

# A Word on Wednesday from Pastor Tonia

## "Life in the fast lane or life in the pig pen" 2/28/24

*We make our own decisions, but the Lord alone determines what happens.*

(Proverbs 16:33)

We often undertake an action because, in our head, it sounds so good, best idea ever, a sure-fire success. Then the rubber meets the road, and you wonder "Why in the world did I ever think this would work?"

I think of the prodigal son, on his way to see the world, learn about other cultures, experience things he's never seen before – like a pig pen. After enjoying his early inheritance on temporary enjoyment, he found he was in need of money for everyday necessities. The only work he could find was taking care of a herd of pigs, and the only food he could afford was what he was feeding to the swine. What a turn of events.

Life doesn't follow our wishes and dreams, our schedule, and plans. Not that dreams are a bad thing, not that wanting a better life is wrong, not that learning doesn't expand your mind; but, if we trust in God, we should check with Him first. What does God expect of us?

This makes my mind whirl. Does God have each step of my life, and yours, mapped out? Do I have free will? Am I where I belong? How is it at times one thinks they're right where they belong, and someone else thinks they should be somewhere else? Confusing. Where should I be? What should I be doing?

How does what we do differ from who we are? How in line is who we are with who God created us to be? We are to choose who or what we will serve or who we will follow, who we set as an example, or who we choose to emulate. This ends up being an important decision. It will affect how we are seen or perceived; it has a lot to do with where we end up in life.

Joshua tells the children of Israel, "But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD." (Josh 24:15)

What is our god? Do we worship the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, or sports, work, money, or self. Who do we serve? What teachings do we reflect to those around us? Do people see or hear the love of God in us? Do we support others, or gossip about them? Do we give or take? Do we speak put-downs or words of encouragement? Do we lift up the brokenhearted or kick them when they're down?

The prophet Micah tells us, "O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you - but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

(Micah 6:8) So what guides us in our actions? Paul tells us, "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor 10:31)

## **Please pray with me:**

God of glory, guide us in our thoughts and actions, give us Your wisdom as we decide who we will follow, help us to do Your will. In all of our choices, may we serve You and others, not just ourselves. Help us to show justice and kindness to others with our lives. May our lives reflect Your love to others. Lord, in this Lenten journey, help us to glorify You in all we do.

**Amen.**