

From the Pastor's Desk...

In Our Own Words

"Is that your own idea", Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?"

--John 18:34

I remember the words of my school teacher well. She was clear in her expectations. She taught us how to use the library, and cite sources. She taught us proper grammar and punctuation. But above all else, she taught us to put it in our own words. Those words might be supported by others, or even discussed by others, but what we wrote had to be in our own words.

American businessman and inventor Thomas Edison had many ideas, but only 1,093 of them came to be patents! He is responsible for inventions such as the light bulb, motion picture camera and the phonograph. Edison pushed himself creatively to bring ideas to life.

Today, God is calling us to original thought and putting it in our own words. What do we believe? What are we asking God for in prayer? How do we express our faith in the midst of such a changing world? God calls us to pray authentically, using emotion and detail. He calls us to express our faith in a way that is genuinely us.

In today's world with social media and the internet, we are told so often what to think and what to believe. Sometimes we might lose ourselves in the ideas and opinions of others. Now more than ever, the church needs to stand on our own faith, and own it personally. We need to study God's word, so that we can express our faith personally and individually.

When Jesus talked to Pilate, he was acutely aware that he was being interrogated. However, what was really behind it? He knew that Pilate caved under pressure. Pilate submitted to the will of the people. He submitted to the will of Roman authority. What was really left that was all Pilate? Had he really gotten to know Jesus? Had he really formed his own opinion of Christ? Or was he just dependent on what others were saying? That of course was Jesus' point.

Many are like that today. Some people have only heard about Jesus, and what others think. But Jesus was always challenging his disciples to form their own views. Remember, it was Jesus who asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" (Luke 9:20). Faith is personal. It's individual. We must have ownership of it, and cannot lease or borrow it from another. Once we do that, then we will truly understand what it means to rely on Christ.

Have a blessed Fall!

Pastor Chris

