

Wednesday Word

2 Timothy 2:1-2 “You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.”

When my oldest son was in middle school he was on the track and field team. They competed in many competitions from sprints, long-jump, javelin, hurdles and the 400-meter. The stadium would be packed with friends and families and the field and track would be buzzing with events and activities throughout the afternoon. After all the events had been complete, there was just one event left to compete: the Relay Race. Teams of four runners would align themselves on different parts of the track. The first runner would hold a baton and would run as fast as he could to his teammate who would grab the baton and continue the race. This exchange would take place three times until the last runner would cross the finish line. This was one of my favorite events.

I think that our faith can be described through this relay event. We have a responsibility to the person that we pass off our spiritual baton to. Our baton could represent many different things: Our ministry, wisdom in the Lord, valuable life lessons, financial advice, relationship experience, leadership skills, experience with God and knowledge of God’s Word. We are to pass on what we possess to the ones who come after us.

As we approach confirmation Sunday (This Sunday at 5 PM), we consider the five Confirmands that will be officially confirmed. While there has been a lot of specific and intentional discipleship, spiritual development and Biblical training already, every one of us has something to give to them. In the bigger picture we are called to pass our spiritual baton to the next generation so that they can continue to follow God with their baton and their lives. The best way to do this is through relationships. Young people today speak a different language, their slang words are different than when I was growing up. They have a different style of clothes and music. None of it is bad - it’s just different.

When two runners converge to make the baton exchange during the race, there is trust that they must have in one another. The runner who is making the exchange must trust that the other runner is going to catch it and continue to run. The runner who is receiving the exchange must trust that when they reach their hand back the runner behind them will put it in their hand. There is a moment when they are both holding it at the same time. This exchange must take quite a lot of work, patience, flexibility and rehearsal for the exchange to be smooth. There must be mutual respect and mutual trust with one another.

As we consider this, and we prepare for confirmation Sunday, let’s ask ourselves how we can pass on the baton of our spiritual lives. Maybe not to these specific students, but to who the Lord has placed in our lives. Kids, Grand-kids, nieces, nephews, spiritual sons and daughters. The Lord has given us His Word, His Spirit, His presence and the gifts of His Spirit. We can pass on a baton that will equip and propel those who come after us to

greater heights in the Lord and effectiveness in ministry. Let's ask the Lord to help us do this!

I love you and God loves you!

Pastor Eric