

Brush Your Teeth on Autopilot; Live by Choice

Reformation, Pentecost A; Oct 24/25, 2020 Rev. Dr. David Gardner Tweed

John 8:31-36

31 Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." 33 They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, "You will be made free'?" 34 Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. 35 The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. 36 So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

John's Gospel is the "high" Christology gospel: it looks at Jesus refracted through his divinity. In John's gospel the story is more about God here, with us than God among us/as a human. Jesus is given nearly supernatural abilities and understandings about the course of things and the motives of people, etc. Here, after debating the identity of God and having a good response among the people – Jesus becomes aware again of human fickleness and talks to them about what being children of this God really means then in their identity, life, choices, and outlook. The people's response reflects their lack of understanding – they are narrowly concerned with earthly slavery and all the while ignoring the very reason they are in Jerusalem celebrating in the first place!! (The Passover – God leading them OUT of slavery in Egypt!!) Jesus is referring to a much more hidden and pervasive condition of their heart. One that if understood and grasped by what God has already brought into their midst to be its antidote would give a feeling of having been set completely free; free to reflect and more fully become those children of God; free to enjoy their Life gift to its fullest and join with this ultimate Child of God in being a traveling host of Grace bringing forgiveness, love, hope and healing to others.

In 1517 an Old Testament Professor and Monk, Martin Luther, tacked a list of 95 topics he wanted to discuss with the rest of the faculty and other learned individuals. Somehow that list made its way to the local Kinko's of the day.....the brand new Gutenberg Press studio. From there it sparked/released a revolution that continues to this day. Luther's main ideas (Bible is the authority for faith and Salvation is God's gift of Grace not something that can be earned) were not new Augustine had presented

them around the year 400. The maelstrom of motivations and movements among culture, government, and church proved to be a catalytic environment to release all this pent-up energy for change. Since then the church, government, self-understanding of nations and peoples has been dramatically impacted. The Reformation is considered by many historians as one of the top 10 most influential events in human history.

Much of our life is lived on autopilot....we don't think about how to go about writing and with which hand....we just do; we don't think about how to brush our teeth and with which hand....we just do; and so on. Unfortunately, much of our autopilot approach flows over into other areas of life that would be helped by more conscious awareness, consideration, thought, reflection and better decision-making. To test this for yourself: examine/become aware of your biases – from gender, cultural, economic, experiential, age, etc. perspectives. Are these still actually true? How much do we simply assume to still be true but may not be? Are we parenting/living/acting in similar ways to our parents because that is what we learned or because that is what we have chosen?

“Mirror, Mirror on the wall,

- + What are YOUR growing edges for life (and in your faith) today? Why do you have them or why not?
- + What growing edges do you see for the Church/Kingdom.....how 'bout LCR specifically?
- + How do you envision where we (Family, Church, Society) should grow next? How do we do that? How will you help?