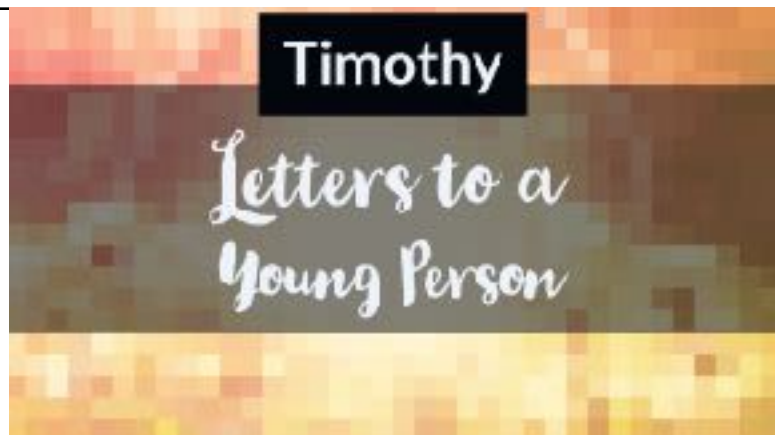

Graphics and Audio Notes

- There **will** be a sermon starter video.
- There **will** be notes and / or scripture to show on screen during the sermon.

Text highlighted in this way will have a slide prepared to be on screen.

Text highlighted in this way is a reminder for Andrew during delivery.



Key Questions

What is this sermon about?

This sermon is about Paul, Timothy and the pursuit of holy living.

Why is this sermon important?

It is important because holy living is, at times, overlooked in the life of the church. Also, it is important to pursue holy living with the awareness that God's love comes first.

What is the good news?

The good news is that God's love for you is what makes it possible to pursue holy living.

What are the next action steps?

You are invited to read the Bible, pray for God's guidance and be part of a Wesley small group.

What is the context of this sermon?

This sermon is part of a series focused on 1 and 2 Timothy.

Metadata

Topics

- Grow
- Make Disciples

Sermon Books of the Bible

- 1 Timothy
- Luke
- Matthew

6th Sunday after the Epiphany (Green)

February 12, 2017

Timothy: Letters to a Young Person - Pursue Holy Living Sermon

1 Timothy 6:11-16

First United Methodist Church of El Dorado

Preaching Target Word Count: 2,109

Tags

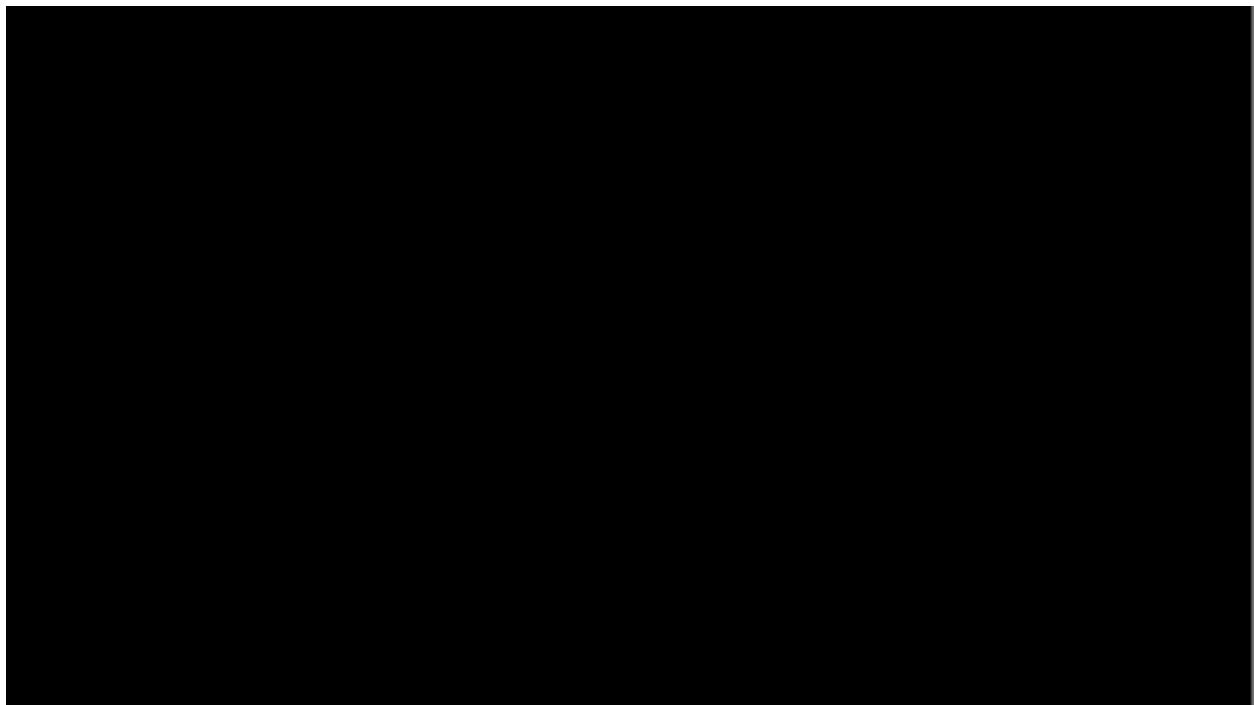
sermon, worship, church, Methodist, UnitedMethodist, UnitedMethodistChurch, FirstUnitedMethodistChurch, Eldorado, Kansas, GreatPlains, AnnualConference, GreatPlainsAnnualConference, Timothy, Paul, holyliving, meansofgrace, grace, love

