

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

Date : 17 March 2024

Sermon Title : The Work

Speaker : Rev Eddie Ho

Text : 2 Timothy 2:2

INTRODUCTION

This is the fourth sermon in the Discipleship sermon series. God has given all of us only one job to do here on earth and that is to make disciples intentionally:

“Go therefore and **make disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **teaching** them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20)

The Work of Making Disciples

2 Timothy 2:2 – “And **the things** which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, **entrust these things** to **faithful** men, who are **fit** to teach others.”

Paul wrote two letters to Timothy while he was imprisoned in Rome – 1st and 2nd Timothy. 2 Timothy is a deeply personal letter because Paul was waiting to be executed. Emotionally, Paul was drained. He missed his friends and loved ones. In 2 Timothy 1, Paul said he longed to see his adopted son Timothy. Physically he was suffering, it was cold in the dungeon, and he urged Timothy to visit him before winter and bring the warm coat that he left at Troas. He also yearned for spiritual sustenance, requesting for Timothy to bring his books and parchment.

Timothy was like an adopted son to Paul. He was young and timid but he bore the heavy responsibility of pastoring the church in Ephesus, especially in guarding against false teachings. 2 Timothy was written specifically to him but it is also applicable to all of us. Like Timothy, we are all given one task to make disciples intentionally while living in challenging times like what they faced in Ephesus.

- **How are we to make disciples intentionally?**

1. **Entrust**

In the Greek grammar this entrust was written in an imperative form meaning it is not a suggestion or an advice but a command. In other words, Paul is saying, “Whatever you do, make sure you entrust correctly.”

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

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

2. These things

What were these things that Timothy heard from Paul which he was to entrust to others? From whom did Paul received these things? This is answered in another letter that Paul wrote to the Galatians in Galatians 1:

Galatians 1:11-12 – “I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origins. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, ***I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.***”

2 Timothy 1:12 – “which is why I ***suffer*** as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been ***entrusted to me.***”

Paul had been entrusted with these things directly from Jesus Christ and now he is suffering because he had these things. He is awaiting his execution because of these things but he is not ashamed of it. What are *these things*? The answer is in verse 13 – pattern of sound words.

2 Timothy 1:13-14 – “Follow the ***pattern of the sound words*** that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.”

Sound words – Refers to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Pattern – There is a pattern in all God is doing and was doing. The pattern He showed in redemption history is a weighty one. This pattern is not just the Gospel of Jesus Christ in His short three years of ministry on Earth, but how the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been consistently revealed throughout the ages. There is a pattern in what God revealed to Adam and Eve, to Cain and Abel, and to Noah. This pattern is also in what God revealed to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to Joseph, Moses and David, to all the prophets and also the people of Israel, the Israelites. This pattern is summed up in and through Jesus Christ, and from this pattern we know of God's character, His attributes, His heart and His will. God is not just concerned with the salvation of the people of Israel, but also the redemption of all Gentiles, including all creation. This pattern can be called sound teaching or doctrines, but it also has life application and examples.

Philippians 4:9 – “What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me – ***practice*** these things, and the God of peace will be with you.”

Jesus entrusted these things to Paul and Paul entrusted these things to Timothy and to us, and that is why Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11:1 – “imitate me as I imitate Christ”.

- **Who are we to entrust this gospel, this pattern of sound words, this pattern of living to?**

3. Faithful and Fit people

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Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

We must entrust the pattern of sound words to people who are faithful and fit to teach others because of false teachers and false teachings. The Christians in Ephesus were facing the same problem we modern Christians are facing today.

