



MAKE YOUR BED

May 5, 2019, Third Sunday of Easter; Confirmation Sunday

I Timothy 4:6-16

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There is so much to say and so little time to say it. That is why today, we all need to be reminded that Confirmation is not a graduation but rather a continuation. It is a promise to seek after God and to try to live how He taught us to live. It is a reminder to come to church more often than we do, to read our Bibles more often than not as well as to say our prayers more. Confirmation is a promise to live differently than the world tells us to live and to live lives that are more Godly than the ones we lived the day before. This is not just a reminder to the Confirmands but rather to all of us.

Paul told Timothy to “have nothing to do with profane myths and old wives’ tales.” Here, he was referring to false information, that other teachers had been leading believers astray with. These false teachers were forbidding marriage and demanding abstinence from certain foods and Paul was saying that it was not right, that they were not right. He was telling them that everything that God created was good and that we should celebrate it and receive it with thanksgiving. In Paul’s letters, he often corrected churches and leaders to change their ways from things that were not the way he believed Christ would have wanted us to live and to start living in all the ways that we should.

One of the old wives tales I have so often heard in Confirmation Class is the myth that people cannot believe in both science AND religion. That these two are pitted against each other and that we have to choose between one OR the other. However, that is absolutely not true and we can, dare I say, should, absolutely believe in both science AND religion. In fact, oftentimes I would not have my



faith in God if it weren't for science and I wouldn't have faith in science if it weren't for my faith in God.

Here are some questions to ponder about that: how do we believe, or trust, in science? Through faith. And how do we believe, or trust, in God? Also, by faith. Therefore, if we are believers in science then we already have faith in something that at times can be seen and that at other times cannot be seen. Just like God and our faith in God.

Have you ever stopped to think about how little of our "science" is actually observable by the naked eye, or by sound or touch, sight or taste? Probably not, rather, we simply put our trust in the scientists who pass that information along to us. We have faith in those individuals to tell us the truth about science, about their experiments, and about their findings, and then we believe in them.

In today's world, people are quicker to believe the word of a "scientist," when they do not even know who the scientist is, or where they were educated, than they are willing to listen to someone affiliated with a religion. So tell me, is coffee good for us this year or bad? Do Vitamin E supplements combat cancer or cause it? Is Pluto a planet or a dwarf planet? Who cares? Well, I guess we all do and though I do not know the answers to these things I do put my trust in our best scientists to help us find those answers. And I thank God for those scientists every day.

One more quick point about science, religion and modern media. Last month, while watching the National Geographic channel, aka Nat Geo, I stumbled across Morgan Freeman in a series called "The Story of God". And in that episode, Freeman was speaking to a priest at the Vatican about science AND religion and the history of the Big Bang Theory.

Listen to this, "according to the Big Bang theory, the expansion of the observable universe began with the explosion of a single particle at a definite point in time. [AND] This startling idea first appeared in scientific form in 1931, in a paper by Georges Lemaitre, a Belgian cosmologist and Catholic priest."



The Big Bang theory originated from a Catholic Priest. So then, why doesn't the news tell us about that instead of pitting science and religion against each other? Freeman went on to say, "Cosmology not only allows room for divine creation, it offers new ways to understand God as the master of space and time." He said, "I like what Father Jucepe says – 'Creation is a continuum. It did not begin and end with the Big Bang; it is God's ongoing activity, which includes evolution. What he was saying is that God does not exist outside of space and time, God is space and time.'"

Paul told us to have nothing to do with old wives tales but rather to help remove them from our teachings. So let's squash that old tale and make sure to teach people that it's both science AND religion, not one or the other.

Paul then tells Timothy, or rather, us, to be Godly people and that as we toil and strive each day that we set our hope on God and become more righteous, more holy, and more loving people. He said, "Let no one despise your youth, but set an example for other believers in your speech and conduct, in your love for others, in your strong faith, and in your wholesomeness."

"*'Our Daily Bread'*, a little devotional book that comes out monthly, and that many churches leave in their Narthex for people to take, shares the story of a gigantic tree supposedly brought down by a violent storm. However, upon closer examination, it was found that the tree was actually rotten at the core because thousands of tiny insects had eaten away at its heart. The weakness of that tree was not brought on by the sudden storm; it had begun the very moment the first insect nested within its bark."