Sermon Audio

9 a.m. Worship

11 a.m. Worship

Sermon Video



Introduction **5**

1 Timothy 6:11-16, CEB

Response to Scripture

Sermon Starter Video

Football, Fundamentals, Paul and Timothy **5**

Super Bowl LI

Lombardi Trophy

Vince Lombardi

“This is a Football”

Transition

Context of 1 and 2 Timothy

Paul’s Encouragement for Timothy

Location of Ephesus

False Teaching in Ephesus

Pagan Teaching and Christianity

Key Scripture: 1 Timothy 6:11

Fundamentals of Christianity **7**

Means of Grace

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Grow

Give

Serve

Share

Illustration: Means of Grace?

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Conclusion

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Good News

Call to Action

Invitation

Closing Prayer

Introduction

1 Timothy 6:11-16, CEB

¹¹But as for you, man of God, run away from all these things. Instead, pursue righteousness, holy living, faithfulness, love, endurance, and gentleness. ¹²Compete in the good fight of faith. Grab hold of eternal life—you were called to it, and you made a good confession of it in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³I command you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and Christ Jesus, who made the good confession when testifying before Pontius Pilate. ¹⁴Obey this order without fault or failure until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵The timing of this appearance is revealed by God alone, who is the blessed and only master, the King of kings and Lord of lords. ¹⁶He alone has immortality and lives in light that no one can come near. No human being has ever seen or is able to see him. Honor and eternal power belong to him. Amen.

Response to Scripture

One: The word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon Starter Video

Play sermon starter video.

Football, Fundamentals, Paul and Timothy

Super Bowl LI

Last Sunday, Super Bowl LI was the first Super Bowl ever to go into overtime. In addition to going into overtime, more than 30 team and individual Super Bowl records were either broken or matched during the game. Of course, the New England Patriots defeated the Atlanta Falcons, 34–28 to bring home the the Lombardi Trophy.

Lombardi Trophy

The trophy was “officially renamed in 1970 in memory of legendary NFL head coach Vince Lombardi, after his death from cancer, to commemorate his leading the Green Bay Packers to victories in the first two Super Bowls”¹

Vince Lombardi

In 1960, ten years earlier, Lombardi’s Green Bay Packers lost to the Philadelphia Eagles in the NFL Championship. It would be the last playoff game that Lombardi would

¹ Wikipedia contributors, “Vince Lombardi Trophy,” Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Vince_Lombardi_Trophy&oldid=703314375 (accessed February 7, 2016).

ever lose. The Packers went on to win five championships in the next seven years, including three in a row: 1961, 1962, 1965, 1966 and 1967.

“This is a Football”

On the first day of training camp in July of 1961 ... “[Lombardi] began a tradition of starting from scratch, assuming that the players were blank slates who carried over no knowledge from the year before. He reviewed the fundamentals of blocking and tackling, the basic plays, how to study the playbook. He began with the most elemental statement of all. “Gentlemen,” he said, holding a pigskin in his right hand, “this is a football.”²

Lombardi focused on the fundamentals with fantastic results.

Transition

You might consider the letters of 1 and 2 Timothy to be written with a similar focus on the fundamentals. Let me remind you of the context of these letters.

.....
Pause
.....

Context of 1 and 2 Timothy

Paul’s Encouragement for Timothy

It is likely that the apostle Paul met Timothy when he was a young boy living in Lystra who had come to hear the traveling preacher. Some years later, Paul returned again to Timothy’s hometown and invited him to travel with him and help start churches.

For much of Timothy’s life, Paul has been a mentor and encourager for Timothy. Now, Paul sends Timothy to a major church in early Christianity that was in trouble - the church at Ephesus.

Location of Ephesus

Let me remind you of where this was:

Show map

You can see it here across the Aegean Sea from Greece in modern day Turkey.



.....
Pause
.....

² David Maranis, *When Pride Still Mattered: A Life of Vince Lombardi* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999), Google Books Edition.

False Teaching in Ephesus

Pagan Teaching and Christianity

There was false teaching that was going on in the church. You had people in the church who had become these prominent teachers, yet in hearing what they are teaching, Paul is concerned that they are teaching things that were different than the gospel that he had taught while he was there.

Key Scripture: 1 Timothy 6:11

Paul tells Timothy in this letter that he is to command and teach the Ephesians, as well as set an example for them by the way that he lives. Hear again these words from 1 Timothy 6:11:

¹¹But as for you, man of God, run away from all these things. Instead, pursue righteousness, holy living, faithfulness, love, endurance, and gentleness.

