

New Year's Sermon

December 29, 2011 & January 1, 2012

Introduction:

- Happy New Year
- Exciting things in 2012:
 - Start off the year with a new series called, "Who do you Follow?" 3 key disciplines for every disciple
 - Our new Discipleship Director, Tom Rich digs in
 - We will then be going after the idea that each and every one of us should desire to be "fully formed" in Christ (Gal. 4:19). As we thought about how to approach that kind of discipleship and transformation, we decided that taking our church through a gospel account would be the way for us to understand who Christ is and how we can become more like him.
 - Right after the "Who do you Follow?" Series, we will begin marching as a church body through the Gospel according to Luke! Not just the adults, but our children and students as well!
- Are you sensing a theme? DISCIPLESHIP!

1 Timothy 4:6-16

- Timothy is dealing with false teachers and those who would add to the gospel by saying along with the good news of Christ, you must only eat certain foods, and you must be married.
- We will forever, until the coming of Christ, be dealing with those who teach falsely.

6) If you explain these things to the brothers and sisters, Timothy, you will be a worthy servant of Christ Jesus, one who is nourished by the message of faith and the good teaching you have followed.

- Paul says to Timothy, if you help your people, your congregation, your brothers and sisters what the Gospel is and what it isn't, you are a worthy servant.
- A good servant teaches truth, and truth is the Word of God
- In an age that is so politically correct...this isn't easy, some of you find yourselves in conversations in the the world is determining what is true: sexuality, marriage & divorce, what we do and don't do for our bodies, you name it.
- We have to get back to looking at the Word of God as the truth not just centuries ago, but today...it is as true today as it was when God inspired it to be written!

7) Do not waste time arguing over godless ideas and old wives' tales. Instead, train yourself to be godly.

- Oh but you know what they say...
- play with fire, you'll wet the bed
- make your eyes crossed, someone hits you in the back of the head...they'll stay like that forever!
- Don't swallow gum

- Step on a crack
- Some of these may be harmless, but Timothy was dealing with things that were wasting his time and distracting him from the true task of training himself to be godly.

“Trying to live the Christian life implies and leads to failure; training to live the Christian life puts even failures to good use.” Neil Wilson - Biblical Scholar/Author

- Train YOURSELF - You must dig in, start reading this book on your own, write down action plans for your lives, attempt new ways of living your Christian faith!

8) “Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.” 9) This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it.

- Greek culture was very much into physical fitness...birthplace of the Olympics
- Here is TRUTH - for those of you who don't exercise enough or some, you are missing out on some good. It will give you more energy, more confidence, and a healthier body...it's good for you on so many levels. Start somewhere!
- Here is MORE TRUTH - for those of you who workout 4+ times a week and are in the best shape of your lives, but your bibles sits on the shelf and your prayer life is non-existent...you are missing out not only on what is good, but what is the best thing for you!

10) This is why we work hard and continue to struggle, for our hope is in the living God, who is the Savior of all people and particularly of all believers.

- Discipleship should be hard work, a struggle...we should strive and fight for a better walk with Christ...we are in a race...not a stroll.
- “Quiet Time” - let me dispel something...it shouldn't be doilies and tea! That's not my life and I doubt it's yours
- training for godliness is loud and messy, hard... I picture moments of exhaustion, like the athlete that trains twice a day!

11) Teach these things and insist that everyone learn them. 12) Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity. 13) Until I get there, focus on reading the Scriptures to the church, encouraging the believers, and teaching them.

- insist on godliness on the efforts to be godly, don't let people off the hook!
- Don't make excuses because of your age, for Timothy it was probably his age physically or spiritually. Doesn't matter if you are 12 or 80, it's not whether you have been a Christian for 10 months or 40 years...all of us can take from this passage one thing that we can do. BE an example to others...(look at list)
- Spend time reading Scriptures to the church...remember they don't have bibles or bible apps...it is vital that we continue to go through scriptures together, just reading them, talking about them, teaching through them.

14) Do not neglect the spiritual gift you received through the prophecy spoken over you when the elders of the church laid their hands on you. 15) Give your complete attention to these matters. Throw yourself into your tasks so that everyone will see your progress. 16) Keep a close watch on how you live and on your teaching. Stay true to what is right for the sake of your own salvation and the salvation of those who hear you.

