

Jesus

Read: Colossians 1:15-20

At a time such as this it is important to talk about and to remind ourselves of what matter the most...It is there that we will find courage and peace.

There are not enough words to describe the one called Jesus of Nazareth...**Jesus the Christ**

For me...There is nothing better than talking about Jesus...**It's my life's work...**

I know when I talk about him...I am alive

I am talking about the most important one in all of time and space

I feel as if my feet are placed exactly where they should be

But of course...because that is true... I always feel as if I fall so far short

No words can ever fully express Jesus

I am the way, the truth and the life...He said

The true "I am"

Jesus embodies the gentle, gracious, fearless, wonderful power of God

He is the image of the God we cannot see or begin to describe

In Jesus... God has described himself...in one like us

He lives and breathes and walks...He speaks and heals and loves... in the power and truth of God

This Jesus turns everything upside down

So that the ones who think they know...are the ones from which things are hidden

Jesus says to them you are looking in the wrong place

The little ones are the ones who know

In the midst of those who want to be sure

In the midst of those who want certain morality and purity

In the midst of those who need to be right

The little ones know that this Jesus is enough

It is truly enough to know Jesus...Because that transforms everything

Even difficult times like these

Because in Jesus we see the way God is...and the way God acts

And He is good and he can be trusted

If you focus on Jesus you will know the mystery of how this life works

You will have enough to live well...to be free

Even when you are wrapped in these chains of fear and uncertainty

To be with God means to stay very close to the simple, caring, and
yes, the demanding ways of Jesus

We have made Jesus too pious...too nice...too patient...too polite

He was and is a dangerous alternative kind of power

He was prepared to name names...to tell the truth to worldly power

To describe things as they truly are

His honesty was grounded in his confidence about the rule of God

In Jesus...the full holiness of God is found in human life

The fullness of what it is to be truly Human can be seen and touched

This is too easily forgotten

To be fully Human as God intended is to be like Jesus...The image
bearer of God

Friends...We must endlessly tell our Jesus stories

In them we behold the glory of the father...full of grace and truth

But this holiness needs to be understood friends...

It does not happen in large religious ways

It happens...

When a son is welcomed home

When a neighbour is honoured and cared for

When a prostitute is loved

When a leper is touched and healed

When a crowd is fed

When the guilty are forgiven

When the crippled stand and laugh and dance

The glory of God is not religious ceremonies and liturgies

It is the life of Jesus

In him we see what God intends and wants and asks of us

It is every day...it is concrete...it is engaged with hurt and self giving

It is the face of this one who dazzles with life giving light and power

People then and now wonder about who this Jesus is

He rarely gave a direct answer

He said...everywhere I go new creation appears

The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the dead are raised

Where I am THERE is God's Kingdom

The rule of God is **seen in Jesus**...to be believed and then...to be lived
By all of us...Here and now

Jesus is our lens...through which we read the world around us

Through which we read this the spread of this invisible virus

He stands alongside all the powerless and the lonely...the
isolated...the sick

His own innocence exposes the truth about every other form of
power

They killed him but he kept praying in his subversive, dangerous
honesty

Jesus was deeply disruptive wherever he went

He was a misfit...He did not fit anyone's categories

He was frankly a bit weird and strange...and they did not know
what to do with him

When he entered a room everything changed

In a world of alienation and fear...Jesus brings peace beyond
understanding

Peace brought at the price of his own vulnerability...at his own risk

Breaking the vicious cycles of judgement and violence

It is his suffering love for us that destroys the power of death

And we are all welcomed into his peace...so that we too can become
peacemakers in his image...

...in hard places and difficult times

We can refuse the way of anger and fear and hate...of greed

Friends...we need to understand that the only true reality...is the reality of Jesus

Look at Jesus because he confronts all the thrones of the world

If you want to know joy, hope and truth...look at Jesus

I have no doubt that the world depends on Jesus

The world depends on people who know and live in Jesus

Jesus people who give their lives as he gave his

Everything about Jesus is truly spell binding...awesome and beautiful

He did not only talk this talk...He walked God's walk

He healed and transformed and made new

And countless people have seen it

Everywhere he goes the power of new life swirls around him

See who gathers around him...The **former** blind, the **former** poor, the **former** deaf, the **former** lame, the **former** dead

All former...and all made insiders

And see how the old insiders resisted the loss of their power

You could not and cannot remain neutral about Jesus...you either oppose him or you follow him

This Jesus...Full of grace and truth

This Jesus is the very centre and focus of the Big Story of heaven and earth

In our hearts and minds this church connects the baby born in Nazareth and executed by Rome.....to the great mystery of the Universe

We can't say everything we sense about him
So many of the things we have said have been superficial and foolish
But we must continue to try to give voice to Jesus
He is the bridge between heaven and earth
He is the stairway that Jacob dreamed of
And through the church that link between heaven and earth will not
be broken

Friends, lets be honest coming to church is sometimes a routine

Perhaps we only value it properly when we can't do it! A time like
this I'm afraid

We may even begin to lose sight of this very odd claim about Jesus of
Nazareth

And his new command to love one another

But as we read this wonderful Gospel we re-enter the story so that
we can hear again

To hear those same words the disciples heard

And then we look again...and **we see only Jesus**

And our hearts are filled with explicable wonderful Joy

Jesus!

Jesus...The image of the living God

Jesus...The question and the answer

Jesus...The beginning and the end

Jesus...The Way...The Truth and the life

Jesus...Our all in all

Jesus...Love himself

May his name be praised forever ...Amen