When Paul encourages Timothy to demonstrate the fundamentals of the Christian faith in both his teaching and, perhaps more importantly, the way that he lived.

Pause

Fundamentals of Christianity

Jesus himself the basics of our faith in Matthew 22:34-40:

“When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had left the Sadducees speechless, they met together. One of them, a legal expert, tested him. “Teacher, what is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

He replied, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: You must love your neighbor as you love yourself. All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands.”³

These are the fundamentals of Christianity - love God and love neighbor.

So, how do we focus on the fundamentals of Christianity?

Means of Grace

John Wesley, founder of Methodism focused on the fundamentals of Christianity through the means of grace. According to our denomination’s website: “John Wesley taught that God’s grace is unearned and that we were not to be idle waiting to experience grace but we are to engage in the means of grace. The means of grace are ways God works invisibly in disciples, hastening, strengthening and confirming faith so that God’s grace pervades in and through disciples.”

³ Matthew 22:34-40, CEB

Worship

Be in worship
Receive Holy Communion

Grow

Pray
Study the Bible - alone and with others
Be in a group for accountability

Give

Give financially to God's work and to meet basic human needs

Serve

Visit
Feed the hungry
Seek justice

Share

Share faith with others

These practices are the fundamentals of Christian spiritual formation. When we engage in these spiritual practices, we live into our identity as a child of God, become sisters and brothers of Jesus and are enabled to be channels of the Holy Spirit.

Illustration: Means of Grace?

Wesleyan Understanding of Grace

Prevenient Grace - Before our Awareness

As United Methodist Christians, we believe that God is at work in the lives of people before they recognize it. God was working in the life of the son, even at the beginning of the story when he asks his father for his share of the estate.

God loves us even when we are sinners.

God offers us forgiveness, even though we don't deserve it.

Justifying - Opportunity for Decision

We have the same choice that Paul considers in the passage of scripture today. We can decide to live as slaves to God or a slave to sin. It is that moment of clarity for the son there with the pigs. Life doesn't have to be like this.

We confess our sins, receive forgiveness, trust in God and seek to follow Jesus. We are set free from the slavery of sin and are free to live as slaves to God. We are made right with God and begin to grow in love of God and neighbor.

Sanctifying - Growing in Faith

Then, we seek to follow after God all of our days. We grow to perfect love of God and neighbor with the spiritual practice to worship, grow, give, serve and share. When we use these spiritual tools, we come closer and closer to God and care more deeply for our neighbor.

Fully in the Light - Christian Perfection

By God's grace, it is possible for us to be delivered completely from slavery to sin and death and live completely as disciples of Jesus Christ. The amazing thing is that to live in this way, it takes people who know what it is like to live as slaves to sin. The only ones qualified are the ones who have experienced God's grace and forgiveness.

The Lost Son, Older Brother and Running Father

This is the story of a man who had two sons. "The younger son said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the inheritance.'⁴ This would have been what he would have received after his father died. Essentially, the son is saying, "Dad, I wish you were dead."

He takes this money, travels to another state and blows it all on wild living - sex, drugs, and parties. He utterly enjoys himself, until one day he realizes that he is out of money. Completely.

"When he had used up his resources, a severe food shortage arose in that country and he began to be in need. He hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. He longed to eat his fill from what the pigs ate, but no one gave him anything."⁵

Then, he remembers that even the slaves in his Father's house were better off than he was right then. He sets off for home with a script in mind - "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son. Take me on as one of your hired hands."⁶

"So he got up and went to his father. "While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion. His father ran to him, hugged him, and kissed him."⁷ He throws a feast and a great party for this son that has returned.

His old brother complains to his father - "'Look, I've served you all these years, and I never disobeyed your instruction. Yet you've never given me as much as a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours returned, after gobbling up your estate on prostitutes, you slaughtered the fattened calf for him.'

⁴ Luke 15:12, CEB.

⁵ Luke 15:14-16, CEB.

⁶ Luke 15:18b-19, CEB.

⁷ Luke 15:20, CEB.

Then his father said, 'Son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad because this brother of yours was dead and is alive. He was lost and is found.'⁸

This story paints a picture of God's love, grace and forgiveness. The very same love and forgiveness that is available for you today.

Conclusion

Good News

The good news is that God's love for you is what makes it possible to pursue holy living.

Call to Action

Take time this week to read the Bible and pray.

We have created a reading plan for you that will take just a few minute each day.

Take moments to pray and ask for God's guidance in your life.

One of the best ways to pursue holy living is to do it with other people as part of a Wesley Small Group. We have a goal as a church of launching three new small groups before Easter, yet more importantly than that, is the impact that it will have on your faith. Being part of a small group is most often the next step after being in worship as someone is connected in the life of the church. Come talk to me after worship if you are interested in being part of one of our small groups.

Invitation

You can pursue holy living – love God and love our neighbor – because God first loved you.

Closing Prayer

[Text here]

Amen.

⁸ Luke 15:29b-32, CEB.