

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

Date : 3 March 2024

Sermon Title : Discipleship: The Power

Speaker : Rev Kenneth Huang

Text : Acts 1:8

INTRODUCTION

Faith Methodist Church has a vision statement: “*Transforming lives, changing the world*” and this means that we are a community whose lives have been transformed by Jesus Christ and we then go by the grace of God to transform lives of people in our spheres of influence, the community and the regions beyond. ‘A transformed life is one that is fully growing in “F.A.I.T.H” (Fellowship, Adoration, Involvement, Transformation, Harvest)’ and ‘a changed world is one where ideally everyone is living a transformed life and experiencing a real presence of the kingdom of God in their lives’. (www.faithmc.sg) To help us live out this vision in 2024, our church’s focus is “Make Disciples Intentionally”, and for us to be able to do so, we need to understand the urgency for us to be intentional about our discipleship so we can then make disciples intentionally.

This second sermon of the Discipleship Sermon Series focuses on the power needed for making disciples intentionally based on Acts 1:8.

ACTS 1:8

Jesus said, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.”

Truths from this verse:

- 1. Being a Disciple of Jesus automatically means that we are to WITNESS for Jesus to others.
i.e.: **Make Disciples Intentionally****

Witness - appears thirty-nine times in the Book of Acts.

In the court of law, a witness is someone who reliably and truthfully testify about what he or she has personally seen, heard or experienced. Likewise, as disciples of Jesus, we are to reliably and truthfully testify about what we have personally seen, heard and experienced about who Jesus is, what He has done for us, taught about Himself and the Kingdom of God to us where God’s rule and values are to be honoured and obeyed. We are also to testify that Jesus suffered and died, but rose from the dead and is alive forevermore, has ascended to heaven and will come back for us one day.

For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

Why should the church and disciples of Jesus witness for Him to others?

A church is not an earthly enterprise, society or company conducting social and religious activities.

“The church is a divine organism...through which Jesus’ life and power must operate. Jesus died for a lost world; we (His disciples) must live to bring that world to Jesus!”
(Wiersbe)

Being a disciple of Jesus automatically means we are to witness to others for Jesus, and to make disciples intentionally.

2. Jesus will give us the Power of the Holy Spirit to help us WITNESS for Him to others.

In Act 1:8, the operative word is ‘will’. It is a definitive promise and reality that has taken place and is taking place in our lives that Jesus has given and will give us the power of the Holy Spirit so we can witness for Him to others just as His early disciples did. We can thank God that we do have the power of the Holy Spirit acting in our lives already, enabling us to witness for Him to others because:

The Gospel of Jesus *“is a message of SPIRITUAL REGENERATION – one of reconciliation. God in Christ on the cross has reconciled the world to Himself and is willing to save all who trust His Son (Jesus)...We (disciples of Jesus) represent Christ as we invite the lost to receive Him.”* (Wiersbe)

- Witnessing and making disciples is not a task that can be carried out solely by human effort or ingenuity.
- It is a spiritual task that can only be done by the power of the Holy Spirit acting in our lives to bring about reconciliation between a holy God and sinful mankind, through the making anew the core of the person to become a new creation (2 Cor 5:17), or to be born again (John 3:7), or to cross from death to life (John 5:24).
- The Holy Spirit (mentioned 4 times in Acts 1) is pivotal to the above-mentioned transformations because without His power nothing will take place, and no one can be changed.

“The Power” – *“dunamis”* (Gk) [from which we get the word *“dynamite”*]

It means explosive power, yet not to cause death but to effect change for good, the power to give life. *“Dunamis”* also means mighty acts, or wonderful works which implies not just capacity for activity or accomplishment but rather the actual actions and accomplishments of such a magnitude that inspire a sense of wonder in others.

Nothing inspires a greater sense of wonder than when we see a person we know after trusting in Jesus as Lord and Saviour transforms from unloving to loving, not lovable to lovable, unjoyful to joyful, without peace to one who is peaceful and effecting peace

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Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

with others, totally impatient and a pain to be with to someone who is kind and patient; a sinner forgiven by Jesus, now living a life that bears the fruit of the Spirit by the power of the Holy Spirit at work.

We have the power of the Holy Spirit to witness to others for Jesus, and to make disciples intentionally.

2 truths we need to share when we witness to others:

- a. Jesus is the Saviour of the world who died for all mankind,
- b. Jesus is the risen Lord and Saviour who gives us new life.

