

Daily Devotional Guide

Monday – Make a list of the people in your life who are dependent upon you. List all of them – coworkers, friends, children, spouses, and neighbors. Say a prayer for each of them. Say to God, “Today, God, these people are counting on me. Give me the strength to help them. I do not want to let them down.” Read Matthew 25:23. Commit it to memory.

Tuesday – Read Hebrews 12:1. Who do you think the “great cloud of witnesses” are? Do you think they are dependent upon us to finish the race? Take just a moment and look up the passage in your own Bible. Give it some thought. Read the passages that precede this verse in chapter 11. What is the writer of Hebrews communicating to us about dependability?

Wednesday – Read 1st Corinthians 4:1-2. What do you think Paul meant by “trust?” What has God entrusted us with? It looks like God is depending on us to do something? What do you think that is? God desires for us to be faithful, but faithful in what?

Thursday – Being dependable means using what you have for God. Some think they need “more” to do something great for God. What we tend to forget is that God simply wants us to be faithful in the little things. More will come if we prove to be faithful in what we have. Mother Theresa said, “All of us can’t do great things, but we can all do small things with great love.” What little things can you do for God with great love today?

Friday – Here is a thought for you to reflect on during your prayer time: When folks think of you do they see you as someone they can depend on? Can they count on you? Ask God to give you the strength to be dependable.



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Pasadena Community Church

I Dare You to Be Dependable!

Sunday, August 7, 2011

Sermon by: Dr. Charley Reeb, Senior Pastor

Scripture Lesson: 1st Corinthians 4:1-2

The date was September 6, 1995. Thousands of fans stood on their feet in Camden Yards baseball stadium to honor one man: Cal Ripken, Jr. The fans cheered for 20 minutes, stopping the game – all to salute the Baltimore Orioles shortstop. Why now? There were plenty of other superstars on the team. Five other Orioles had higher batting averages and three hit more home runs. The fans cheered Cal because he set the new record for consecutive games played – 2,131. He played 2,131 games straight! Cal Ripken played in an additional 501 straight games over the next three years and his streak ended at 2,632. I doubt this record will ever be broken. For 17 seasons Cal Ripken did not miss a game. This is why they called him “Iron Man.” Cal was cheered for his faithfulness and dependability. Everyone knew they could count on Cal (David Cooper, “The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success,” p.77).

The greatest ability is dependability! To be successful in life and effective in faith you must be dependable. Take the Sunday morning worship experience here at Pasadena. Many people are inspired by our worship services every week. But Sunday morning would not happen without the dependability of several people – ushers, greeters, musicians, singers, liturgy writers, Communion stewards, altar volunteers, sound and media technicians, maintenance ministers, our two great worship leaders, not to mention the staff and volunteers who prepare our wonderful bulletin. If we

could not count on these folks each and every week, Sunday morning would not happen. Dependability moves the church. Dependability is what makes anything significant work.

I would like each of us to take an honest look at ourselves this morning. Ask yourself, “When people think of me, do they think I am a dependable person? Do I do what I say I am going to do? Do I follow through?” You see, it does not matter how gifted, skilled, knowledgeable, or spiritual we are, if we can’t be counted on, all that we have means nothing.

I remember going to a kid’s soccer game when I was serving a church in Orlando. Many of our kids from the church were playing in this big game, and I wanted to show my support. There was a child on the team who had a busy father. He was so busy that he did not make many of his son’s games or events. I recall watching the boy look at the sideline several times for his father as he played. He was more interested in seeing his dad than he was the ball. The whistle blew for a time out and water break and the boy came running over to his mother. He hugged her and asked, “Where’s dad?” She replied, “Oh, honey, he has to work today. But he told me to tell you that he loves you and he is proud of you.” The boy said, “If he loved me, he would be here.” Then he walked off.

We can say what we want and we can make all the promises in the world, but they

mean nothing unless our words are backed up with dependable action.

Did you know there are people counting on you? Make a list mentally right now of the people who are counting on you - spouses, children, friends, neighbors, the church. Oh, I hope God made the list! God is certainly depending on you.

You may be thinking, "Charley, that's a lot of pressure!" Well, you won't feel much pressure, if you remember a great spiritual truth - dependability starts with the little things. Jesus taught this basic spiritual law in Matthew 25:23: **"You have been faithful in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things."**

My advice is to memorize this verse because not only is it a spiritual law, it is a law of success. You want to succeed in whatever you do? You want to get a better job, get promoted, be effective, gain a great reputation in a chosen activity? Be dependable with the few things you have been given. Follow through with the tasks in front of you. Most people can't be counted for even the little things, so if you follow through, you will rise to the top!

