

Ruin To Renovation - Sermon #19 - The Emperor's New Clothes Study Questions for Groups & Individuals

OPENER:

What was your favorite nursery rhyme, fable (such as Aesop's Fables)? And why? What was the lesson it taught? In the sermon we used the Emperor's New Clothes as an illustration, what did that teach us?

OPENINGPRAYER:

Pull up the prayer requests from the church newsletter again & pray through some of those items including Jen & Kathleen in the Middle East right now! Remembering Robert, Kathleen's hubby, and Jen's kids in your prayers!

DISCUSSION:

John Calvin said, *"The only haven of safety is to have no other will, no other wisdom, than to follow the Lord wherever he leads. Let this, then, be the first step, to abandon ourselves, and devote the whole energy of our minds to the service of God."*

What does that mean to you?

Is that happening in your life? Why or why not?

In light of that, discuss the following verses/passages and what they mean to you...

Jesus said in John 8:29, ²⁹ *The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.*

Galatians 2:20, ²⁰ *I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

Galatians 5:24-25, ²⁴ *Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.*

Romans 13:14, ¹⁴ *Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.*

In the sermon we said,

'We realize the Will is dependent on the content of the Mind; the thoughts & feelings which govern it. What we think & feel are very much a matter of what we allow ourselves to think & feel. Our life's direction is very much a matter of the direction of our Will which can be instrumental in giving direction to the future thoughts & feelings of our minds. In the redeemed person the Will becomes a creative agent of change. We can use our will to envision a changed life in Christ, to foster an intent to see that change happen, and set our will on the means to get there.'

How do you see this playing out in your life?

If you find yourself governed by thoughts & feelings which are not worthy of Christ, how do you go about crucifying these things, and replacing them with that which is worthy?

Looking at Colossians 2:8, have you ever seen evidence in your life where this has happened to you?

⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.

In combatting this we look to 2 Corinthians 10:5 which tells us,

⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Practically, how do you do this?

In the sermon we said,

‘Character can be changed, although it has much to do with surrendering negative thoughts & feelings which control us; a process we refer to as repentance.

Repentance is defined as a turning away from one thing, and turning to another.

Turning away from sin & disobedience, turning towards Jesus in obedience.’

Do you feel practiced in good repentance?

Describe what it practically means to turn away from these things and towards Christ?

What are some of the things which have to happen in this process?

How does all this align with our vision, mission & purpose statements: *to follow Jesus, to live as Jesus did, and to manifest Jesus?*

We said in the sermon,

Character develops from the Will since certain things will become habitual & automatic, and therefore, a part of character.

Are you developing Christlike Character?

How do you surrender your will to develop Christlike Character?

What would you do differently?