

Good Morning,

On behalf of St. James, Grace & Ferguson Presbyterian Churches as well as our online platform New Hope Miramichi, I want to welcome you to part nine of our Summer Family Faith Series.

Today's message, "Freedom Influence" is the ninth message in our Summer Family Faith Series – ways that your family can integrate God more and more in your family circle, as we seek God for ways to use the Word of God to influence our family, friends and neighbors with the Gospel, offering them ultimate freedom – first, we start with Bible readings, then the message and then we provide you with online resources for the rest of the week.

My name is Colin Holmes and I want to welcome you to this broadcast. No matter where you are – at home, at work, in the car; by yourself or with loved ones, I want you to hear every spoken word, I want you to ponder every word that is read – take it all in and know this: God loves you... God cared for you!

So, as we set aside time for Worship, let's be grateful to the Lord for His continuing grace and mercy in our lives, rooted in the very God we serve. To the Glory of God.

Call to Worship: Psalm 111: 1-10

1 Praise the Lord. I will extol the Lord with all my heart in the council of the upright and in the assembly. 2 Great are the works of the Lord; they are pondered by all who delight in them. 3 Glorious and majestic are his deeds, and his righteousness endures forever. 4 He has caused his wonders to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and compassionate. 5 He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever. 6 He has shown his people the power of his works, giving them the lands of other nations. 7 The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy. 8 They are established for ever and ever, enacted in faithfulness and uprightness. 9 He provided redemption for his people; he ordained his covenant forever—holy and awesome is his name. 10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise.

Opening Hymn of Praise – 219

Prayer of Approach & The Lord's Prayer

Hymn:

Responsive Reading: 1 Timothy 4:9-16

9 This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance.
10 That is why we labor and strive, because we have put our

hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe. 11 Command and teach these things. 12 Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. 13 Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. 14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you. 15 Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. 16 Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

OT: Daniel 7:13-18

13 "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. 14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. 15 "I, Daniel, was troubled in spirit, and the visions that passed through my mind disturbed me. 16 I approached one of those standing there and asked him the

meaning of all this. “So, he told me and gave me the interpretation of these things: 17 ‘The four great beasts are four kings that will rise from the earth. 18 But the holy people of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, for ever and ever.’

NT: Matthew 12:33-37

33 “Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. 34 You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. 35 A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. 36 But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. 37 For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Hymn:

Sermon: Freedom Influence

Today’s message is one of those three-point messages, where you’re going learn God’s ways to use His Word to influence your family, friends and neighbors with the Gospel. The purpose of today’s message is for you to offer what you have been given in Christ and, out of love, offer that same kind of redemption to the people around you; so that they

too might experience the ultimate freedom that only Christ can give. Like those mandatory classes in school, college or university, Freedom Influence is just that for all believers of all ages; young and old alike.

1. The Power of Seeing – Youth 1 Timothy 4:12 *“12 Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.”*

Simply put, by example, live your life in front of those you want to influence.

How old do you have to be to influence another person? Tony Robbins has his answer. John Maxwell has his answer. Zig Ziglar has his answer. Peter Drucker has his answer. Forbes Magazine has their answer. The psychologists have their answer. And the list goes on. But all I have to get you to do, is think back to when you were a kid – hopefully that’s not too much of a strain. (Laugh) But you don’t have to be very old before you understand that age has nothing to do with influence. From the time of conception, you begin to influence others. Just your presence causes your mother to have morning sickness. When you’re born, you influence her day when her water breaks and it’s show time. When your diaper is in need of changing, you influence other. When

you're hungry, you influence others by your cry to be fed. Just your actions provided you influence.

In the Bible verses I read, Paul is exhorting Timothy to remember that just because he is young, is no reason to believe he has no influence. Then he goes on to tell him how he, as a young person, can be an influencer by others observing or seeing five areas of his life: in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. There's a lot to unpack here, but I will keep it brief:

Young person – how's your speech? What kinds of words are letting slip out across your vocal cords onto your tongue for the world to hear? The words you decide to use will determine the kind of influencer you can be.

Young person – how's your conduct? What kinds of activities are you letting yourself get into that aren't God-honoring? It can be in person or online, there's no difference. Your activities determine the kind of influencer you can be.

Young person – how's your love? I didn't say sex, I said love. In what ways do you show you love others? People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. Your love determines the kind of influencer you can be.

Young person – how’s your faith? Do you have faith in God? Your faith in God, through Jesus Christ determines the kind of influencer you can be.

Young person – how’s your purity? This time I am asking about sex, substance abuse, self care. How “clean” are you keeping yourself from the unsafe, unethical, unbiblical world your live in. Your purity determines the kind of influencer you can be.

