



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

Chapter I—Life?

Thinking about life in general and what we do with it really brings up a lot of stuff we really don't want to think about too often. Am I making ANY impact on this world? Is my life going to mean anything a hundred years from now? How will anyone even know I have lived and will it make any difference? A person could get depressed thinking like that! OR we could recognize that as a child of God, we will always make a difference because God makes a difference.

When we take our marvelous vacations to places which, in our minds, are ancient, we find lots of statues, plaques, tombstones, even immense buildings built to help people remember who they were or who someone they were close to was. The idea is to have people remember. But what for?

The pyramids were built as monuments for the pharaohs. We sure remember the pyramids, but do we really remember the pharaohs? Not really unless someone reminds us: they were particularly young, particularly rich, and particularly elegant in their tombs. But what did they DO? How did they make life better for the world? Not much there.

Many of the monuments are to leaders who were great, in their own minds, because of war: great victories which brought lands together or others which brought particular peoples together. But usually war, none the less.

Peacemakers are remembered less often with great statues or enormous plaques. Some are remembered because of great writings – by them or about them.

Moses and the 10 commandments have received big play in recent years. Amazingly, it seems to be mostly protestant Christians who have made a great noise to see that they are displayed in many public places.

I'm not against the 10 commandments, really. But I would rather seem more effort put into living one's life in a moral manner than seeking to make everyone live by the strict rules of the commandments – going to jail for coveting is not high on my list of things to put into law.

I suspect that those who want those commandments displayed feel that seeing them and hearing them often will change the ways of people. I don't think so. What will change the ways of people is for each of us to bring the love of God into the world rather than having the world see us as contentious and whining. We need to be accepting of others and what we see as their misunderstanding of God's ways (people who are non-Christian or of sects) even as we love them because we know that God loves them and cares about them. Being accepting of a person doesn't mean always accepting what they believe, but accepting them as fellow children of God – whether they know it or not!

We do make a difference in the life of the world by how we act out God's love in the world. We may never have a monument with our name on it, but somewhere, somehow, someone will remember that we were the one who brought coffee on a tough day or listened when we needed to explode or held our hand when no one else was there. And they say thanks.

TAK

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