



Thursday Thought

by Pastor Myron D. Atkinson

“The World is Not Your Ashtray.”

Thursday, October 4, 2016

Verse for the week: Numbers 35:33 (NIV) “Do not pollute the land where you are...”

Have you ever driven down the road and stopped at a stop light and noticed the pile of cigarette butts piled up along the curb? Or maybe you’ve see the “Adopt a Highway” signs placed around where organizations, churches, and even families adopt a section of road to pick up the discarded trash along roadways. Our church does it and I’ve been doing it since I was a child. My mom would have us take a bucket and pick up the trash along a quarter mile stretch of road that was the distance between our home and our grandmothers. It doesn’t matter how many times we pick it up, it seemed liked within moments more would appear. Even at our church we pick up cigarette butts every week. (Lots of them pile up around the sign that says “No Smoking...”). It really isn’t an issue that just follows me, it’s a worldwide issue. I’ve been to several countries around the world and have seen the same issues. Well, there is one county that has had enough and is doing something about it. In January of 2014 the county board of supervisors in Roanoke County, Virginia evidently had enough and began a campaign to battle littering in the area. They had banners donated and placed them all around the county that said “The World is Not Your Ashtray.” Now two years later they have metal signs place at intersections and in other areas. I would like to report that after nearly two years our small place on this beautiful earth is cigarette butt and litter free but it’s not. We have actually purchased one of those containers that people put their cigarette butts in and place it by our gym door to help combat the problem. Why do people do it? I think it’s a lack of respect kind of like when people trim their finger nails in church. (I mean SERIOUSLY!?) It’s a lack of respect shown towards other people, towards God, and towards His creation. We are called to take care of the world that we live in. In Genesis 2:15 (NLT) it says, “The Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it.” So how do we tend and watch over it? We recycle, we pick up trash, we are careful about the carbon footprint that we leave, and we strive to be contentious about being wasteful. When we begin to do these things and teach others, soon there won’t be a need for the counties to spend money on signs that say things like “The World is Not Your Ashtray.”

Question to ask yourself: What am I doing to help take care of God’s creation?