I
went to Mobilong for
the 'Journey Program'
there was a guest
speaker all the way
from Florida, America,
and he read from the
story of Samuel. What
a coincidence!

He read the story of
Samuel where for the
first time he was
hearing the LORD call
him, and how at first
Samuel didn't
recognise the LORD'S
voice. He asked us,
there in prison, how do
you recognise God's
voice? This lead to
interesting discussion.

So, how do you
recognise Jesus' voice?

As I reflected on this
question, carefully
reading the text again I

was looking for a
formula to apply. I saw
that Samuel was lived
in the Tabernacle, close
to the Ark of the
Covenant. So step one;
live in the Tabernacle.
Step two stay focused
on God's promises.
Step three, I realised I
don't need a formula
but a relationship!

This lead me back to
our reading, the birth of
Samuel. From Samuel's
birth, before Samuel's
birth, he was dedicated
to the LORD. Let's
listen to his mother's
prayer again; "LORD
Almighty, if you will
only look on your
servant's misery and
remember me, and not
forget your servant but
give her a son, then I
will give him to the
LORD for all the days
of his life..." (1 Sam.
1:11)

Notice, Samuel doesn't
have a formula he
applies. He doesn't
have some special
mantra to repeat, or a
special way he has to
sit. Samuel doesn't
have a formula, he has
a relationship. His life
is dedicated to the
LORD. His life is lived
set apart for the LORD.

With that phrase two
thoughts came rushing
to my mind; being set
apart for the LORD is a
definition of holiness,
and in baptism I was
dedicated to the LORD.

At my baptism my
parents gave me over to
the Father, in Jesus'
name that my life might
be lived as the Father's
child whom he loves
and delights in. I don't
have a formula to
apply. I have a
relationship to live. A
relationship created
through Jesus' life,

death and resurrection. I have a relationship to live with a living God who has poured his Spirit into me, so that we have a dynamic, living relationship.

This week I was also sharing emails about a paper someone wrote about the recent American election, and as part of that dialogue I read this; “When we hear the word, ‘Be holy, as I am holy’ (said with a stern voice) we always hear that as a command and then immediately feel guilty. Well, what if we heard it as a benediction (now spoken with a mighty whisper, and a voice full of love and encouragement): ‘Be holy, as I am holy’. What if all us followers of Christ knew that the whole God head is cheering us on to simply love and live as the people we’ve been redeemed to be.”

Samuel didn’t have a formula to apply but a

relationship to live. He was set apart to live in the LORD’S presence all his life. Then it dawned on me that it was out of this relationship that Samuel was open to hear from God.

As with the book of Ruth which we looked at last week, we are

Samuel didn’t have a formula to apply but a relationship to live.

offered two options. We have Samuel who is set apart for God, living in the temple, willingly serving Eli the priest. This is contrasted with Eli’s sons who have chosen to take what they want so that they might enjoy life. They take the best food and have sex with those they like. They’re living the ‘good life’.

Why don’t Eli’s sons hear from the LORD?

God speaks to Samuel and it was a message for Eli. The LORD said; “Why do you scorn my sacrifice and offering that I prescribed for my dwelling? Why do you honour your sons more than me by fattening yourselves on the choice parts of every offering made by my people Israel?” (1 Sam 2:29)

Each time I read this I wonder why Eli didn’t straight away fall down on his knees before the LORD in repentance, seeking his forgiveness, and dismiss his sons from their duty. Why didn’t he repent? Why didn’t he hear this warning and respond? He knew it was the LORD.

How do we recognise Jesus’ voice? How do we respond? How do we listen to God?

That got me reflecting on the story of the ‘Wisemen’ which I’d

just shared at Kindy. The ‘Wisemen’ followed a star. How many other people would have seen the star, and not given it a second thought?

The ‘Wisemen’ spent their life seeking to be attuned to God, knowing his promises and looking for their fulfilment. The ‘Wisemen’ were living in relationship with God.

The contrast was Herod who could only hear a threat to his position. All he heard was; ‘Another King’. For Herod there was only room for one king, the rest had to be destroyed.

Why did the ‘Wisemen’ hear from God and Herod didn’t recognise God at all?

How do we listen to God? How do I listen to God?

When Samuel, with Eli’s help, recognised the LORD calling he responded; “Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.” (1 Sam 3:9b)

This reminded me of the ‘Good Shepherd’ where we read; “...he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow

I Know My Sheep and My Sheep Know Me

him because they know his voice... I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me – just as the Father knows me (Jesus) and I know the Father...” (John 10:4, 14)

What an intimate relationship exists between God the Father and God the Son. I’m sure when Jesus picks up the phone he doesn’t have to ask who it is, he recognises his Father’s voice immediately. He

doesn’t even have to have it come up on his mobile display. He recognises his Father because of the wonderful intimate, loving relationship they live.

How do I listen to God?

By seeking to live the relation he has created for me to enjoy with him through Jesus.

It dawned on me that if I don’t feel I’m hearing God speaking the best thing to do is spend more time chewing the fat with him. Spend more time getting to know him intimately as I share with him what’s on my heart and soul, being real. As I open myself up to hear what’s on his heart and soul, so that we share at the most intimate and vulnerable level.

When faced with that question; how do I hear from God, I became defensive; I don’t have audible voices, other’s