

From: Pastor Les Young
Sent: Friday, July 27, 2007 4:44 PM
Subject: Sunflowers and People

Dearly Beloved of God,

The other day my wife and I drove by a nearby place known as Buttonwood Farm. Most of the folk in this neck of the woods know Buttonwood Farm as a place where you can buy some very rich and quite expensive ice cream. Also, for the past 3-4 years they have planted acres and acres of sunflowers in the stone walled fields that border the main road. When the sunflowers are matured, they sell them for \$5 a bundle, with all the proceeds going to benefit the "Make-a-Wish" Foundation. They even make a sunflower ice cream!

As Barb and I were driving by, we noticed that it was that time of year again. It was a bright sunny day and there they were in all their glory, standing erect like several divisions of soldiers - every one with their face fixed on the sun. In the morning they face East, at noon they face South, and in the afternoon they face West. When the sun is out, they face the sun; when the sun is not out, they sort of droop. Sunflowers do what they were created to do. They don't break ranks. One doesn't say, "You all can face South if you want, I'm facing West." And so in all their unified glory, they glorify God.

People, on the other hand, created in the image of God, created to praise God (Psalm 102:18, 148:5, 150:6), do much that does not glorify Him. Romans, chapter 1 states that to their shame, men have been worshipping created things in place of the Creator for eons. At the top of that rubble heap is worship of self. Yet in spite of ourselves, God who loves us unconditionally, sent His Son to a cruel cross where He would shed His blood for the sins of the entire world, including yours and mine. And He calls for everyone to look at the Son. In the Old Testament there was a time when the people of Israel were plagued by thousands of poisonous snakes. God instructed Moses to construct an image of a snake on a pole and to lift it up in the midst of the people. Whoever looked at the image (a type of Christ bearing sin) would be healed. Jesus, referencing that incident to the people some 1500 years later said,

John 12:32-33 (NIV)

³² But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself."

³³ He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

If you have never looked to Jesus for forgiveness of sins, I urge you to do so today. I promise you, He will abundantly pardon. A wise man once said, "Nobody is so bad that he can't be saved and nobody is so good that he doesn't need to be saved." He not only pardons, but He imparts a new nature to those who believe - a nature that is more like that of the sunflower. Yet even then, we must make the choice to follow the Son. Such is the nature of love. Love, while always seeking the benefit of the beloved, does not impose its will on another. That's why some will choose to ignore the Son. But you, dear friend, this Lord's Day, why not gather with some others of like precious faith, and together, face the Son and give Him praise.

Yours for His Purposes,

Pastor Les