Blatant heresies are not that difficult to detect. What is harder to detect are teachers who give you half-truth, incomplete truth. Teachers who paint a beautiful picture of the Kingdom of God but neglect to address the reality of living in a fallen world. Teachers who preach salvation without teaching the need for repentance and who peddle the good news without underlining the cost of discipleship. It is easy to skip the hard part of the gospel and just preach the nice part. That is why God requires faithful and fit persons who are willing to teach the hard part together with the nice part – teach the whole counsel of God, not partial counsel; the full truth not partial truth; the full picture not part of the picture because the Bible is the only inspired word of God:

2 Timothy 3:16 – “All scriptures is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.”

The Impossible Task

James 3:1 tells us not many of us should become teachers because we know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. How can we live up to protecting and preaching a pattern of sound words and to living a pattern of sound living? It is actually an impossible task for three reasons:

- (i) The whole counsel of God is above our heads. It is almost impossible to understand it fully, let alone teach accurately.
- (ii) Jesus’ life is so difficult to follow, it is almost impossible to be like Jesus.
- (iii) Even if we tell the good news to others, people only want to hear the good news they do not want to hear the bad news, the hard part.

1 Corinthians 2:14 – “The natural person **does not accept** the things of the Spirit of God, for they are **folly** to him, and he is **not able to understand** because they are spiritually discerned. “

2 Timothy 2:1 – “You then, my son, be **strengthened** by the **grace** that is in Christ Jesus.

We need to be strengthened because it is an impossible task to tell anyone the whole truth of God because the natural person will not accept it and find it foolish. This strengthening is not the same as taking supplements, going to the gym to carry weights or eat proteins and grow strong. This strengthening is by grace, and it is only provided by God who is working in us through the work of Jesus Christ. It is supernatural, the power of the Holy Spirit which God will provide and equip us with, not by our own strength.

2 Timothy 2:3 – “Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”

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Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

We need power and supernatural strength because we will suffer. We may be ridiculed, faced with unreasonable response, maybe persecution even though it is not as bad as what Paul has gone through. We will suffer in the process of entrusting God's truth to others. It will not be a walk in the park.

1 Corinthians 2:13 – “And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the ***Spirit***, interpreting ***spiritual truths*** to those who are *spiritual*.”

In other words, it is a spiritual warfare.

CONCLUSION

We can all take heart, for He who begin a good work in us will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. It is not our cleverness nor our power that will get the job done. It is by God's strength, His power through Jesus Christ who is working in us, so it is not impossible. This 'sound words' is entrusted to each one of us so we must treasure, protect, and not corrupt it. Teach it and better still, live it out so our life will be an example. Let us go forth to faithfully entrust it to others who are faithful and fit and make disciples intentionally.

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?

2. Appoint someone to read 2 Timothy 2:2 slowly.
 - a. Reflect on your life as a member of the Christian community. How have you aligned to what Paul exhorted in 2 Timothy 2:2?

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Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

B. Relate Sermon Content

Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.

3. Why must those who are to be entrusted with the 'sound words' of God be faithful and fit?
 - a. How would a faithful and fit disciple of Christ who can be entrusted with the 'sound words' of God look and behave?
 - b. Are you such a faithful and fit disciple of Christ?

4. Making disciples intentionally is the "one job" God has given you to do. It may seem impossible by our human strength but with the Holy Spirit's empowerment, it is not.
 - a. Do you enjoy doing this job or find it challenging?
 - b. What are some challenges you face in accomplishing this job?
 - c. What is one thing you can do to overcome these challenges?
 - d. How can your group members encourage or help you to achieve 4c. above?

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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 personal testimony on how God's grace has strengthened you in your journey of making disciples.

OR

Give thanks to God for the 'sound words' and 'pattern' revealed in the Bible that has been treasured and protected for us by faithful and fit people before us. As a group, seek the Holy Spirit's help to commit to do so for the next generation.

6. As a group, pray for willingness to know the whole counsel of the Bible so you will be able to discern and reject subtle false teachings and protect and preserve the 'sound words' and pattern revealed by God. Seek the Holy Spirit's grace and strength to also live a sound living and to be faithful in entrusting it to others as you go forth to first be faithful disciples of Christ and then make disciples intentionally.

Optional items:

Suggested worship songs:

1. How Can I Keep from Singing – Chris Tomlin <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-pNU8tbvXc>
2. I Believe – Phil Wickham <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7PRGMQxNcM>
3. Facing a Task Unfinished – Keith and Kristin Getty https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zOpt_bulJxY

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