10-13-19 BUILDING STRONG BONES Series #1 of 6 The Importance of Good Bones-Heredity & Life-style Help

I've been thinking and praying --- WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO GROW IN CHRISTIAN MATURITY? WHAT ARE THE MARKS OF A MATURING CHRISTIAN? and WHAT CAN WE DO AS A CHURCH TO HELP ONE ANOTHER TO KNOW & EXPERIENCE GOD MORE FULLY? (John 10:10)

As I have considered this notion of growing in Christian maturity --- I can't but help to parallel the thinking to that of a child growing up --daily routines, learning life from family, going to school, relationships with friends and then one day, becoming a more mature adult. Perhaps, the process is similar?

I believe that there are 4 key areas of life skills and experiences that we need to BUILD & DEVELOP STRENGTH & PROFICIENCY.

- 1. THINGS WE DO EVERYDAY
- 2. THINGS WE NEED TO KNOW
- 3. THINGS WE DO BEST IN CONGREGATION or LARGER GROUPS
- 4. THINGS WE DO BEST WITH 1,2,3, or 4 CLOSE FRIENDS

WHAT ARE THESE THINGS THAT WE NEED TO DO to grow spiritually to grow in our faith, and to grow in the Christian experience & lifestyle?

- 1. EVERYDAY ... we need to:
 - PRAY --- connect with God in thought, conversation and
 - BIBLE read & respond to the written & living Word of God
 - BREATHE SPIRITUALLY to breathe out & release or confess the bad and then to breathe in the life-giving presence of the Holy Spirit.
 - DEVELOP ESSENTIAL LIFE-SKILLS & PRACTICES INCLUDING:
 - + A capacity & spirit of GENEROSITY, GIVING, & KINDNESS
 - + A capacity & spirit of THANKFULNESS & APPRECIATION
- 2. As children attend classes to learn essential knowledge & skills, we as Christians need to learn essential doctrines and beliefs such as:
 - + Salvation by Grace
- + The TRINITY
- + A Personal & Caring God
- + Jesus the Christ

+ The Holy Spirit

- + Fruit of the Spirit/Gifts of the
- + Our identity in Christ

- + Biblical authority
- + Stewardship of the 3 T's +1

- + How to read/study the Bible + How to Pray
- + Responsible living & care
- + How to Know God's Direction & God's Peace

3. As children become part of a family, a school, and a community --- we as Christians, also must become part of a church family, a church & an extending community of faith that does things together such as:

+ Praise & Worship God

+ Proclaiming the Word of

God

+ Celebrate the Sacraments

+ Serve and help one another

- + Serve & help the communities & world that we live in
- 4. As children often have a "close friend' or two ... we as Christians need 1,2,3, or 4 others to share and to pray and to encourage us in an especially deep and significant way ...

FOR THE NEXT 6 weeks we'll be focusing upon THINGS WE NEED TO DO EVERYDAY TO GROW SPIRITUALLY WE WANT TO DEVELOP STRONG BONES!

I'll be using familiar stories from the Bible to help us see and apply these essential life-skills to our own lives. The common theme or metaphor will be the notion of **DEVELOPING STRONG BONES**.

Of course, I grew up in the milk business and remember vividly the promotion "DRINK MILK & DEVELOP STRONG BONES."

The critical importance of "GOOD BONES" has become an expression that conveys ultimate viability no matter of outward appearances --we see the term used in regards to houses (HGTV); relationships (Maren Morris' popular song 'The Bones'); car restorations, and virtually anything requiring a STURDY, STEADFAST STRUCTURE OR UNGIRDING THAT IS CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING EVERYTHING ELSE.

POINT - IF THE BONES ARE GOOD, WE CAN DEAL WITH EVERYTHING ELSE!

That's my prayer for this series ... that each of us BUILD UP AND DEVELOP GOOD STURDY, STRONG BONES THAT WILL ENABLE US TO SURVIVE THE STORMS OF LIFE AND HELP US IN TERMS OF EVERYTHING WE DO AS CHRISTIANS...at home, in life, at work, and in our communities.

GOOD HEREDITY & GOOD FAMILY, while not essential, really helps to DEVELOP GOOD BONES.

<u>Today's text</u>:---- <u>2 Timothy 1:1-7</u> "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, in keeping with the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus,

Having a godly grandmother & mother helped Timothy – NO DOUBT!

1 method of daily Bible reading = the S.O.A.P. Method:

S - SCRIPTURE - "text"

O – OBSERVE Who? What?

When? Where? How?

A - APPLY - SO WHAT?

P-PRAY

WHO:

Paul & Timothy

Note: Lois and Eunice were Jews – Father was a Greek Gentile SO – Timothy is a child of a 'mixed' family ... hmmm?

WHAT:

An intro to a letter?

WHEN:

66-68 AD --- VERY NEAR to the END of PAUL's life

Does it matter?

WHERE:

Modern day Turkey ---

Does it matter?

SO WHAT?

A spirit responsive to God?

Invigorated by adventure?

What inklings do I sense or feel or think?

PRAY ---- HOW?

PREACHING POINTS:

- 1. SHUMC is from 'good stock' --- WE HAVE GOOD BONES!
- 2. What kind of passion & vision do you sense from our predecessors?
- 3. How does our passion & vision compare?
- 4. What were Paul's words and call to his spiritual 'son'
 - a. FAN INTO FLAME the GIFT OF GOD
 - b. DO NOT BE TIMID
 - c. PRAY FOR and RECEIVE GOD's POWER

GOD's LOVE

GOD's SELF-DISCIPLINE

- 5. What are we being called to do or to be?
- 6. What are we to do? How are we to pray?

Friends --- if we are going to stand tall as a church -- & as Christians ... we must MAKE SURE that we have GOOD BONES ... as the song says --- "if the bones are good – the house won't fall"

EVIDENCE OF GOOD BONES INCLUDES:

- 1. AN ADMIRABLE LIFESTYLE --- that develops over time
 - + Character + Wisdom + Passion + Vision
- 2. AN ADMIRABLE WITNESS --- that validates our faith in God
 - --- a life of INTEGRITY NOT HYPOCRISY
 - --- a winsome life that 'attracts' not 'repels'
 - --- a life that reflects the Fruit of the Spirit
 - --- a life that stands firm in midst of life's storms
- 3. A LEGACY --- will the world be a better place because of you?

WE ARE THE BENEFICIARIES OF THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE US

ME MUST ASK OURSELVES:

WHAT KIND OF "BONES" ARE WE DEVELOPING?

WILL THEY SUPPORT US, OUR FAMILIES, & THOSE WHO COME NEXT?

WHAT IS OUR VISION & OUR PASSION?

Dear God, may we be faithful to the 'good bones' that we have inherited. May we be faithful so that those who come after us may be BLESSED as we've been and continue to be blessed. God, please help us to develop strong bones in one another and in those who come to SHUMC. In Jesus' Name. Amen

² To Timothy, my dear son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

³ I thank God, whom I serve, as my ancestors did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. ⁴ Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. ⁵ I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.

⁶ FOR THIS REASON I remind you to FAN INTO FLAME THE GIFT OF GOD, which is IN YOU through the laying on of my hands. ⁷ For the Spirit God gave us **does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline**."