

Second Baptist Church
301 South Hamilton Ypsilanti, Michigan
Rev. George W. Waddles, Jr., Pastor



Thee Word for The Week

Keeping the Faith

Hebrews 3:1-15

Monday - Read Hebrews 3:1-4

- Who are we to consider? Why are we to consider Christ (v. 2)?
- What term of respect and familiarity is used to describe the readers?
- Would that encourage them? Does this encourage you?
- This is important in light of the actions they/we are to take toward others. Through faith in Christ we are a family of God. Our calling or “ultimate home” is where (John 14:2)? How should that affect our view of the here and now?
- Make a list of the things and/or truths about your future home. Thank the Lord for that future home.

Tuesday - Read Hebrews 3:5-6

- Who is the builder of God’s house (v. 4)?
- What is His house built upon (v. 6 and Ephesians 2:19-22)?
- No human construction could ever compare to the dwelling place of God, which is made up of His children (1 Corinthians 3:16). But what should be true of those in His household (Hebrews 3:6)? Is this “holding fast” and “boasting” something that earns our citizenship or is it something that flows from being a citizen in God’s house?

Wednesday - Read Hebrews 3:7-11

- What is true of hard soil? How long does it take hard soil to form and what does it take for it to become soft and useable?
- This a quote from Psalm 97:6-11 referring to the events of Numbers 14. What were the consequences of their hard hearts?
- What could be consequences for God’s people today for having a hard heart (one example is in John 14:2)?
- Do you take those consequences seriously? Why or why not?
- Think through your answer before the Lord.

Thursday - Read Hebrews 3:12-13

- How does a heart become hard, as it did with the people of Israel?
- What is the action listed in v. 12 that would prevent a hard heart (cf. Proverbs 4:23)?
- What are the characteristics listed of a hard heart in v. 12?
- What is the action listed in v. 13 that would help prevent a hard heart?
- What is ultimately behind the cause of a hard heart (v. 13b; I Peter 5:8)?
- Think of someone you can encourage today and do something that encourages that person as member of God’s household.

Friday - Read Hebrews 3:14-15

- To be a partaker of Christ has two aspects (a taking of something and a giving of something). By faith in Christ, what is taken from us and also what is given to us [I Corinthians 5:21 says, “He (God the Father) made Him (Christ) who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in him.”]?
- What then are we to “hold fast” to (see also Revelation 2:1-5)?
- Are you holding fast?

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1. List how Jesus is superior to Moses in the following verses:

- a. (Heb. 3:1) _____
- b. (3:2-3) _____
- c. (3:3) _____
- d. (3:4) _____
- e. (3:5-6) _____
- f. (3:6) _____

2. Jesus is the person we place our faith in, how can you demonstrate that commitment on a daily basis? _____

3. Jesus is worthy of our ultimate praise and glory, how can you bring Him glory?

4. What impact does it have on your life that Jesus is the Creator and Sustainer of all?

5. a. How does faithful living provide hope for eternal life? _____

b. How should this impact your life? _____

6. What is the context of (Psalm 95:7-11) that is quoted in (Hebrews 3:7-11)? _____

7. How can “dying in the wilderness” apply to:

a. The lost? _____

b. The carnal Christian? _____

8. What warning is offered in (v. 12)? _____

9. What was the “deceitfulness of sin” in which the Israelites were being warned? (v. 13)

10. What outside influences attack Christian’s today? Or you today? _____

11. The Hebrew Christian’s were instructed to “encourage one another” to help any from falling, do you have anyone in your life holding you accountable for spiritual growth?

12. What is the author of Hebrews referring to in “holding fast the beginning of assurance firm until the end?” (v. 14) _____

13. How is your eternal life, reward account shaping up? _____

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Step 1

List those areas where you are still living without faith.

Step 2

Write down the opposite “faithful living” characteristics to the above.

Step 3

List first steps to faithful living for each area you listed.

Step 4

List encouragers who can help you be accountable for faithful living.

Step 5

List those to whom you could be a spiritual encourager.

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Group 1 Read the following story and discuss the questions that follow.

Robert Schuller tells a story about a banker who always tossed a coin in the cup of a legless beggar who sat on the street outside the bank. But, unlike most people, the banker would always insist on getting one of the pencils the man had beside him. "You are a merchant," the banker would say, "and I always expect to receive good value from merchants I do business with."

One day the legless man was not on the sidewalk. Time passed and the banker forgot about him, until he walked into a public building and there in the concessions stand sat the former beggar. He was obviously the owner of his own small business now.