Most people are not dependable because they undervalue the little things. They believe the little things are not important or they believe they are too important for the little things. Their attitude is, "Lord, use me, but in a supervisory capacity." Often folks are waiting for something more or bigger. But how can we be counted on to do the big things if we can't be counted on to do the little things?

The truth is the little things add up to big things. There is a providence of God at work with the little things which prepares us for the big things. I know this to be true in my own ministry. Every church I have served has prepared me for the next one. I believe in every church God was testing my faithfulness, my dependability. From dealing with the unique challenges of small churches in Plant City, Florida and rural Georgia to working

through conflicts and adversity in a church in Orlando, God was asking me, "Will you be faithful in a few things?"

During the American Revolutionary War, a man on horseback came across a squad of soldiers trying to move a heavy tree which had fallen across the road. A corporal stood by giving orders. "Heave!" he said. But it was just too heavy. The stranger on horseback asked the corporal, "Why don't you help them?" He replied, "Me? I'm a corporal!" The stranger dismounted, took his place with the soldiers, and said, "All together now, heave!" Together they lifted the tree. The stranger mounted his horse and said to the corporal, "Next time you need to move a heavy tree, send for the Commander in Chief!" The stranger was George Washington (Cooper).

Be dependable with the little things, with what you have today, and God will reward you with greater blessings tomorrow.

It's amazing what we can produce with very little. After all, Jesus only needed five loaves and two fishes to feed a multitude. When the disciples were willing to use the little they had God made a miracle happen. Jesus said we could move mountains with just a tiny mustard seed of faith. You don't need more money, power, confidence, or resources to be faithful and dependable. Just use what you have. Be faithful with the little things and you will be blessed with greater things. The little things contain more power than you know!

You have in your possession two little things that, when used faithfully, can make such a difference. If people would just be dependable with these two things, the world would be a different place. These two things are on either side of your head. They are your ears! The most dependable people I know are those that really listen. Someone once said that listening is the highest form of love. I believe that. When people listen with their hearts and not just with their heads, love happens.

I came across a touching story the other day. Three people were having lunch in a

diner. They were a grandmother, a mother, and a little girl. The waitress first took the grandmother's order and then the mother's. Finally, she said to the little girl, "Honey, what would you like?" The mother of the little girl interrupted and said, "No, I'm going to order for my daughter." Yet the waitress continued to concentrate on the little girl and repeated, "Honey, what is it that you really want?" The little girl said, "I would like a hamburger." And the waitress said, "Do you want mustard and relish and ketchup and the works?" The little girl clapped her hands in excitement and replied, "Yes, I want the works!" The waitress turned to the kitchen and called out the orders for the grandmother and mother. Then she paused and said in a loud voice, "And give me a deluxe hamburger with the works!" The little girl said, "Mommy...Mommy, she thinks I'm real!"

When we can be counted on to do something as simple as pay attention to somebody, to listen to them with our hearts, we make a difference.

So, today, take inventory of your life. What has God given you? Are you faithful with what God has given you? Do you complain about what you don't have or are you dependable in what you do have?

Remember Jesus' parable of the talents? If the verse from Matthew looks familiar it is because it comes from the parable of the talents. It is a convicting parable. A man was leaving town and decided to entrust his money to three people. To one he gave 5 talents, to another 2, and to another 1. The two people with the 5 and 2 talents invested what they had been given and gained more for the owner. But the person who had been given 1 talent buried it. When the owner returned, he richly blessed the ones who had been given 5 and 2 talents. But the one who had buried his only talent was rebuked and relieved of his duties. Are you faithful in what you have been given? We can have all the money, opportunities and resources in the world, but if we can't be depended on to be faithful with it, it is all in vain.

John Rockefeller, Sr. is a good example. At age 33 he earned his first million dollars. At age 43 he controlled the largest company in the world. At 53 he was the richest man in the world. Then he contracted a rare disease, and his hair fell out. He got worse and his eyelashes disappeared. He couldn't sleep, lost weight and looked terrible. He had no joy. The doctors thought he wouldn't live another year.

One sleepless night he had a moment of clarity. He was convicted by God and realized that he could not take his money with him. He made a new resolution and decided to give his money to hospitals, medical and missions work, and to help the poor and needy. He also established the Rockefeller Foundation whose funding led to the discovery of penicillin and cures for malaria and tuberculosis. Well, it might not surprise you that Rockefeller got better. Instead of dying at 54, he died at 98. He was faithful with what God gave him (Cooper).

All of us cannot be Rockefellers but all of us have been blessed by God to be used by God. Mother Theresa said, "We can't all do great things, but we can all do small things with great love." True success belongs only to those who are faithful and dependable with what God has given them. People are counting on you. The church is counting on you. God is counting on you. He was faithful to redeem you. Will you be faithful to Him? I dare you to be dependable! Amen.