

Enthusiastic Freedom

Summer Family Faith Series: #6EnthusiasticFreedom

I want to thank you for being compliant during this time of COVID-19. These are certainly unprecedented times and yet, we find ourselves with the opportunity for us to put our trust in God like never before, regardless of our present experiences.

For those of you gathered here today, whether in person, or via FB Live or the FM broadcast, I want you to know that God loves you ... God cares for you. And if you are in need, please reach out through FB Messenger or a phone call.

So, as we praise God that the doors of our Church building are open for a second week, please remember, the countless others across Canada and the globe who cannot meet as we are. Please don't take this for granted. Please physical distance. Please apply PPE as necessary.

Sunday August 2nd, for the sixth message in our Summer Family Faith Series "Enthusiastic Freedom" – ways that your family can integrate God more and more in your family circle, as you establish an enthusiastic plan that will develop your family's long-term faith.

Call to Worship: Psalm 100:1-5

*1 Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. 2 Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. 3 Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. 4 **Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.** 5 For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.*

Responsive Reading: Matthew 5:1-12

*1 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, **2 and he began to teach them.** He said: 3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. 7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. 8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. 9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and*

*falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. 13 “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. 14 “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. **16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.***

Old Testament: Psalm 40:1-8

1 I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. 2 He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. 3 He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in him. 4 Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods. 5 Many, Lord my God, are the wonders you have done, the things you planned for us. None can compare with you; were I to speak and tell of your deeds, they would be too many to declare. 6 Sacrifice and offering you did not desire— but my

ears you have opened—burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require. 7 Then I said, “Here I am, I have come— it is written about me in the scroll. **8 I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart.**”

New Testament: Philippians 1:3-11

3 I thank my God every time I remember you. 4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, **6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.** 7 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God’s grace with me. 8 God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. 9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, 10 so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, 11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

Enthusiastic Freedom

I believe that I need to begin today’s message with a preamble. You see, I don’t want anyone to get the wrong point of this message. So here goes: “I believe that for all

believers, who call Jesus Christ, Lord, and have confessed their sins in repentance before God, will exhibit Holy Spirit directed enthusiastic characteristics, in word and deed as a result of the freedom they have in Christ.” REPEAT So, what I want every person who calls themselves a believer in Christ to understand is that because of Christ’s shed blood, you live a life of enthusiastic freedom. The question is, do you and your family exhibit the enthusiasm about your life in Christ? I’m gong out on a limb here, to say, that if you don’t live a life of enthusiastic freedom, you’re either not saved or not living for God.

So, what I want to offer you is a plan.

Step 1. Follow God’s Direction – Psalm 40:8 “. 8 I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart.”

When we take the step to follow God’s direction that is, His will this begins by changing the course of your life... let me explain with a story:

One foggy night, the captain of a large ship saw what appeared to be another ship’s lights approaching in the distance. This other ship was on a course that would mean a head on collision. Quickly, the captain signaled to the approaching ship: “Please change your course 10 degrees

west.” The reply came blinking back through the thick fog: “You change your course 10 degrees east.”

Indignantly, the captain pulled rank and shot a message back to the other ship: “I am a captain with 35 years of experience. Change your course 10 degrees west!” Without hesitation, the signal flashed back: “I am a seaman, fourth class. You change your course 10 degrees east!”

Enraged, the captain realized that they were approaching each other quickly and would crash within minutes. So, he blazed his final warning: “I am a 50,000-ton freighter. Change you course 10 degrees west.”

A simple message winked back: “I am a lighthouse. You change your course.”

The lighthouse was on a solid rock foundation. It could not and would not change. If the captain of the ship refused to change its course for whatever reason, the ship was destined to run upon the rocks. In this example, the lighthouse represents the truth. The truth cannot and will not change – it will always be truth.

So, when you and your family want to live with the enthusiastic freedom God has in store for you, start with His word. Read it together as a family. Memorize it together as a family. Live it together as a family.

2. Let God's Light Shine – Matthew 5:16 “In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Earlier in this passage in verse 2 it says “and he began to teach them”. What is your response to the teaching of the Word of God? Is it enthusiastic? is it religious? It is done out of duty? You see, when I hear that Jesus is about to teach, my ears perk up with attention to what is about to happen – Jesus is going to teach... in the Bible it says they sat down... not to say that all teaching is done sitting down, but what it refers to is the intimacy with which Jesus was doing His teaching.

As a family I want to assure you that God wants your light to shine, but when you don't have time to get your batteries recharged by God's teaching, it's tough. So, Rachel Lenher suggest “12 Ways to Sit at Jesus' Feet (When You Have Neither Quiet Nor Time) – that I thought could be helpful for you:

1. Go to church.

It may sound simplistic, but worshiping with a community of believers that have committed themselves to the Lord and to each other can be the most instrumental means of encountering Christ. When you're tired and stressed, you need to go to church.