"I have always hoped you might come by someday," the man said. "You are largely responsible for me being here. You kept telling me that I was a 'merchant.' I started thinking of myself that way, instead of a beggar receiving gifts. I started selling pencils—lots of them. You gave me self-respect, caused me to look at myself differently."

Name a time when someone really encouraged you.

What is your best method of encouragement toward your best friend, spouse or child?

Share examples.

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Group 2 Read the following story and discuss the questions that follow.

You Are a Lousy Football Player (from *See You at the Top*, by Zig Ziegler)

During a practice session for the Green Bay Packers, things were not going well for Vince Lombardi's team. Lombardi singled out one big guard for his failure to "put out." It was a hot, muggy day when the coach called his guard aside and leveled his awesome vocal guns on him, as only Lombardi could. "Son, you are a lousy football player. You're not blocking, you're not tackling, and you're not putting out. As a matter of fact, it's all over for you today, go take a shower."

The big guard dropped his head and walked into the dressing room. Forty-five minutes later, when Lombardi walked in, he saw the big guard sitting in front of his locker still wearing his uniform. His head was bowed and he was sobbing quietly.

Vince Lombardi, ever the changeable but always the compassionate warrior, did something of an about face that was also typical of him. He walked over to his football player and put his arms around his shoulder. "Son," he said, "I told you the truth. You are a lousy football player. You're not blocking, you're not tackling, you're not putting out. However, in all fairness to you, I should have finished the story. Inside of you, son, there is a great football player and I'm going to stick by your side until the great football player inside of you has a chance to come out and assert himself."

With these words, Jerry Kramer straightened up and felt a great deal better. As a matter of fact, he felt so much better he went on to become one of the all-time greats in football and was recently voted the all-time guard in the first 50 years of professional football.

That was Lombardi. He saw things in men that they seldom saw in themselves. He had the ability to inspire his men to use the talent they had. As a result, these players gave Lombardi three consecutive world championships at Green Bay. Later, when he moved to Washington, many people wondered how he would handle Sonny Jurgensen, the talented but undisciplined quarterback. They didn't wonder very long. On the first day of practice one of the reporters baited him with a question about Jurgensen. Lombardi called sonny to his side, put his arm around him and said, "Gentlemen, this is the greatest quarterback to ever step on a football field."

Is it any wonder that Jurgensen had his best year ever? Lombardi saw the good in others, treated them like he saw them and helped develop the "good" that was inside of them.

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Group 2

How can we focus on the good in others and not the bad?

Share examples of times in your lives that someone greatly encouraged you.

How can you be a source of encouragement?

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Group 3 Read the following story and discuss the questions that follow.

Mr. Charles Schwab was one of the first men ever to earn a million dollars a year. Why did Andrew Carnegie pay Schwab more than \$3,000 a day? Because he knew more about the manufacture of steel than other people? No. Schwab said that he had many men working for him whose technical knowledge surpassed his.

Schwab was paid such a handsome amount largely because of his ability to deal with people. Here is the secret set down in his own words:

“I consider my ability to arouse enthusiasm among the men the greatest asset I possess, and the way to develop the best that is in a man is by appreciation and encouragement. There is nothing else that so kills the ambitions of man as criticisms from his superiors. I never criticize anyone. I believe in giving a man incentive to work. So I am anxious to praise but loath to find fault. If I like anything, I am hearty in my approbation and lavish in my praise.”

At your work what motivates you to do more?

How can you encourage those you supervise? Employees, volunteers, children, etc.

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Group 4 Read the following story and discuss the questions that follow.

Dr. Larry Crabb recalls an incident in the church he attended as a young man. It was customary in this church that young men were encouraged to participate in the communion services by praying out loud. Feeling the pressure of expectation, the young Crabb (who had a problem with stuttering) stood to pray. In a terribly confused prayer, he recalls "thanking the Father for hanging on the cross and praising Christ for triumphantly bringing the Spirit from the grave."

When he was finished, he vowed he would never again speak or pray out loud in front of a group.

At the end of the service, not wanting to meet any of the church elders who might feel constrained to correct his theology, Crabb made for the door. Before he could get out, an older man named Jim Dunbar caught him.

Having prepared himself for the anticipated correction, Crabb instead found himself listening to these words: "Larry, there's one thing I want you to know. Whatever you do for the Lord, I'm behind you one thousand percent."

Crabb reflects in his book: "Even as I write these words, my eyes fill with tears. I have yet to tell that story to an audience without at least mildly choking. Those words were life words. They had power. They reached deep into my being."

---Larry Crabb, *Encouragement: The Key to Caring*

How has someone encouraged you? _____

What is your best method of encouragement toward your best friend, spouse, or child? Share examples. _____

How can your group be a haven of encouragement? _____

