



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

Christ's Values in Today's World

It's important for us to remember, when people do their "confrontation" thing with us about being a Christian, that yes, Jesus doesn't know what it's like to live in today's world. We are confronted with more stuff since the introduction of electricity than he ever could have dreamed of. The question remains, then, how do we deal with the questions and problems all this "stuff" brings into our lives?

Many of us can look back to times of no electricity in our homes – no refrigeration, no telephone, no electric pumps for water, no radios and the list could go on. Things went on. Life went on. People survived and did very well. Now some of those very items are things we no longer consider "extras" but rather essentials. When we think of establishing a place to live, we immediately think of these essential items.

If we think of "values", can we put this kind of thing in our thinking? There are those who are trying to live "essential" lives, sometimes out in the woods, sometimes with minimal "stuff" in a more urban or suburban setting. They feel that, as Americans, we are spending too much of the earth's resources on our living while others in the world have hardly enough to keep on living – sometimes not enough. They know their efforts are a small dot on a large map, but they are trying to make a statement with their life style.

Some would say that is taking the values of Jesus into the current world situation. Others would dispute that and say there are other, and more effective ways to do that very same thing and point to the fact that God gave human beings good brains in order to learn more and more about living in the world. We

can still be comfortable and be helpful. We need to take the riches we have and help distribute them so others can enjoy the good earth that God has given us.

Personally? I believe a lot in both! How's that for fence-sitting? All of us have a tendency to over buy on things that we don't really need. We want to be just a little more comfortable than the people next door. My own attempt is to take my faith and try to place it against the plumb line of God's goodness and try to live – not on the least I need, but certainly on less than I want. And there lies the tale.

We need to learn to make the difference in our lives about wants and needs. We need to continue – since many of us already are pretty careful about this – we need to continue to make more “no” decisions when we are tempted than “yes” decisions. We need to take our “no's” and turn them into helpful and useful deeds for the good of others.

Many of you do this already. We fill that basket up every week for the neighborhood center. We go shopping and we think of all the people we would like to bless with a gift, not because of their kindness, necessarily, but because of their need. We may just want to gift them to add to their pleasure in life. We do not need to “go native” – either the current Florida native who wants and gets everything or the early pioneer version who had nothing but their creativity. But we do need to decide what is really important in life.



--- Thoughts of the Week

October 15, 2006