



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

Whose

There are those who often ask the question “who are you?” The emphasis is on the word YOU. Who are you, to come here and use your credit card? Show us some ID. Who are you to tell me what to do? Do you have that authority? Who are you to suggest that I am living my life rather sideways that straight ahead? Are you my parent or guardian? Who are you, anyway, in this world?

Wrong question and wrong responses. Those are worldly concerns. They are the concerns of those who are into the worldly stuff of “we’re number one”. These are the questions of students of worldly life and of the things of this world. The better, and more relevant question is WHOSE are you? To whom do you belong? Do you “belong” to that card which proves your identity? Do you belong to that status of authority – of an officer of the court or parent or guardian? Are you one who can decide what is right or wrong for me or my friends?

The answer is yes and no. Don’t you just dislike that kind of answer? Yes AND no. In some ways we are tied to this earth and it is important for us to have the proper ID in order to move around in it. And we do, sometimes, have the authority to help people behave in ways that are useful and helpful. But the biggest answer is no. We are not given the right by law, by moral association, by our age or temperament, to make others live in ways we think are the best or ways in which we think they would move better in.

There are times we would like to be the ones to quiet a crying child (think: on a plane), to discipline people who are being rude, to quiet the boor who is going on and on (or the preacher who doesn't quit!). But that's not our job. That's not who we are called to be. We need to remember that we are called to be God's children in the world. It is WHOSE we are that is important. It is the fact that we are children of God that makes us more patient with those who can be annoying, which helps us approach those who can be upsetting with words of encouragement, who can distract the rude and distract those who are being disruptive.

None of these things is easy to do. It takes a lot of practice and prayer. We are God's children and in each case we need to call on God's wisdom to speak or act in a given situation.

We are God's children and as his children we are to bring his love into the world. We may not think that today we have done that or perhaps we will be better tomorrow. We keep practicing that patience and love God has showered on us. We keep pushing God's love into the world. The world objects, because love is not the way of the world. The world may and actually often does, reject the love of God, but we keep trying because that is our call.

People of God, you are blessed to be a blessing. You are God's children. You know WHOSE you are and when you leave our worship time, you walk out into an uncaring world with a caring message: God loves us, everyone!

CMK

-- Week of September 23, 2007