People we are to witness to according to Acts 1:8

- a. Jerusalem – our immediate family and extended family God has placed us in, and close friends God has brought into our lives
- b. Judea and Samaria – neighbours, schoolmates, colleagues and community God has placed us with
- c. To the ends of the world – people from all nations in our midst such as migrant workers and unbelievers in foreign lands

As disciples of Jesus, we must be concerned about the eternal destiny of those who have not known Jesus – an eternity apart or away from God. While we may not be able to reach everyone, we must reach out to those we can because:

We are found, **to find another**,
We are told, **to tell another**,
We are won, **to win another**,
We are saved, **to save another**. (Anonymous)

3. To fully utilise the POWER of the Holy Spirit in our lives daily, we must walk by/keep in step with the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16, 25)

We need to be filled with and live by the standards and values of the Holy Spirit, then our lives will be shaped to live as we should as disciples of Jesus Christ witnessing for Him to others and making disciples intentionally, fully utilizing the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

To help us live by and keep in step with the Holy Spirit, we must:

- (i) refuse to live by the desires of the flesh – stop sinning and compromising in hatred, selfishness, fits of rage etc. (Gal 5:19-21)
- (ii) resolve to live out “the fruit of the Spirit” – love, joy, peace, etc (Gal 5:22-23)

To further help us to live by the Holy Spirit, we can make time to experience God’s grace in our lives by:

- (I) going through the Sacrament of Baptism and Membership Class – obey the command to be baptized if you have not done so.

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Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

- (II) participating in “Journey with Jesus” – take time to walk with Jesus.
- (III) participating in the Sacrament of the Holy Communion – with seriousness and faith it demands; reverent, repentant and grateful to receive His peace and grace, as it is a special time that God has granted to us, those who have by His grace, trusted Jesus as Lord and are living for Him.

CONCLUSION

Being disciples of Jesus automatically means we are to be witnesses for Jesus to others. To enable us, Jesus has given us the power of His Holy Spirit, so let us fully utilise this divine power by walking by and keeping in step with the Holy Spirit. Let us be constantly filled with the Holy Spirit and bear His fruit to witness and share the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to another so there will be no more empty seats in our church.

A. Review Sermon Application

Purpose: Reflect on how you have been embodying God’s truth.

- 1a. How successful have you been in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do for the last FaithWalk?
 - 1b. What were some challenges you faced and what would you like to celebrate?
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- 2. After hearing the sermon, do you still have doubts and concerns on witnessing to others for Jesus? Share your concerns with your Life Group (LG).

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Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

B. Relate Sermon Content

Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.

3. Read Acts 1:8 aloud.
 - a. Are you experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit as mentioned in Acts 1:8?
 - b. What could be hindering you from experiencing this power of the Holy Spirit in your life?
 - c. What is one thing you can do to claim this promise that Jesus has given you?

- 4a. What is your attitude towards empty seats in our church during Sunday Services before hearing this sermon? How has this sermon impacted your attitude?
- 4b. Who from your family and close friends or school, workplace, neighbourhood and community do you wish will fill those seats? Bring your desire to God and seek the Holy Spirit's power and leading to witness to the person(s) you have named.
- 4c. How can your group members pray for and assist you in your witnessing?

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Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

C. Testimonies, Prayers and Action

Purpose: Give glory to God, seek Him and embody His Word.

5. Share your testimony on how you have witnessed to someone, or someone has witnessed to you through the power of the Holy Spirit at work in the witnessing, giving all glory to the Lord!

OR

Give thanks to Jesus for giving us the power of the Holy Spirit to enable us to witness for Jesus to another – *to find, tell, win and save another.*

6. As a group, pray for the people in your families/extended families, close friends, schoolmates, colleagues, neighbours, community and the nations beyond that do not know Christ yet. Be still and hear from the Holy Spirit the calling for you or your group to go forward to witness for Jesus – who He wants you to find, tell, win and save, and commit to obey, trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit to empower you.

Pray also for our church that we will fully utilize the power of the Holy Spirit by walking by and keeping in step with the Holy Spirit to witness for God's glory and purpose.

Optional items:

Suggested worship songs:

1. Goodness of God – Bethel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-f4MUUMWMV4>
2. This I Believe (The Creed) – Hillsong <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uuDI-sk2nJU>
3. Spirit Touch Your Church – Kent Henry
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5L7MMs3gUG8>

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