

May 3, 2015

Confirmation Sunday (Rebekah's Confirmation!)

Sermon: Redeeming the Time

Scripture: Ephesians 5:1-16, various (CEV)

Text: Psalm 31:14-15a (ESV)

PP#1: Ephesians 5:1-16

1 Therefore, imitate God like dearly loved children. 2 Live your life with love, following the example of Christ, who loved us and gave Himself for us. ...

8 You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord, so live your life as children of light. 9 Light produces fruit that consists of every sort of goodness, justice, and truth. 10 Therefore, test everything to see what's pleasing to the Lord, 11 and don't participate in the unfruitful actions of darkness. ... Christ will shine on you.

15 So be careful to live your life wisely, not foolishly. 16 Make the most of your time!

Reader/Mikayla: Ephesians 5:1-16

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PP#2: Redeeming the Time

"But I trust in you, O Lord; I say, 'You are my God.' My times are in your hand." -Psalm 31:14-15a (ESV)

"Redeeming the Time" Psalm 31:14-15a "But I trust in you, O Lord; I say, 'You are my God.' My times are in your hand."

PP#3: *Image for today is a moment in time, or time frozen, or the such.*

Today is a moment in time. It's a moment, for me, and perhaps for a few of you, when time seems to freeze. For me, this is a first. This is the first time I've led Confirmation Sunday with my own child. I just can't imagine where the time has gone. Other parents, are you with me on this? Doesn't it just seem like yesterday that they were starting Kindergarten? And today I'm in a bit of a daze. My daughter...confirmed...already?

For you students, however, I bet it seemed this day would never come! Time crept along slowly for you over these past two years. All of that time spent memorizing Bible verses and doing our lessons. And now, finally, the time has come. But perhaps at this moment you are not quite sure you're ready. You'll be giving your faith sharing soon. The time is just about here! It'll be awesome.

PP#4: *Image for reflecting on how one walks with God through life...since birth even.*

Today is a moment in time, but it is also the culmination of a lot of time. All the class time, yes, but also all the time since you were born. Think back about the 14 years you've lived so far. All the ways you've seen God in your lives: through your family, your experiences, your important friends, those that God has placed in your lives. God has been after you since you were born...well, even before then, we've learned. All of that time invested into you preparing for this day when you confirm your faith in Jesus publically. All of the time that has come before.

And now, this moment is a very significant time in your lives.

PP#5: Redeeming the Time [*With an image of a cross*]

1. The gift of salvation

I think that in Confirmation, you are receiving a two-part gift. You receive the gift of Jesus' life, death and resurrection applied to your lives, as you take Him as your personal Lord and Savior. His forgiveness, His making you new, His relationship with God, all these are yours.

PP#6: Redeeming the Time [*With an image of a clock*]

1. The gift of salvation
2. The gift of time

But the second part of the gift you get from God today is time. It is time to live as a follower of Jesus. It is the moments that span out in front of you from this time forward. God gives you life, and then gives you new life. Confirmation is you saying that you want to live following Jesus. We are celebrating this today with you. But the second part of today is about how you are going to spend the time that God gives you from here on out.

PP#7: Pastor David's Bible Verse for This Confirmation Class:

“But I trust in you, O Lord; I say, ‘You are my God.’ My times are in your hand.” -Psalm 31:14-15a (ESV)

Each confirmation class I select a special Bible verse. Psalm 31:14-15 is the one I have chosen for you this year. “But I trust in you, O Lord; I say, ‘You are my God.’” This is the confirmation commitment. But that's not all of it. The next part is, “My times are in your hand.” It is a giving not just of your commitment to Jesus, it is the giving of the rest of your time as well. So, from now on, all of your time is a gift from God, but it is also a gift you give to live for God.

PP#8: Ephesians 5:1-16

1 Therefore, imitate God like dearly loved children. 2 Live your life with love, following the example of Christ, who loved us and gave Himself for us. ...

8 You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord, so live your life as children of light. 9 Light produces fruit that consists of every sort of goodness, justice, and truth. 10 Therefore, test everything to see what's pleasing to the Lord, 11 and don't participate in the unfruitful actions of darkness. ... Christ will shine on you.

15 So be careful to live your life wisely, not foolishly. 16 Make the most of your time!

Ephesians 5 talks about how we use our time living for God. Imitate God, for you are His

dearly loved kids. Live your life with love, following Jesus, and the example of Jesus for what that love looks like. You live differently, not the dark ways of the world. You live in the light: honest, doing what is right, doing what makes those who love you proud. Spend your time bearing fruit, fruit of goodness, justice, and truth. Do what pleases the Lord. Let the Light who is Jesus shine *on* you, and *through* you!

This is an ongoing way of life. This is how you live each moment of your days, from this time forward. “So be careful to live your life wisely, not foolishly. Make the most of your time!”

PP#9: *Image of a person/Christian standing out/looking weird in front of/near others*

This isn't easy. You are making a public declaration today that you plan to live differently. You will look strange, when you don't talk badly about that other person. But, make the most of your time. Others will think you're weird when you spend your Saturday helping out to bless people. But, make the most of your time. It will seem that you're the only one at times who actually reads your Bible or goes to church. But, make the most of your time. You will be tempted to make choices that go against what you proclaim today...and some times you will mess up. That is when it is so important to make the most of your time.

PP#10: “When you are with unbelievers, always make good use of the time.” -Colossians 4:5

When you leave here today, you will be spending a lot of time with people who don't believe like you do. That's when it is so important to live as light. It's for them, so they can see God in you. Colossians 4:5 says, “When you are with unbelievers, always make good use of the time.”

Each confirmation class I've had I've given a cross pendant. It's a symbol of the faith in Christ that you make today publically. I want you to wear yours as part of your public witness. Today, I'm wearing the one I got when I was confirmed, 30 years ago.

PP#11: *Image of the cross pendants the students will receive.*

Your crosses this year, however, have something different about them. You see that they look very thick. That's because they open up, and on the inside is a watch. I want you to have this cross watch, so you can always remember to watch the time. Your pendants help you remember the two part gift of Confirmation: the gift of salvation in Christ, and the gift of time God gives you to live for Him from now on. Every time to you open it up to see what time it is, I want you to remember how awesome it is that you have chosen Jesus, but also that you make the commitment to make the most of your time, living with God, living for God.

PP#12: Redeeming the Time

1. The gift of salvation
2. The gift of time

“So be careful to live your life wisely, not foolishly. Make the most of your time!” -Ephesians 5:15-16a

God has so many plans for you, all the time. He has a grand adventure ahead for you. To live into it—all that God has planned—remember to always redeem the time.

Amen.

Reese: Also, please make a PowerPoint slide for us to use later in the service:

PP#13: Pastor David's Bible Verse for This Confirmation Class:

“But I trust in you, O Lord; I say, ‘You are my God.’ My times are in your hand.” -Psalm 31:14-15a (ESV)