

Trusting God's Word: Growth

Psalm 34
Philippians 1:27-30

November 11, 2018
Faith Community

There are four key words in our mission statement that're displayed symbolically in our logo, and then briefly described on the back of the bulletin. The four words are:

Hearing
Trusting
Acting
Sharing

We're spending two weeks on each one, starting at the top and working our way down, knowing that in reality a lifetime wouldn't be enough.

All this is designed to help you pray for your Pastor Nominating Committee and the eventual arrival of your new pastor. Hopefully he or she will see that you have a firm grasp on who you've been called to be and what you've been called to do.

Today is the second of our two week look at the second word, 'trusting.' Your mission statement says,

"Hearing God's Word in itself is not enough. God's Word demands commitment. Therefore as a church we will continually strive for deeper commitment throughout our life. We realize our faith will make demands on our time, our abilities and our money. In doing so, we will apply our faith in our daily lives...being reformed we will grow."

Becoming more like Christ in our character and in our emotional and spiritual maturity doesn't come easily. It's so much more than showing up, staying out of trouble, and paying your bills. Because of that, some of us never pull it off. The same applies to healing, whether physical or emotional. Healing can be painful, which is why some people don't experience it.

Friends, the surest way to grow is how you respond to brokenness. Bob Pierce, the founder of World Vision, the world's largest Christian relief organization, used to say, "Let my heart be broken by the things that break the heart of God." That's my wish for everyone who joins us in our mission work in Guatemala. I tell them that my greatest hope for them is that their hearts will be broken by what they

see and experience, because in the process it brings them closer to God.

Our Old Testament reading starts like this:

I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. I sought the LORD, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. (Psalm 34:1-4)

Friends, that last sentence demonstrates the power of personal witness. It gets even more personal a couple verses later when the author writes,

This poor soul cried, and was heard by the LORD, and was saved from every trouble. (v. 6)

There's no bravado here, no pretense. Instead, there's reality.

What do you do with your brokenness? There are all kinds of options, some good, some not so good, and some even destructive. We can find the best way in today's New Testament reading. It's the acid test of discipleship.

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. (Philippians 1:27)

It doesn't mean putting on a good front. It doesn't mean stuffing your feelings or dealing with them in a destructive way. Instead, it means being real. It's the power of personal witness.

That's where discipleship comes in. And remember friends,

Disciples are people who are becoming more like Jesus in their character and emotional and spiritual development.

Discipleship is always

**Personal- becoming more like Christ myself.
Missional- helping others do the same.**