2. Learn from good friends.

Ask good friends what God is teaching them through his Word. A heart eager to sit at the Lord's feet asks, "How is the Lord guiding and instructing my brothers and sisters? Could what they are learning apply to me as well?"

3. Attend Bible study in any state of preparation.

I can think of no better place for the weary servant than in the company of believers, with the Bible open on our laps, learning together from the Lord. Live like "I don't always have it all together" this will free you to receive the benefits of study from those who have come prepared.

4. Pray in community.

Take full advantage of the prayer time you have, at meals, before school, and during my kids' bedtime. Enjoy regular meeting with other others you know. Pray even when interrupted, yet leave refreshed, knowing you have just spent time in the presence of the Almighty.

5. Pray Scripture.

Find great comfort in short prayers of Scripture ("Lord, save me!" from Matthew 14:30; "Repent and believe in the gospel" from Mark 1:15; "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" from Luke 18:13) and long prayers (Psalm 119; Ephesians 1:15-23; Colossians 1:9-14).

6. Worship as a family.

Consider using a Bible reading plan “sitting at the Lord’s feet together.

7. Commune through the Lord’s Supper.

There is a reason this ordinance is called communion. In the most chaotic seasons of life, its important to cherish it deeply. There is something so tangible and real and gospel-centering about the wine and the bread. “proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes”.

8. Create a plan for the little time available.

Be accountable to some kind of plan for sitting at the Lord’s feet, especially when time is limited. Bible reading plans, weekly Bible study, small group prep work, memorize longer passages of Scripture to “stock the shelves” of my mind for moments when I can’t read it myself.

9. Read or listen to the Bible wherever possible.

Use your smartpone, it is possible to read God’s Word while waiting for the dentist, to listen while driving, or while in the bathroom. The hungry need to look for food where they can find it.

10. Meditate on one verse at a time.

I’ve found that mindless activities like folding laundry, walking the dog, washing the dishes, or exercising are perfect

moments to ponder and reflect on verses. Prayerfully asking the Lord for understanding, this can be a most memorable spiritual “ah-ha” moment.

11. Listen to expository sermons.

Sermons that seek to draw meaning and application directly from the scriptures can be a huge means of God’s grace in your life, and, with the gift of technology, we don’t have to limit our weekly sermon intake to Sunday mornings. Like the difference between a salad and a smoothie, I know it’s good for me to chew and swallow the deep things in God’s Word on my own, but when I can’t, I’m grateful for those who have put it all in a glass for me.

12. Sing Scripture, especially the Psalms.

Parents, one of the benefits of having young children is the ability to expose the wonderful Scripture-based music that is available now. From Sunday school and VBS songs to the Seeds Family Worship CDs, it’s easier than ever to soak in truth and lift praises unto the Lord wherever you are.

This is such a simple plan, but it does take being intentional and your enthusiasm is directly related to your intentionality of embracing and living this plan.

“Enthusiasm is the fuel that empowers the Christian... and gives them the love for the call that they have been given.”

3. Trust God Confidently – Philippians 1:6 “6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

Please understand this message isn't about a self-help plan. No, this plan is a trust God plan. And in order for you and me to live Enthusiastic Freedom, we must put our faith in the God who provides this freedom. Remember on of my earlier sermons “Freedom Priorities” reminds us that everything begin with God – “in the beginning God” – so no matter what you're going to do in life, trusting God confidently will give us everything we need to live a genuine enthusiastic freedom in this crazy, confusing, confounding world.

Conclusion

When I started my message off with “I believe that for all believers, who call Jesus Christ, Lord, and have confessed their sins in repentance before God, will exhibit Holy Spirit directed enthusiastic characteristics, in word and deed as a result of the freedom they have in Christ.” I want you to relax as a grand parent, parent, or child need to trust God, otherwise we will not live out enthusiastic freedom that God intends for you.

Let's Pray

Prayer Items

- Wife, Mother & Grandmother Gloria recovering back pain no longer in hospital.
- Mary O – tested positive for COVID-19
- Melanie Joseph's friend, Kayla Scott, has a 22-month-old son who accidentally shot himself in the chest with a brad nailer (construction nail gun). It went off in his heart ~ He is now in critical condition and not doing well neither is his mom
- Sherry Newman's son, Benjamin, was a passenger in a MVA yesterday and the car was crunched with a banged up knee and whiplash.

Please join us in two weeks, Sunday August 9th, for the seventh message in our Summer Family Faith Series “Freedom Begins Today” – ways that your family can integrate God more and more in your family circle, as you begin with the ABC’s of Freedom – Same time 10AM Atlantic or 9AM Eastern time.

Benediction: Romans 12:11-13

11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. 12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. 13 Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.