

## WELCOME

### Our Mission is to . . .

- Connect you to Jesus
- Connect you to His community for discipleship
- Connect you to your mission and purpose in life

We are not here to tell you what to wear, eat, listen to, vote for, or even believe. These are things you must determine for yourself if you want to have real faith.

Life is too short to be shallow. In fact, you can't really do life without developing a strong foundation and becoming a person of substance. This is your journey, your discovery, and you will reap the benefit of the work you do.

**FHNew** - Our mission as a church is to do everything we can to help you grow your faith. If you would like to get to know us a little better, or begin or continue your journey of faith, text **FHNew** to **53123** and we will send you a link to a few short videos about Foothills Church, or stop by the **Connection booth**.

**FHBaptism** - One important step in your faith journey is being baptized. To learn more about baptism, text **FHBaptism** to **53123** and we will send you the teaching on Believers' Baptism.

## UPCOMING

- [Financial Peace University](#) (started January 10)
- [1st Steps](#) – 3 week course **starting January 28** for new believers who want to know more about Jesus and what it means to follow Him as well as an introduction to be able to share your faith with others. **Click the 1<sup>st</sup> Steps link above, connect via the QR code on the screen, or go to the Connection Point in the Atrium** to sign up.
- [Moms groups](#)
- [Bible Recap](#) – read through the Bible
- **Weeds in My Garden** – 8 week sermon series starting February 4 about **Mental Health** -- suicide, self-harm, stress/anxiety, burnout, low self-esteem and depression.
  - **Pray the Holy Spirit** gives Pastors Doug and Harv the words that people need to hear
  - **Pray for the staff** who will be fielding questions on topics of which we are not experts as well as reaching those in our community who are feeling isolated and alone
  - **Pray about whom you might invite**: friends, family members, co-workers. Everyone wrestles with these issues or has a loved one who does, and we can all use tools in our toolbox to navigate life
  - **Testimonies**: If you have a testimony or story that could help someone, please tell it. You can **use the QR code** on the screen to sign up.
  - **Counselors**: We are looking for partners in this series. If you are a counselor or mental health professional and would like to be a resource for those in need, scan the QR code for a link to the **Counselor Info Form**.
  - **Parents**: If you typically bring your kids (6<sup>th</sup> grade and under) to the auditorium for church, during this sermon series I encourage you to take advantage of our kids' ministry for this series. We don't want to put ideas in their heads that you will have to navigate as a parent.

**INTRODUCTION: Train to Go - Expanding the Kingdom of Jesus (Matthew 28:16-20)**

**Question:** What actually happens to me when my faith grows strong and mature?

- Are there signs I am getting stronger and more mature? How would I know?
- When athletes mature, you see it: A runner runs farther and faster; a lifter gets muscles; a baseball pitcher has more control
- When your faith grows, you see it in your heart and soul

**Story:**

- When I was a little guy, I had to clean my room. My poor mother had to go through so many techniques to get me motivated to do it -- showed me how, removed privileges like no cartoons until it was done, used my allowance as leverage
- As I grew up, something happened: Today, I can't stand a cluttered bedroom

**In the same way, when I learned of the Great Commission, it was frightening.**

- First, I avoided it. Next, "it's my duty." Then "I should." Then "out of thanksgiving . . ." Finally I saw the benefit but it still felt like a duty.
- Now, as Paul says, "*Woe is me if do not preach the gospel*" (1 Cor. 9:16)

**I am the Great Commission.** Your goal should be to **become** the Great Commission. This is how you know you are maturing in the faith.

**1st step in becoming the Great Commission is to care about what Jesus cares about.**

- **Luke 15:1-7** *Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near Jesus to listen to Him. 2 And both the Pharisees and the scribes began to complain, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them." 3 And so He told them this parable, saying, 4 "What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the other ninety-nine in the open pasture and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? 5 And when he has found it, he puts it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost!' 7 I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance.*
- What Jesus does is change the frame of reference of lost people
  - They matter to God
  - How do you know you are growing in maturity in your faith: When you start caring about the salvation of lost people
  - A desire to see the Kingdom of God expand is the heart's desire of mature disciples
- I can't write people off, but I also can't compromise the Gospel. So this is where growth really takes place. The dilemma forces you to reconcile the Gospel truth with the needs of the lost

**2<sup>nd</sup> step in becoming the Great Commission is celebrate what Jesus celebrates.**

- The parable in verse 7 says, *"I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance."*
- In verse 32, Jesus quotes the father of the prodigal son. *"But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found."*
- Jesus is thinking about joy -- Heaven is rejoicing!
- Mature people seek joy even in the midst of dire circumstances, troubling times, challenging obstacles
  - **Story:** Woman dying of cancer leading others to Jesus. How can a person be joyful over such a terrible thing?
- It's easy to be bitter, angry, mad when things aren't going well. This is why having a joyful spirit in the midst of difficulties is a sign of maturity and strength.

**Let's spend 2024 expanding the kingdom of God by growing our own faith -- the two are inter-connected.**

- Be a **BRINGER**
  - Our messages on Sunday morning are going to focus on what the Bible teaches on subjects that most people are dealing with every single day
  - If you need a deeper diet, use the Salty Pastor podcast (YouTube) and/or a small group
  - Practice the **Principle of the 5:** Create a list of 5 people you want to pray for and then invite to church
- Be an **INCLUDER**
  - One of our ministry goals is to connect you to your ministry in life
  - 1 Peter 4:10 says, *"As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the multifaceted grace of God."*

**CONCLUSION**

We want to live the Great Commission because when we do, our faith grows. We want it to be an engine that drives our faith forward and gives it horsepower! **Our engine has 3 cylinders: catalytic weekend services, life changing friendships, surrendered living.**

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. If the Great Commission is a sign of maturity, how does living it affect you personally?
2. Why do we tend to separate the challenge to expand the Kingdom of God from our growing faith?
3. Why is the Great Commission a challenge for you to grow in maturity?