

7/16/23-Series: 'MORE THAN' (#7)

Pastor Lee

Affirmation
- - - Positives
& Pitfalls

- Pastor Lee exclaims our Church's excitement for its culture of mutual support, loving, caring, serving, appreciating, life-giving, encouraging....truly overwhelming! This day-in/day-out focus is what CF Downingtown is all about...lets build on that!
- This is an affirmation of the power of 'the Body of Christ'! Jesus said, however, that there's actually a 'dark side' potential where it all goes wrong....that is.... we can't allow ourselves to get to a place where we love the AFFIRMATION for each other MORE THAN God Himself.

Resistance
To Belief...
Then & Now

- John 12: 36-43- - "While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." When Jesus had said these things, He departed and hid Himself from them. (V37) Though He had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in Him, (V38) so that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"
- Note in V 37-38..... that Jesus had been performing wondrous miracles all over the land...notwithstanding all His works, miracles and incredible teaching, so many didn't believe, just as Isaiah prophesied.....continuing: V39-40: Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said: " He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them."
- These people were in DENIAL....no amount of evidence would convince them. UNBELIEF DENIES GOD'S TRUTH! Just look at the wonderment of creation....our bodies, the mountains, sun, etc.,etc.....some will say there HAS to be a creator (!); still others will deny this absolute and perfect cohesion of our existence.
- The sin of unbelief is, ultimately, the thing that keeps you from God and from heaven. That disbelief has a habitual cumulative effect....might reach a point where you deny so much that you can't believe!! Remember Pharaoh's stubborn disregard for God's signs and his disbelief.

Continual
Denial can
Blind!

Leading to
permanent
Separation
From God

Do we allow
worldly needs
to override
Belief?

- V 41: Isaiah said these things because he saw His glory and spoke of Him...V42: Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in Him, but for fear of the pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue...(a terrible fate in that ancient world)
- For those on a personal faith journey who are not yet sure of your belief, listen here, ask questions, be encouraged to learn more about God's word. If you take the time, you will learn that God word stands on truth...cannot be broken. God's spirit will move into your life! Plea to God.....show me!!!! He will.

God =
Truth

Above All,
love God &
His Glory

- V43:FOR THEY LOVED THE GLORY THAT COMES FROM MAN MORE THAN THE GLORY THAT COMES FROM GOD. This is the key takeaway this morning!!!!!!!

Pride is
'Stumbling
Block'

- We all look for personal affirmation from each other but how does that compare to the perfect/glorious affirmation of God? CS Lewis said "speaking of pride,....on chastity, anger, greed drunkenness and all that are mere flea bites in comparison....it was through pride that the devil became the devil...pride leads to every other vice...it is the complete 'anti-God' state of mind." Pride and personal affirmation go hand in hand.

Praise
God!

- We need to reformat our thinkingstop living for praise....rather bring praise to God. What are our priorities?! The ultimate is what God thinks of us...not what we think of each other or of ourselves.. Within all this, we can still be loving, encouraging, etc. to each other! Yet, simultaneously and reflexively, try to reflect everything back to Jesus!...however you do that! Trust in Him and thank Him!!!
- Psalm 115: 1: Not to us Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your steadfast love and your faithfulness.

Core:
Place Christ
First!!

- Our new Church name.....Christ First, a natural extension of our core and a reflection of our desire TO PLACE CHRIST FIRST IN OUR LIVES! First at Church and first in our lives!
- Pastor Lee reiterates an invitationaddressing those who haven't already.....to put their faith and trust in Jesus.....putting Him in first place in everyday life.