

Dear Lillian Methodist Church family,

I recently read an article published by a well-known denomination. Its goal was to encourage lapsed members to return to the church. They promised that their churches are different now. They are now "a safe space to be your authentic self".

Honestly speaking, "authbe yourself" is a modern way of describing a life without repentance. My authentic self is a jerk. You would not want to be around me. Left to myself, I am prideful, selfish, arrogant and profane. My authentic self will pilfer from the job and excuse it. The real me will gladly commit sin, as long as another is blamed for it.

The real me will attend church, as long as no demands are made of me and no standards are expected of me. The authentic me is satisfied with how I am and will resist all signs of a guilty conscience. My authentic self loves myself, and it shows. As I said, my authentic self is a jerk.

Fortunately, my authentic self, my unrepentant self, is now my old self, which has died, and my new life is hidden with Christ in God (Col 3:3). Jesus did not come to affirm my authentic sinful self; He came to free me from it. My authentic self is a slave to sin. (John 8:34) Jesus came to free me, and now I am free indeed!

Our authentic self is marred by sin. God loves us too much to leave us as He found us. Through the grace of God, we are now able to put off our old self and to put on the new self created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (Eph 4:24) Old self=bad. New self=good.

See y'all Sunday
Perry Cunningham
Lay Leader

