

Do not Give Up!

Hebrews 10:23-25

He who promised is Faithful!

- Pastor Jimmy has asked a few of us to share our hearts with you in November and I have the opportunity to share my heart today.
- I am so excited to have this opportunity to share a word from the Lord with you all today.

I felt God leading me to bring a message of encouragement to the Church and open our hearts to the possibility of developing a body that is in shape on the outside and on the inside.

I felt that this word came to me about a month ago and as Dana and then Jonnie and Jake shared the past two weeks, I believed that God confirmed that this was the Word to share with you all today.

One thing that I have noticed in our society is that we encourage people to look good on the outside. We work out, wear flattering clothes, and do our best to show others that nothing is wrong with us.

Everything looks good, happy family, nice car, great family vacations, Facebook lists hundreds of friends, Twitter shows a lot of followers, we live a life that is to envy!

But is that the real you we see?

In my one class, I challenge my students to look at themselves in the mirror and ask this question.

Do you love the person you see in the mirror?

Why or why not?

Most of the time people can't answer that question and this opens the door to the reasons we struggle with self-esteem and what love really looks like.

Our society encourages us to place on a happy face and to hide our true selves and feelings so no one can judge or condemn us.

Nothing is wrong as long as we don't take the time to look into it.
like a noise in our car, we just ignore the signs.

We are not like animals are we? One of the reasons we are not animals is what God placed within us, His Spirit.

He breathed into us his Spirit and that brought something that animals do not have, Self-Awareness.

The understanding that we are more than bio-chemicals and molecules but have an eternal Soul.

This is a great blessing but also one of the greatest challenges we can face as human beings.

The challenge that we face begins when we start to understand that the way we act and how we interact with each other has reason and purpose and consequences.

We become responsible for ourselves.

The Bible teaches that we are responsible for our actions, and for every word that comes out of our mouths.

This explains why we try so desperately to hide the unbecoming things in our lives.

Who among us wants to face our failures and our short comings?

This fear of facing our failures began when sin entered the world and the first man and woman hid from God because of their sin.

Sin brings with it shame, and shame the mindset that we can't be fixed, it's just who we are.

We are a broken bunch of people.

But there is Good News! We don't have to remain in our brokenness, Jesus Came!
He Died! He Rose Again!

Now there is forgiveness for our sin, removal of our shame, and a NEW LIFE for all who believe!

There is hope!

That is the message that the devil has been trying to destroy since the beginning of time.

Our Hope In Christ!

If the devil can keep us from sharing our HOPE he can keep the world in bondage and prevent anyone else from being set free.

So why do we stand silent when we have such a great message of HOPE?

We still have not become fully self-aware or God aware. We are still afraid of people knowing we are not perfect or afraid we will be judged for our failures, and we are not aware of God's mighty power working in and through us.

But we are a new creation! 2 Cor 5:17

The devil is great at reminding us of our past sins and makes us feel ashamed to share because we still think the same, act the same or cannot see the real change God has made in us!

The devil is also great at making us afraid to be different - counter culture so to speak.

We shouldn't make others feel bad, so hide it in your heart. Don't share!

We do not offend anyone else that doesn't agree with or follow our beliefs and values.

Let's not call it Christmas any more, let say Happy Holidays!

We have been shamed into thinking our values are not accurate and we should be the ones to change.

And for those who do not conform we are discredited and attacked into recanting our position, even if it is held according to the Bible's teachings.

Under this constant attack most of us have forgotten what our true selves are like.

We have grown up with the politically correct mentality where we preach tolerance at the expense of confrontation, when only confrontation can produce positive change.

Jesus did not hold to the status quo, but spoke up every chance he had to dis-spell the fears and false truths of his day, and we are to follow his example in our culture.

He held on dearly to his faith in God and we are to do the same.

Hebrews 10:23

I am often amazed at the change that occurs in my students when we pull back the facade of this fake front we are so used to, and take the chance that we can be the person we are made to be and not be sorry for it.

It is truly amazing when a person is ready to hear that they are not a mistake, that there is a purpose for them and that they can become the person they are meant to be.

It is hard at first because becoming self-aware is hard! It requires courage!

You can't be faint of heart, but strong and very courageous to look yourself in the eye and accept the person you truly are, warts and all.

So why do we tolerate this mentality of holding back, being safe, and not standing out?

We condemn ourselves for our sin and listen to the devil's lies.

Shame is a terrible master that wields fear that separates believers and places a bondage over their testimony.

This separates us from the body and makes us easy prey for the enemies continued attacks.

You see we all have sinned and continue to sin but Christ died once, for all sin.

1 Peter 3:18

This power of sin has been broken over you and shame can no longer hold you.

Hebrews 9:11-14

Romans 8:1

Condemnation has no hold in our lives as long as we stay open and transparent before God and each other.

Vision of a barn vs a green house

Life can continue even if a pruning needs to take place. We do not have to fear becoming self-aware. God has it all in his hands.

By staying connected to the Body we bring resource to our side of the battle. All by ourselves we run out, become depleted, and need help.

Hebrews 10: 24-25