
Sermon Notes

November 13, 2022

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

Fulfilling the Great Commission: Evangelism & Discipleship 2 Timothy 2:1-2

Passing the Baton

- ❖ Relay races are often won, not so much by the speed of the runners but by the hand-off of the baton
- ❖ In the church Jesus is building, a similar sort of hand-off is critical to the growth and development of the church
- ❖ Jesus commands His church to be a disciple making church
 - Matthew 28:18-20
 - there is a distinction to be made between converts and disciples

What is a Disciple?

- ❖ A disciple is a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ
 - not a perfect follower
 - one who faithfully follows the Lord with willingness, joyful obedience and devotion
- ❖ Jesus' call to discipleship (Luke 9:23)

❖ Those who follow Jesus:

- deny self (Lk 9:23)
- embrace Christ's mission (Lk 9:23)
- make His mission top priority (Lk 14:26-27)
- commit to multiplication (Matt 9:36-38)
- live a life of love (Jn 13:34-45)
- abide in Christ (Jn 15:4-7)
- are obedient (Jn 8:31)
- bear fruit (Jn 15:8, 16)
- glorify God (Jn 15:8)
- remain in His love (Jn 15:9)

Making Disciples

- ❖ The church Jesus builds is committed to passing the baton of truth and the life of faith on to others
 - Jesus' followers commit themselves to a life of growth
 - Jesus' followers commit themselves to a life of growing others
- ❖ Since making disciples is God's top priority for the church—it is also Satan's top target for attack
- ❖ How does Paul help Timothy progress in the faith?
 - Timothy is mired in difficulties from which he simply cannot extricate himself
 - Paul doesn't criticize or condemn Timothy for his struggles or try to put him down
 - Paul steers Timothy back on course
 - *be strengthened*
 - embrace and use what God has already given you with commitment and confidence
 - the strength to do what Timothy is called to do comes from the storehouse of God's grace made available in Christ Jesus

- ❖ Faithfully passing the baton of our faith onto others requires us to develop deep, caring, committed relationships with them (life on life)
 - keep pointing to God, not to yourself!
 - shine a spotlight on the truth of who God is and what He has done for us in Christ

Don't "Break the Chain"

- ❖ William Barclay: "The teacher is a link in the living chain which stretches unbroken from this present moment back to Jesus Christ."
 - you are a link in an unbroken chain that extends right back to Jesus' time on earth!
 - don't even think of dropping out or breaking the chain!
 - you not only have to keep yourself going, you have to help others get going as well
- ❖ *Entrust to faithful men*
 - *entrust* = putting something of value on deposit for safekeeping (cf. 2 Timothy 1:12, 14)
 - God has entrusted us with the gospel and the implications of living a gospel driven life
- ❖ Timothy must be on the lookout for men who have both good character and who are gifted to teach others
 - these are leaders who will guard the purity and integrity of God's Word
 - a strong church needs strong leadership in every area of its ministry

- who are the faithful ones who will serve and lead in the next generation of this congregation if the Lord should tarry?

- ❖ Learn to give **AND** to receive, be a learner and a teacher!
- ❖ Whatever you do, share the truth you are learning with others
 - some will answer the call, some won't
 - the important thing is that **YOU** answer the call
- ❖ Pray and ask God who He has put here for you to influence and build into

Personal Reflection

1. Does your life line up with the definition of a disciple given in this message? Are there any characteristics of a disciple listed on page 2 of these notes which you need to grow in? Who might you turn to that could help you to move forward with that? Will you reach out and ask for their help?
2. Who has God used to faithfully pass the baton of faith on to you? Spend time thanking Him for them. If they are still living, encourage them with a note, an e-mail, or a phone call and let them know what they have meant to you.
3. Do you believe God has placed certain people in our fellowship that He is calling you to influence for Jesus? Will you look and pray for opportunities to pass the baton of faith on to them? If not, prayerfully ask God to help you identify what is holding you back from doing so!