



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

Restoration

If you are like me, you like restoration – except if you have to do it! Around New Years people make all kinds of resolutions hoping for restoration in their lives: let's all try to be as fit as we were as teenagers – well, at least as energetic as we were in our 30's – OK, 40's. We are active, we count steps and do exercising, we try to modify our diets and we do everything right – for a couple of days. Then we falter. The restoration is over. We have failed again.

Let's face it, none of us is going to be who we were 40, 30, 20 or even ten years ago. And we shouldn't be. We have grown in our lives and grown in grace during those years. We have learned a lot and one of the things we have learned is that we will grow older and not ever have "yesterday" back again. If we dwell on that, we could become very depressed.

On the other hand, most of us are pretty comfortable where we are. We may have extra length in our belts these days, but we know that, because of God, we are always in the process of restoration.

I know that some of us have attempted and made a success of renewing some of our old skills: Nevin, we do like your clarinet solos. Some of us have taken the skills we have and taught them to others: Christine has become quite an knitter of prayers shawls thanks to the time some gave to teach her the basics. Some have become better Biblical scholars thanks to regular attendance at Bible study. And some have become decent cooks with Christian as the "great kitchen man".

But restoration isn't just all the things we do, can do, or will do in the future. Restoration is hearing God's word and trying to live as he would have us live.

Lent is upon us early this year, in only a couple of weeks. This is a great time for restoration. This is a time when we can meditate and contemplate where we are in the life we have in the light of Christ. Do we reflect that light where ever we go? Do we choose to speak of God's goodness as we move in the world? Have we used the talents and resources God has given us and continues to give us in the best possible way?

I suspect none of us does this every single day of our life, but we try. And when we don't make it, when we have a tough day, and even when we feel isolated or alone in our daily walk, we need to take even more time to listen, to hear God's word as it comes to us from others.

Pastors are not the only ones who "preach" in their lives. Each of us, through our Baptism, became a child of God and whether we like it or not, God won't let us go! Just as you would lay down your life for your own child – well, God has already done that for us! We need to keep our hearts and minds alert to others in the world who may need our time and our love in difficult times. We need to keep our hearts and our minds and our resources ready to help those among us and others with what they need to remain productive in the world. We need to pray that our ears will be alert to the needs of others and our hearts will be ready to respond when we are needed – and that we will know we are needed. God is "doing" through us.

TALK

-- Week of January 20, 2007