If you are young and you want people to respect you, treat you right, then live by example in these areas of your life. And when you do, you have the opportunity to influence the lives of countless people because you’re living with freedom influence, through the Holy Spirit.

2.The Power of Speaking – Adults

One of the most difficult things I hear from adults these days is their inability to say what they need to say in the way in which it should be said. So many adults cuss and go on so bad in their conversation that it seems like they don’t have a strong vocabulary. Which is possible as we know the literacy rates aren’t stellar in this province. Here’s the numbers: “In 2005, the results of the International Adult Literacy Skills Survey (IALSS) said more than 50% of New Brunswickers aged 16 and older are at Levels 1 and 2.

- Level 1: have few basic skills and great difficulty with text
- Level 2: have limited skills and cannot read well. At this level, the individual can only deal with material that is simply and clearly laid out.

Please understand, I am not attempting to put someone or a group of people down. I am however, trying to point to a huge problem in our Province. And a huge problem within our churches. If people in our communities aren't even able to get through their day without difficulty because of illiteracy, then I can understand why people would not be influenced. They don't have the power to speak. Therefore, if you don't understand what's being asked, how can you give an appropriate response?

Well, words are important. Speaking with clarity and using words to go along with what you are feeling or experiencing is so vital. The Bible tells us a lot about words. Here are two things I want to share with you today:

a. Brings life or death (Proverbs 18:21)

Proverbs 18:21 "The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit." You only have to look at the life of a verbally abused child to know whether or not their parents have been speaking life or death into their children. You see it in their demeanor,

their creativity, their dreams, their artwork, their stories. Parents – know this, you can bring life to your child, you can bring life to your children by what and how you say things to your children. By-the-way, this goes for anyone for that matter. Words bring life or death. What and how you speak influences the lives of those around you.

b.Brings acquittal or condemnation (Matthew 12:37)

37 For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”

This verse speaks to the life of a person who accepts or denies God. When you humble yourself to the Creator, realizing that you're not the potter, you are the clay you bring to your life, by asking God to forgive you of your sins, acquittal; that is you have been found not guilty, because the evidence to condemn you was insufficient, not because of what you have done, that is your sin, but because of what Jesus had done, died on the cross to pay your sin debt. Jesus death was sufficient for you. You only bring condemnation to yourself when you deny his saving act.

The Bible says, Romans 10:13 “for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Words influence the outcome for you and for your family.

3.The Power of Salvation – Everyone 1 Timothy 4:10 *“10 That is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe.”*

The power of Salvation isn't something we can explain with scientific methods, it isn't something you learn in school or university. No, there is something about the power of Salvation that that people, by faith, put their hope in the living and it changes them. It transforms them. The late Chuck Colson said, "Where is the hope? The hope that each of us have, is not in who governs us, or what laws are passed, or what great things we do as a nation. Our hope is in the power of God working through the hearts of people. And that's where our hope is in this country. And that's where our hope is in this life." Chucks quote echoes the Apostle Paul as he writes his epistle, his letter, to his apprentice Timothy whom he had so much influence over, and encouraged him and in a round-about-way encourages us to put in the hard word as we labor to share the Gospel, the hope of our living God with "all people" – those we know well, and even those we don't know so well. Remember, it is the power of God working in us that enables us to labor a strive as Christians – it is not by our own power that we live the Christian life, it is God living in us. And just in case you're worried about who

will protect us, Paul continues to remind the people of God in his Second Letter to the Thessalonians 3:3 “But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one.”

Conclusion

You and I have the opportunity to share freedom influence in the lives of the people that we meet when we’re walking down the street, the people that we meet each day; at the coffee shop, takeout or restaurant, at the barber shop or hairdresser, at work, at school, college or university. in sports teams, community clubs or volunteer organizations. God has called us to influence the lives of the people we spend our time with. Don’t waste another opportunity to influence another person on this side of Glory so that you get to see them again on the other side of Glory.

Prayers of Thanksgiving & Intercession

Let’s Pray

Announcements:

Join us next week for the tenth message in our Summer Family Faith Series, Freedom Teaching, ways you can teach others the powerful truths from the Word of God so that they too have the opportunity to not only find freedom, but live the freedom God wants for their lives. As the Bible says in

John 8:36 “36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

Starting September 13, Financial Peace. We all need a plan for our money. Financial Peace University (FPU) is that plan! It teaches God's ways of handling money. Through video teaching by Dave Ramsey, class discussions and interactive small group activities, FPU presents biblical, practical steps to get from where you are to where you've dreamed you could be. This plan will show you how to get rid of debt, manage your money, spend and save wisely, and much more!

Benediction: Hebrews 10:23-25

23 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Closing Hymn of Praise 18 “Let’s Just Praise the Lord”