

ADVENT DEVOTION: NOVEMBER 28, 2022

ISAIAH 1:10-20

POSERS, PROPHETS, AND PEOPLE

One of the gifts of working in youth ministry is having some access to the slang of youth culture. A decade or so ago I heard some young people using the term “poser.” I learned that it referred to someone who presented themselves as if they were a certain way, when they really weren’t. For instance, someone might have acted like they were fans of a band, but when they couldn’t name three songs by that band, they were clearly posers.

In our text from Isaiah, God is calling out Israel for being posers. God doesn’t want their sacrifices, their incense, or any of their pageantry. That’s because God knows that they aren’t serious about being a people that really live by God’s ways. How does God know this? Because of the way they treat other people. Here in Isaiah chapter 1, just like in Micah 6 among many other places, God makes it very clear: if you really want to honor me, you will show it in the way you care for others, particularly the most vulnerable among you.

In this season of Advent, we have an opportunity to reflect on how our faith is being exhibited (or not) in our daily lives. More than the Christmas greenery in the sanctuary, more than the ornaments on the Christmon tree, God delights in our living justly and our acts of compassion for those experiencing hardship.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. In what ways are we being posers? In what ways do we claim one thing, but really live another?
2. In Isaiah God tells us to “...cease to do evil and learn to do good, seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, and plead for the widow.” What does it look like for us to do that in our everyday lives?

~Bill Buchanan

