



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

Jesus and God's Plan

Sometimes I wonder if I'm "reading" God right! Well, that's been going on for centuries. The church in the world has gone through hundreds of "rule" changes over the centuries – some as violent as the Reformation changes and some only upsetting to some folk who are rigorous legalists. And I don't always read Jesus right, either.

Now, the old – and current – basic rule was "Love God and Love your neighbor". We've made a few adjustments to that "rule" as we have, over the centuries tried to define "neighbor". Then I look at Jesus. He just loved everybody – the outcast, the "righteous", the legalists, the Romans, Samaritans and Jews. In other words, he cared about everybody he met, saint or sinner. That puts me in a difficult spot. If God's plan is that I love everybody, I've got a lot of work to do.

But there are people I love, but I really don't like what they do – I love the person but not their actions. I guess government was founded on that kind of thinking. We have laws which try to regulate our every day life. Some we obey (no murder, thievery and the like with people I know – I think!) and some we don't – we tend to think of speed limits as strong suggestions. At one time the state of Connecticut was rigid on the speed limit stuff. One or two miles over and you got a ticket. People learned to obey the limit and it worked.

Wouldn't it be nice if God would put some limits on our actions? Unfortunately we have a tendency to see the commandments as strong suggestions. Not a good thing!

If we are serious about seeing Jesus as the one who showed us what God's plan was, then we need to be serious about how we live our lives. We need to try to walk the walk of Jesus.

Jesus wasn't faced with all the things we are faced with today, but some of the stuff was far harder than what is in front of us. We like to say, well, Jesus didn't know about computers and world wide news coverage. We can't possibly help all the people in the world who need assistance.

No, we can't, but if we don't even try to help those who are close by, we have a problem. And it isn't all about money. Really, the bulk of it is about time and caring.

Many of you give an incredible amount of time by volunteering in the church and in the community and well as in the world. You seek out opportunities to assist others and when it seems that one route isn't effective, you are willing to go another way. But there is only so much we can do.

Some of you are so busy you take no Sabbath rest. Not a good thing. Some of you actually run yourself ragged for others and miss your own doctor appointments or exercise time or meditation time. All of these things are important in life and need to be taken care of or you won't be good for anyone!

Part of God's plan is that we take care of others. Another part is that we take care of ourselves. God's plan is not a suggestion - it is a walk for life. DO IT!

TMK

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