

Good News



Community Presbyterian Church

July, 2009

From the Pastor

“So I would say that those who strike us as self-less are in fact very soul-full.”

What do you think about that?

It is a quote from a book I just read, *I Am a Strange Loop*, by Douglas Hofstadter. (Some of you may remember him from his bestselling book of thirty years ago, *Gödel, Escher, Bach*.)

There is some truth to this statement, and an important insight. We don't become selfless, acting less and less out of selfish motives, by denying our selves. Instead, we become selfless by filling up our souls. Hofstadter has some specific ideas about how we fill our souls, but we'll get back to that in a minute.

His quote reminds me of one of my favorite Bible passages:

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any incentive of love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves which you have in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 2:1-5)

It seems to me that people who take this admonition to heart strike us as selfless people. People who take this to heart are soul-full people.

With this in mind, back to the Hofstadter quote, “...those who strike us as self-less are in fact very soul-full — that is, they house many other souls inside their own skulls/brains/minds/

souls — and I don't think this sharing of mind-space diminishes their central core but enlarges and enriches it.”

How do we fill our souls? By welcoming other souls within our inmost being. How do we welcome other souls in? By listening to other people, to their words and deeds and lives; by getting to know their desires and hopes, their fears and pains; by understanding who they think they are when they are no longer trying to impress or manipulate others.

How do we fill our souls? By a persistent and energetic practice of empathy. And when we do the lives of those close to us become part of our lives, their concerns become our concerns, their pains our pains, their hopes our hopes. In one sense, our souls begin to fill with the souls of others. When they do then we take account of what is good for others as well as what is good for ourselves. And as we look to the interests of others those people begin to see us as selfless.

I think this is a good part of what it means to have among ourselves the mind of Christ Jesus. After all Jesus is one who knew what was in each person's heart, the proximate purpose of empathy, and then loved perfectly. It was Jesus' mind that took the Golden Rule and shifted it from a command into a model of empathy, “Whatever it is that you desire that others do for you, do that for them.”

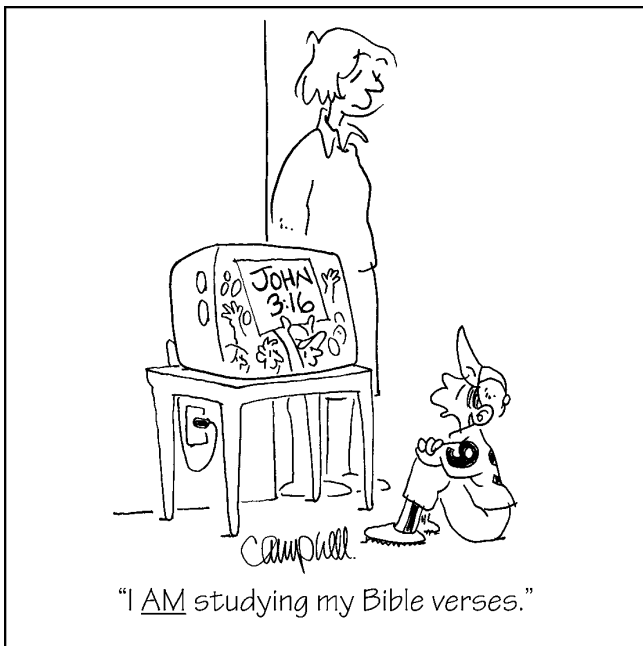
Selfless and soul-full. That sounds attractive to me. Accompanied by encouragement, love, affection, sympathy and humility. Having within us and among us the mind of Christ, becoming a home for the Holy Spirit. This is the abundant life Jesus calls us to live.

Pastor Mark



Adult Sunday School

We are beginning an exciting and involving study of the Gospel of John during the hour before worship: 9:00 til 10:00 AM. Each student is responsible for researching a portion of our study and bringing that information back to the group. Give it a try this Sunday; we still have room.



- 2 Sharon Acord
- 3 Rhonda Ray
- 4 Betsy Ross Silvester
- 4 Robynn Bento
- 6 Levi Friesen
- 13 Magali Hollingsworth
- 14 Robert Wrobbel
- 20 Maya Hollingsworth
- 21 David Galatro
- 25 Evan Costa
- 25 Candee Bento
- 29 Sarah Steckling Friesen



“The Lord watches over you. The Lord is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.” Psalm 121:5-6

July 2009 is Ultra Violet Safety Month.

Have you noticed that in the past few weeks our blue skies have been decorated with some uncharacteristic but beautiful cloud formations? One benefit of my commute time to & from Merced is the daily nature show of birds and wildlife and panoramic views. Even with the heat, I love our valley and am grateful for our sunshine, especially when I talk to Mark’s Mom in Oregon.

As the Fourth of July is here, and we are sweltering in the lovely Central Valley heat, let’s pay close attention to protecting our skin and eyes from damage from exposure to the sun.

Long-term exposure to ultraviolet radiation is thought to contribute to both macular degeneration (The leading cause of blindness in older Americans) and cataracts. The eye can suffer surface burn from excessive exposure reflected from sand, snow or pavement. For protection, wear sunglasses with 99-100% UV A & B rays blockage, and a wide-brimmed hat.

The best plan to prevent skin cancer is to:

- Stay out of the sun between 11AM & 3PM
- Use sunscreen (***a lot & often***) with SPF (Sun Protection Factor) 15 or higher-apply at least 1 ounce or a palm full for an adult’s arms, legs, neck & face. The SPF number indicates how long a product will protect your skin. For example, SPF 15 sunscreen if applied & re-applied in 2 hours or less would prevent sunburn for about 225 minutes (3 hours & 45

minutes). Water-proof sunscreens need to be re-applied about every 40 minutes.

- Time to get into the shade. Sun-protective clothing is also sold at sporting shops (ask Ron to see his cool jacket!) Dark colored clothing made of fabric with a tight weave is next best.
- For babies shade; sun-protective clothing and hats are best. Some Pediatricians say a small bit of sunscreen may be applied to small areas such as the face & back of hands.

Dermatologists teach us that even brief exposures to sun all year round can add up to major damage for people with fair skin, resulting in squamous cell cancer. This includes your arms’ exposure while driving. Make it a routine to check your skin regularly and report to your physician any areas of concern on your skin.

Even occasional major sunburns may predispose a person to the most serious type of skin cancer, melanoma.

In summation, words of wisdom from the American Cancer Society:

1. ***SEEK SHADE***
2. ***LIMIT TIME IN THE SUN AT MIDDAY***
3. ***COVER UP WITH: -A SHIRT, SUNSCREEN, WIDE-BRIMMED HAT, SUNGLASSES***

Happy Independence Day and Happy Summertime. We can enjoy the goodness of sunshine while wisely avoiding any ill-effects.

Radiantly yours, *Nancy*

COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

399 Sixth Street
Gustine, CA 95322
Return Service Requested

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PAID
Permit No. 12
Gustine, CA 95322

Sunday School, 9:00 AM — Worship, 10:30 AM

Pastor — Mark Hollingsworth

Treasurer — Dorothy Gray; Choir Director — Jim Conrad

Secretary — Med Hoover; Parish Nurse — Nancy Hollingsworth

Office Hours — 9:00-Noon, Wednesday, Thursday and by appointment

Telephone: (209) 854-6772; email: pastormark@wefollowjesusingustine.org

Web Site: www.wefollowjesusingustine.org

DO NOT USE YOUR
FREEDOM
AS A COVER-UP
FOR EVIL; LIVE AS
SERVANTS OF GOD.

1 Peter 2:16, NIV