- Paul doesn't define Timothy's gift...teaching? leadership?
- THROW yourself into your task!!
- We take a milk-toast approach to our own godliness

- We take a lazy approach to evangelism and rescuing the lost
- We take a compromising approach to the truth of Scripture when it comes to world.
- Paul says THROW yourself into these tasks!
- Keep a close watch on how you live and what you are teaching by your mouth and example...
- for the sake of your own salvation and...for the salvation of others!!
- Did you realize that your life, the example you are to others, could very well mean salvation for them...

Images to Live by in 2012! (this is where it gets messy, difficult, let's get our hands dirty!)

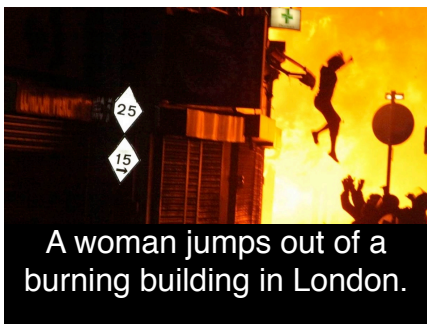


A whirlpool forms off the Japanese coast after the tsunami on March 11.

1) Steer out of the patterns in your life you've kept for years!

(boat caught in whirl-pool)

- for some of you, 2011 came and went and you look the same spiritually, perhaps physically and you haven't done anything to improve and grow your life over the past year.
- you are in a rut
- 2 things will get you out of a whirlpool, power & direction! You have the power through the Holy Spirit, you have direction from God's Word and through His church, stand up and throw yourself into the idea of being godly this year. Maybe it's by tackling a sin habit, by reading the bible and planning for that, by joining a group of others who are seeking to grow.
- don't make excuses (look kids, Big Ben)



A woman jumps out of a burning building in London.

2) Rescue someone from the flames (Girl Jumping out of burning building)

- Who is watching you? Your life? What kind of example are you setting? Be proactive...if its been bad, tell them. Have that difficult conversation...uh, I've really not been a great example of a Christian, but this year is going to be different!
- Jude tells us it's like snatching someone from the fire when they accept Christ.
- Rescue someone by sharing the love of Christ with them by words and by how you live!



Mihag Gedi Farah, a seven-month-old child, is held by his mother in a field hospital of the International Rescue Committee in the town of Dadaab, Kenya. The baby has since made a full recovery.

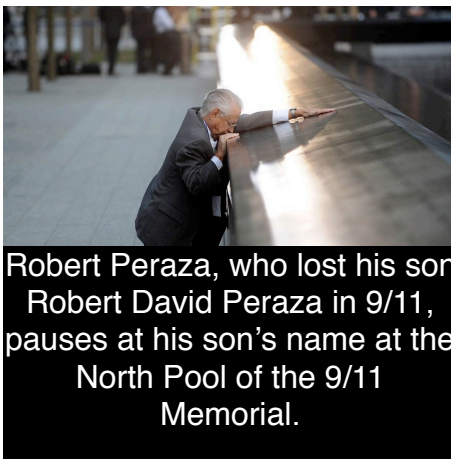
3) Feed someone who is hungry (Little boy emaciated)

- I don't like looking at images like this, but it's truth and reality for millions of people around the world.
- Whether it's local or global, get involved in this battle against poverty! Lead your family to care for others the way we should!



4) Reach out to those in crisis (Joplin before and after picture)

- There will be another crisis this year...look at 2011!!
- Crisis moments allow us opportunity to share the love of Christ.
- Thousands of people in our own country face crisis last year and many were met at their time of need by followers of Christ...it makes a difference
- doesn't have to be the next catastrophe...could be a move, a sickness, loneliness
- Make sure you are available to God and the prompting of the Holy Spirit when this moment comes!



5) Allow what Christ did for you change who you are!

- I looked at this picture and thought several things
- Is he praying? Why is he alone?
- What is different about his life because of this event?
- Surely he doesn't just come and memorialize it...will he take a moment to gather himself and then back to life as usual or has this moment changed him? I bet it has.
- Some of you have memorialized your relationship with Christ. You come to church, sing some songs, take communion, drop a few bucks in the offering, listen to a sermon...then you walk out...gather yourself and nothing really changes. Your life is the same and it's going no where spiritually. You aren't a follower or disciple...you've scavenged salvation from the cross...but you haven't changed...it's time for the cross to change you. It's time for God's love for you,

Jesus' death and resurrection to change that worn out life of yours and for 2012 to be different!

Close in prayer

Invitation