Therefore, as Christians, we must build our Character in the early stages of our life, and every day thereafter, along the three avenues called love, faith and purity. We must take time daily to address the flaws in each one of these areas as early as possible." And Confirmation is a great time to be reminded of that.



Paul takes it a step further and tells us to not only do these things ourselves but to insist on these things and teach these things for others to live by too. To stand up for what is right and good, to speak out against injustices, to not sit silently and idly by while a friend, peer, or fellow Christian doesn't live or act the way they have been taught to or told to. Insist on goodness not only for yourselves but for others as well.

Admiral William H. McRaven gave the commencement address to the graduates of The University of Texas at Austin on May 17, 2014. And in it he said, "If you think it's hard to change the lives of 10 people — to change their lives forever — you're wrong. I saw it happen every day in Iraq and Afghanistan: A young Army officer makes a decision to go left instead of right down a road in Baghdad and the 10 soldiers in his squad are saved from close-in ambush. In Kandahar province, Afghanistan, a non-commissioned officer from the Female Engagement Team senses something isn't right and directs the infantry platoon away from a 500-pound IED, saving the lives of a dozen soldiers.

But, if you think about it, not only were these soldiers saved by the decisions of one person, but their children yet unborn were also saved. And their children's children were saved. Generations were saved by one decision, by one person.

But changing the world can happen anywhere and anyone can do it. So, what starts here – in this church – can indeed change the world, the question is — what will the world look like after you change it? I believe that it will look much, much better.

Later the Admiral says:

"...Our struggles in this world are similar, and the lessons to overcome those struggles and to move forward — changing ourselves and the world around us — will apply equally to all....

"I have been a Navy SEAL for 36 years. But it all began when I left UT for Basic SEAL training in Coronado, California. Basic SEAL training is six



months of long torturous runs in the soft sand, midnight swims in the cold water off San Diego, obstacle courses, unending calisthenics, days without sleep and always being cold, wet and miserable. It is six months of being constantly harassed by professionally trained warriors who seek to find the weak of mind and body and eliminate them from ever becoming a Navy SEAL...”

“Every morning in basic SEAL training, my instructors, who at the time were all Vietnam veterans, would show up in my barracks room and the first thing they would inspect was my bed. If I did it right, the corners would be square, the covers pulled tight, the pillow centered just under the headboard and the extra blanket folded neatly at the foot of the rack — that's Navy talk for bed.

“It was a simple task — mundane at best. But every morning we were required to make our beds to perfection....It seemed a little ridiculous at the time, particularly in light of the fact that we were aspiring to be real warriors, tough battle-hardened SEALs, but the wisdom of this simple act has been proven to me many times over.

“If you make your bed every morning, you will have accomplished the first task of the day. It will give you a small sense of pride, and it will encourage you to do another task and another and another. By the end of the day, that one task completed will have turned into many tasks completed. Making your bed will also reinforce the fact that little things in life matter. If you can't do the little things right, you will never do the big things right.

“And, if by chance you have a miserable day, you will come home to a bed that is made — that you made — and a made bed gives you encouragement that tomorrow will be better.

“If you want to change the world, start off by making your bed.”



Metaphorically speaking, let's "make our beds" each day by starting our days in scripture, starting each of our days in thought and prayer with God. And then being grounded in God and by God, so that no matter what we face that day we will remember that God is with us, and therefore no matter how great our day was or how terrible it was, when we return to our beds we can return to God in scripture, in thought and in prayer.

By book-ending our days with God, every task we complete, every person we encounter, everything that we do, can be done in a more Godly way.

Only then, can we start each of our days reminding ourselves to be Godlier people than we were the day before. Making sure that for the rest of our day, **this** day, during our daily "toils and struggles" we set an example for everyone around us in speech and in conduct, in love and in faith, as well as in purity.

The admiral concluded,

"Start each day with a task completed. Find someone to help you through life. Respect everyone.

Know that life is not fair and that you will fail often. But if you take some risks, step up when the times are toughest, face down the bullies, lift up the downtrodden and never, ever give up — if you do these things, then the next generation and the generations that follow will live in a world far better than the one we have today.

And what started here," with the Confirmation class of 2019, "will indeed have changed the world — for the better."

In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Amen.