



Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church *Pastor Terry's Thoughts of the Week*

Our Leader

“Take me to your leader!” is the old cry we remember. Sometimes, politically, we like our leaders and sometimes we don't. Living in a democracy, we “accept” the leadership we have knowing that it won't be long until we can try to change it.

Jesus told us to give to the government what is theirs and to God what is his. That has been a real struggle for millions of people throughout the ages and even today. We feel that it is not a struggle for us as our government allows us freedom of religion. And that means freedom of ALL religion. That is very dangerous for those of us who consider ourselves Christian. We may not even realize how non-Christian practices and thoughts invade our lives. We are often unaware of how the culture influences our religious life. So, what do we do?

We study. We meditate. We consider what we do in the light of the gospel, the good news from God. Just because someone else does it does not automatically make it “Christian”. We need to put all our actions under the light of God's command and our faith.

I heard a “speech” one day from someone who was telling about how their congregation teaches the Bible. The speech consisted of all kinds of actions – doing the right thing all the time. Putting ones actions up to the light of the Bible. Really, making sure you acted like a Christian in the world.

Now, there's nothing wrong with that except it sounded like that was the whole thing. I wanted to shout out –“faith”! There's more to Christianity than actions.

It is true that faith without actions is dead, but I also believe that actions without faith are wonderful, humanitarian works. My Christianity began when I

was baptized and it will end when I meet God face to face. I will not always have “done” the right thing, but I have God’s promise of forgiveness and love forever. Do it, yes, but offer your life in service to God, not some human idea of Christian rightness.

TMK

-- *Week of January 24, 2010*