

a person talk about prayer and the certainty of our Father's response. And he said; 'When you pray what's the first thought that comes to your mind?' Why wouldn't that be God?

I've asked, and I believe he doesn't lie but answers. Why wouldn't that be God? He then said the second thought you get is the devil wanting you to doubt. Notice when Jesus was tempted the

devil's one goal was to get Jesus to doubt his Father.

What is the Spirit saying to you right now? What thought has he placed in your mind?

Let's talk to Jesus right now believing his promise that he will speak to us through the Spirit, answering us and not playing games.

Jesus who do you want me to go to this week?

(Remember that first name.) Jesus what do you want me to say or do for this person?

(Remember that thought).

Let's go and do it, remembering to keep the conversation going. We don't have a closed book but a dynamic relationship to live, to rejoice in.

23 September 2012

PAUL TO THE CHURCHES

E100



From this week's E100 readings I was struck with a recurring theme; 'We are invited into a relationship, not an intellectual exercise'. Paul's letters were written primarily to communities that were in trouble and the trouble was that they had exchanged a relationship for a set of rules, for a ritual.

Now there's nothing wrong with rules and ritual, they can be of great benefit to building relationships. The trouble was that these rules and rituals took over. They became the focus and a living, vibrant, open and honest relationship with the Heavenly Father faded.

Jesus gave his life that we might have a dynamic relationship lived out with the

Spirit. A dynamic relationship where together we face each new day's highs and lows. A dynamic relationship where we share with each other what's on our hearts and minds.

So Paul wrote; "The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to *his children*. And by him we cry 'Abba Father.'" (Rom. 8:15)

In Jesus we have a beautiful new reality; we are the Father's children, and the Spirit lives with us so that we can share this relationship, today.

What is the Father saying to you today? Who is the Father

putting on your heart today? We have a dynamic relationship, created by Jesus so that we can hear and respond to what he says through the Spirit. What has the Spirit placed on your heart this week?

A dynamic relationship needs us being involved each day. That reminds me of the old joke where a couple were celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary and the wife says to her husband; 'You never say I love you'. To which he replied; 'When we got married I said it. If I ever change my mind I'll let you know.'

How often do we need to hear, experience, know that we are loved? It's not something you say and forget. It's not the same

Christ Church Lutheran

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



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

as a constitution which you refer to occasionally to work out some procedure. How often do you want to know you are loved, valued, worthwhile, precious? Everyday!

A relationship is designed to be lived each new day. That's Jesus' passion. That's why he gave his life, that we might have a living, vibrant, loving relationship, lived out each new day.

Maybe that's why we pray; 'Give us our daily bread'. Our Daily bread, because you can't stockpile love, you can only live it out anew each day. And Jesus, our 'Bread of Life' wants to share himself daily with us. He wants a living relationship finding expression each new day.

But there is a conflict. Paul wrote; "So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the

desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other..." (Gal. 5:17)

We live in a world with two people vying for our affections. We have

Relationships are for Living

everything that glitters enticing us to give our life there. To seek life in all its fullness through our experiences, through our own efforts, through what everyone else is doing that looks like fun. We are enticed to go our own way, believing that this is how we'll discover the love we so crave. Our sinful self loves to hear; 'It's your life you choose'. 'You know what's best for you'. 'With hard work you

can get whatever you want.' 'We need to follow our sanctified reasoning.'

Does anyone notice a problem with having ourselves at the centre of life?

When turned in on myself, when what I want is the most important and only thing, what happens? The simple reality of life is that I don't have what it takes, I don't have the

power to create the life I yearn for. If humanity did the world would be a very different place.

Jesus comes seeking to vie for our affections, for our trust. Christianity is an act of trust in God's love for us as we see it lived out in his Son, Jesus. In Jesus God has come to love you. He's not bullying you to get what he wants. He's not using you to get what he wants. No Jesus has come giving himself

that you might be loved, loved to the full extent of his being, no strings attached. Jesus can be trusted, he's got no axe to grind, he's got no agenda to be proven right. Jesus is just passionate about loving you, so that you might share life with him in the Father's loving embrace.

So Paul says; "Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests." (Eph. 6:18) In other

words live out this relationship, talk to God sharing what's on your mind, how you're feeling, what your soul's desire is. In the Spirit God certainly wants to share with you what's on his mind, how he's feeling, what his soul's desire is.

Jesus hasn't come to give us a text book to study, so that when he tests us we'll pass the exam. That's a fear model. To create fear Jesus could have stayed

in heaven and remained mysterious and unknown. That creates fear. But Jesus chose to make himself known so that we could share life together, so that we could live a relationship based on his love.

So he invites us to pray, not just once in a while but on all occasions.

Jesus invites us into a relationship not to study a text book

What we have is a living, dynamic relationship. So Jesus invites us to; Ask, Seek, Knock. Pursue me for I want to be found. Jesus' passion is to live this relationship, but he can't make me talk to him from the heart. He's given me that wonderful opening, promising to enter that conversation from his heart.

Which is great, because I can't read God's mind. Actually

whenever I try and read anyone's mind I get things in a real mess. I can't read God's mind, but Jesus has sent the Spirit so I can ask and then listen. I can let God tell me what's on his mind, what's on his heart, what his passion is. Isn't that how relationships work; you ask and listen, you don't presume.

This week I've heard Jesus inviting me to believe that the relationship he has created is real.

A real, living, vibrant, loving relationship which is for living, not studying. I don't have an exam to pass, I have a person to know and let know me. Wonderfully I have a relationship to live, for Jesus is alive. He has sent the Spirit, who is speaking into my life all the time.

This week I'd invite you to try a relationship exercise. One that I was challenged with this week. I was listening to