

Pastor's Page

Have you ever done or said something that hurt someone else? Of course, we all have. Have you ever done or said something wrong despite knowing it was wrong? I'm pretty sure we would all say "yes" to this, too. Even St. Paul was guilty of this kind of behavior. "For I do not do the good I want, but I do the evil I do not want...I discover the principle that when I want to do right, evil is at hand." (Rom. chapter 7)

For a long time, I have wondered why, with all we know and love about God, we can be so imperfect, so obtuse sometimes! What is it about human nature that makes us behave as we do? The easy answer, of course, is "fallen human nature". We've been using that excuse for a very long time.

Jesus spent a great deal of his public ministry trying to have people pay attention to their behaviors and where those behaviors come from. "It is not what goes into a person that makes them dirty but what comes out." "If you store evil in your hearts, then you will do evil things." "Where one's heart is, there is one's treasure." "God reads the heart." I could go on but I think it is pretty clear that Jesus was teaching values, morals, and ethics to people very much like you and me.

Now, we all know what it's like to take the easy way out, to follow the path of least resistance in a difficult situation, to give in. Even when we know we are doing wrong, we will sometimes rationalize that it is too hard to do what is right. I get that. I am guilty of it myself. But the funny thing is that it doesn't have to be this way. We can change. We can get it right.

And part of getting things right is listening, not judging; sharing, not hoarding; giving, not just receiving. Listening to someone else's opinion without demonizing them does not seem to be the way of doing things these days. Sharing insights and understandings and trying to come to agreements is not in fashion. Yet, those things have always worked. Why do they not work now? What is it about our culture and politics that is so broken?

My answer is that we do not recognize the Spirit of God who lives in each of us. Our core is a God-core. By that I mean we are made to act like God. We are created by God for certain behaviors and not for others. "If anyone says, 'I love God,' but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen" (1 John chapter 4). We are not made to hate or to cheat or to lie or to steal. We are made better than that. We simply have to give in to the better nature.

I think about these things as I read the newspapers or pay attention to things going on in the world. We are made to love and we can't see it. Of course, we can always find excuses not to be like Christ. It's being like Christ that's the hard part.

This is one of my favorite quotes and it says it all:

Someday, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love, and then, for a second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin