

JOY IN THE JOURNEY XII



“But I Don’t Want to Move Over.” - 2 Timothy 4:9-18

Sermon Idea: *We experience joy in our journey with Jesus when we willingly and actively engage with others by making room in our lives for them to flourish in their relationship with Christ.*

Intro : **I had a friend in college who seemed like a goof-off – who later ended up becoming a great missionary and pastor!!** Have you ever misjudged or conversely promoted someone’s contribution to your life or Kingdom accomplishments? Think of your circle of friends – especially spiritual friends in the Lord? Who is your longest standing friend? Do you consider anyone your mentor or are you mentoring anyone? Let’s consider the John Mark and Apostle Paul case...

Read and discuss: 2 Timothy 4:9-18

1. Can anyone recount the history of this guy, John Mark, in the Gospels and the NT? He certainly was connected from the time of Jesus to Paul’s last days? (see key events -- Acts 12:12,25; Acts 13:5,13; 15:36-39. Note Mark 14:51! Strong earliest traditions hold that Mark, a close companion of Peter, authored the Gospel of Mark.)
2. Mark was obviously a younger companion on Paul’s first journey...what reasons might have caused him to leave the team and return to Jerusalem? Do you think Paul was justified in splitting with Mark and Barnabas?
3. Paul seems at the end to really treasure Mark. (see also Col. 4:10; Philemon 24). What does this say about Mark’s character and commitment? Paul maturity as well?
4. Have you experienced gaps or just distance from a friend that was reversed and closeness was restored? What attitudes and character are required in our longstanding journeys with friends and colleagues? (Examine some of Paul’s advice to us on relationships: Rom. 12:9-16; Gal. 6:1-5; Phil. 2:1-4)
5. What did Pastor Wes mean by “merging” or “moving over” in our journey with others?
6. Our day is characterized by division and disagreement on everything from politics, global and cultural issues, to theological positions -- What practical steps can we take to bridge the divisions...even amongst friends? What solutions do you suggest in these months of post-election healing as a nation – in our own circles?
7. What are our biggest obstacles to us following the two great commands? (see Mark 12:28-31) Are there any higher priorities than these? How should we obey?!
8. Close with a time of prayer to commit to love and build up others in the Body as we experience the joy of journeying with Christ...bearing the image of Christ.

Jesus prayed: *“...May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”* John 17: 23

(If you are willing to share, Pastor Paul would love to hear from you if these discussion sheets have benefitted you individually or in groups this Fall. Or make suggestions! paulshea@hwchurch.org)