



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

Doxology

I remember when I was a mere kid in sixth grade, every morning we would start out with the pledge of allegiance, the 23rd Psalm and the Lord's Prayer. However, our teacher stopped saying her prayer "before the end"! For most of us, that identified her as a Roman Catholic – like my best girlfriend. It was not until years later that we, as Lutherans, accepted that the Bible teaching stops with "deliver us from evil" and we added the doxology, which we sang. (This is remembrances of the second setting of the old Red Book).

Now, the point is, what is a doxology? It's a song of praise, so singing it was just a good thing to do. Having gone through a few hymnals since then, we have reverted to adding the Doxology every time we pray the Lord's Prayer. Such is life.

There are a lot of doxologies in our worship life and in the hymnal. Almost anyone that begins with "praise God" is a song of praise. We like songs of praise because they tend to be full of life and lift us up.

Now the question arises, are our lives a doxology? Do our lives praise God every day? Do we even see our lives as hymns of praise? If so, why and if not, why not?

Last month I had a great experience. I got to meet most of the volunteers at the Faith Neighborhood center on a one by one basis. They are a great bunch who do a lot of (sometimes thankless) work out of the goodness of their hearts. There were times when I have seen them insulted, argued with, told they didn't care, abused with words and being told they didn't care for the people they were serving.

And what do they do? They hold their tongues, continue their work and rarely complain. I firmly believe that they are living lives of praise – and most of them would object to that kind of accolade saying “not really. I’m just doing my part to help people who are less fortunate than I am.” People who live lives of praise seldom realize that it is their humility that keeps them coming back again and again.

I’ve also heard some “thank you’s” and seen some people make a point of saying how much they have appreciated the gifts of the center when they were down on their luck. MOST people are appreciative, but there are the few for whom the blessing of a praise life is a real gift for the volunteers!

Have you seen someone whose life seems to be one of praise and thanksgiving? As you pray our Lord’s Prayer, think of these people and then try to figure out what it is about them that comes across to you as a life of praise. You will surely find a personality that seldom takes offense, a person you will find volunteering here and there, often the first one to come the aid of another. There are also people who, in their work are seen as anchors for the business. They care about the people they work with, they try to make the business they are in responsible and people friendly and they are the ones others go to for a time of refreshment and renewal.

A life of praise. Not necessarily easy, but one that is passing on joy in life and giving God a chance to look at his people with hope! AMEN=this is most certainly true. A life of praise is a perfect AMEN.

TMK

-- Week of August 30, 2009