

## “Vows Taken, Promises Kept”

1 Peter 5:1-10

- I. I always enjoy Confirmation Sunday. It’s a significant day because of the profession of faith that these guys are making.
  - A. I’m sure that they know what they’re doing and understand the significance of this morning.
  - B. I want to make sure that all of us understand the commitments that they are making.
    - 1) What exactly is being confirmed this morning?
    - 2) What are these guys promising God and you?
    - 3) What role do you play in all of this?
- II. 1 Peter talks about the relationship between elders and those younger in the faith.
  - A. It’s important to note that this part of 1 Peter is not talking about the office of Elder that some churches have. It’s talking more generally about the relationship between those further along in the faith and those just beginning their journey of discipleship.
  - B. So, the advice that Peter gives to elders and young men here is appropriate for us to consider this morning.
    - 1) The great thing about the Bible is that the advice God gives isn’t just for that day, but for today.
    - 2) God’s truth is truth for all time. Most importantly for our time. So let’s have a look.
- III. Peter begins his instructions with the elders by saying, “Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.”
  - A. Which brings us to our first point; the responsibility begins with the elders.
    - 1) That’s why Peter begins here. You (elders) have a responsibility to those who are following you on this discipleship journey.
    - 2) I want to call on you to be examples to this flock.
  - B. Look at the words of our confirmation service. It’s not a mistake that it says:
    - 1) “*We will live according to the example of Christ.*”
    - 2) Later in our service, you will commit yourself to that example.
  - C. There are few things more powerful than a good example.
    - 1) Jerry Beall
    - 2) Amy?
  - D. This isn’t always a function of age. It often is, but not always.
    - 1) And all of us have a responsibility to those who come after.
    - 2) That means that you [confirmands] have a responsibility to those younger than you.
  - E. The beauty of the church community is that we can provide example and mentors for everyone on this journey.
    - 1) You promise you’re going to be there. You promise to take some responsibility.
    - 2) “I don’t have any kids!”
    - 3) We commit ourselves to being that models love and forgiveness.
      - a) Our goal is for all to trust in God and be found faithful.
      - b) We support that goal through prayer.

- 4) *“We will surround these people with a community of love and forgiveness, that they may grow in their trust of God, and be found faithful in their service to others. We will pray for them, that they may be true disciples who walk in the way that leads to life.”*

- IV. Those of you who are younger aren't off the hook.
  - A. Listen to 1 Peter 5:5-6: “Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.
    - 1) Elders: If you want respect, you have to earn it.
    - 2) Younger ones: You need to be ready to give respect.
  - B. We follow the example the elder’s set – that’s the commitment I want you to show.
    - 1) Nothing shows more respect and more honor than following in the footsteps of those who came before you.
    - 2) Myth: the only example (the only role model) you need is Jesus.
      - a) That’s not even Biblical!
      - b) What did Paul say? “You became imitators of us,” (1 Thes. 1:6)
      - c) Paul said, “follow me as I follow Christ.”
    - 3) Following the example of elders in the faith is Biblical, its sound, and its character building.
  - C. Look closely at what you commit yourselves to:
    - 1) Renounce evil and repent. *{do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of your sin?}*
    - 2) Resist evil. *{Resist evil, injustice and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?}*
    - 3) Follow the faith. *{Put your whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as your Lord, in union with the church...}*
- V. For all of us, the key is humility.
  - A. It’s not about you.
    - 1) 1 Peter says, God will lift you up.
    - 2) God will restore you. God will make you strong.
    - 3) God will make you firm. God will make you steadfast.
    - 4) All through HIS power.
  - B. It’s all about God.
- VI. So what’s exactly being confirmed?
  - A. In baptism we recognize what God is doing, has done and will do.
  - B. By our profession of faith we become members of the family of God and experience the salvation available to us through Christ.
  - C. And by confirmation we do two things.
    - 1) The confirmands declare their intention to live their lives as disciples of Jesus Christ and they make that declaration publicly before the church.
    - 2) The church confirms that they receive this declaration and have seen evidence of faith, growth, and discipleship in these lives.
  - D. It’s an important time. It brings together our worship, service, evangelism, fellowship and discipleship.
    - 1) It shows us the result of our faithfulness.
    - 2) It highlights for the confirmands
- VII. It culminates in this way: “the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.”