

**The Word Goes Forth
Pastor Tim Peterson's Blog
October 1, 2015**

LIVING FOR CHRIST ALONE!

Last week I listened to an interview of a man divorcing his family to pursue a relationship with another woman. He used the words "I think" over ten times after which I stopped counting. He made the statement, "I needed to find myself" and added in his comments that he was a Christian. I pondered after the interview what his children, his neighbors and his church family must think. How did this man miss the message to deny self and live for Christ? As a pastor who has the honor and privilege to meet with many families as they seek to live for Christ, I have heard many say similar things as this man did in the interview. In fact, most come to a pastor or counselor not exactly sure what they are searching for; many just know the way they have been living is not working. The Apostle Paul writes in Colossians 2:8: "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ." Sadly many Christians are not aware they have been taken captive by the world's thinking. The greatest evidence that I have seen is a Christian seeking self-realization or "I must find myself".

Self-realization is a hollow and deceptive way of thinking which has led a person to believe sin is wrong-doing rather than what it really is which is wrong being. To be self-focused means to be independent of God. If we see sin in only the result of our Actions, we fail to see that we have desired to be separate from Him. Christ calls us to die to self and live for Him.

Jesus looks at something we many times miss in ourselves: our self-centeredness. If my religion is based on my right to myself, I have a crisis in my soul; I may be right-living, but I am anti-God. "If you are going to be My disciple," Jesus says, "you must give up your right to yourself." I know this all too well in my life prior to accepting Christ. I truly thought of me and only me. I have hurt many because of my self-centeredness. It is only when my eyes are fixed upon Christ that my being right with Him gets into focus.

Self-realization and God cannot live together in a person. Jesus says we cannot serve two masters. When I am born from above, I realize I must enter into identification with Jesus Christ, otherwise I will kill the life of God in me. If I agree that self-realization is against Christ, then I am not concerned so much about me but much more in what Christ is doing in others around me.

Finally, when I understand it is not about me but all about my Savior and what He thinks, I will let go of attempting to be master of myself. When I see that I no longer live for myself and live for Christ, I see the world as He sees it, and the

burn in my heart is for His people. I begin to do His will more and more. I wonder, what Christ would do in a community like Broken Bow, Merna, Mason City, Anselmo, Sargent, Berwyn, Westerville, or Callaway as more and more live for Him. I wonder as Christ heals one family at a time. These healed families pointing others to the One who heals, how this will impact our communities. I trust many of you have been on this path. I want to join you in praying for families in our community. The Roman Empire collapsed and fell for many reasons; however, the primary reason as cited by Edward Gibbon in 1777 was that in Rome the family deteriorated and collapsed. Please join us in praying for the healing of Jesus Christ in our families and marriages.

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