

A Word on Wednesday from Pastor Tonia

"What is The Right Thing to Do?" 6/8/22

*The LORD God has told us what is right and what He wants from us:
"See justice is done, let mercy be your first concern, and humbly obey your God." (Hosea 6:8)*

In life we are to be focused. When cattle drivers cross the river, they keep their eyes focused on the place on the opposite shore where they plan to drive the cattle. They can't get side-tracked. No matter how rough the current, they have to stay focused on their destination. So, it is with us on our journey. But on what do we focus? What is the right thing to do?

Many wonder, what is a Christian? What is different about their faith? How does a Christian show they follow Christ? Good questions. What does God say about how we are to live? Well, God puts it out there in simple words.

Besides the words of Hosea, we read in Isaiah, "Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow." (Isa 1:17)

Zechariah tells us, "This is what the LORD Almighty said, 'Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another.'" (Zechariah 7:9)

James puts it this way, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, 'To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep themselves unspotted from the world.'" (James 1:27)

Simple, but not easy. We are not to be sidetracked by how unfair life is, but to hold fast to the model Jesus left for us. No matter how rough the current, we are to think on that which is honorable, just, pure, pleasing, and commendable. This is how we fight injustice. This is how we right the wrong – by keeping our eyes on the destination, the goal.

People may bully us, or others, the weak, or those they don't care for. People lash out. We feel shorted in our lives. People, unfortunately, do not treat others justly. How, then, are we to react and beat them at their game? By showing justice and doing goodness.

Jesus' actions, His teachings were counter cultural. People couldn't understand. But this was His character and is to be ours. Our reactions to difficult acts and times show who we are and whose we are.

Jesus, Himself, the Son of God, faced injustice. He was wrongfully accused, betrayed, abandoned; unfairly judged and condemned to die as a criminal. Oh, how He understands our tumultuous trials. And His message to us is the same as it was in the beginning, "Love one another." Simple. Succinct. Not always easy, but always the right thing to do. It gives us peace. It diverts fisty cuffs, bad feelings, lost friendships.

God's love for us is breathtaking. We are in awe of God's compassion and unfailing forgiveness. Doing the right thing is a choice. We choose to be kind. To listen. To see things from another point of view. We choose to turn the other cheek. To walk away from the fight. To forgive and to show love.

Please pray with me:

Forgiving God, we turn to You for the strength, the resolve, the fortitude to live as You have commanded. Help us to step back, to count to 10. Help us to forgive and to love. May our actions and reactions reflect Your love and lead to justice. We pray for our nation and the nations of the world. May the desire to strive for justice become the heart felt cry of our leaders.

Loving Lord, let there be peace. **Amen.**