

By way of
INTRODUCTION

A Basic Understanding

(Scripture used in this chapter is from the
New American Standard Bible 1995 version (NASB).

1 Timothy 1:5

“The goal of our instruction
is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a
sincere faith.”

- ***Passing on the Baton of Faith***
- ***Landmarks in our Journey of Faith***
- ***My Life Verses***

Passing the Baton of Faith is a Biblical Mandate



II Timothy 2:2

The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Hebrews 13:7

Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.

1 John 1:3

What we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

II Peter 1:12,13

Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you. I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder.

II Thessalonians 3:7, 9

For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you...not because we do not have the right to this, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you, so that you would follow our example.

Philippians 3:17

Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.

Hebrews 6:12

So that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

John 13:15

For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.

Joshua 4:6

Let this be a sign among you, so that when your children ask later, saying, 'What do these stones mean to you?'

Joshua 4:21, 22

He said to the sons of Israel, "When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, 'What are these stones?' then you shall inform your children, saying, 'Israel crossed this Jordan on dry ground.'

II Peter 3:1, 2

This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.

1 Corinthians 11:1, 2

Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you.

1 Corinthians 4:16

Therefore I exhort you, be imitators of me

Jude 1:17-21

But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they were saying to you, "In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts." These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit. But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

Romans 15:4

For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Ezra 7:10

For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel.

1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 11

For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved... Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

Acts 20:17-38

From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, bound by the Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.

"And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, will no longer see my face. Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my own needs and to the men who were with me. In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' When he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. And they began to weep aloud and embraced Paul, and repeatedly kissed him, grieving especially over the word which he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they were accompanying him to the ship.

Jude 1:17-21

But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they were saying to you, "In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts." These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit. But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

Matthew 28:19, 20

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

John 15:16

You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.

Deuteronomy 6:1, 2, 6–9

Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the Lord your God has commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in the land where you are going over to possess it, so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the Lord your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged... These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Psalm 71:18

And even when I am old and gray, O God, do not forsake me, until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to all who are to come.

Psalm 78:4, 6

We will not conceal them from their children, but tell to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and His strength and His wondrous works that He has done... That the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born, That they may arise and tell them to their children.

Psalm 103:17

But the lovingkindness of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children.

Psalm 145:4

One generation shall praise Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts.

Galatians 6:14

But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,
through which the world has been crucified to me,
and I to the world.

Landmarks in our Journey of Faith

Tom and Judy Horton

Key Events and Relationships

Short background:

Judy was the firstborn of seven to Herb and Clara Cogbill then of Vancouver, Canada, on June 25, 1945. She was raised in a Christian home and grew up in many different communities as her father was a contractor and they moved a lot. Her family attended church regularly and she became a Christian at an early age. She began to learn the violin when she was seven while she taught herself to play the piano.

Tom was the last born of three to Loren and Vera Horton of Port Orchard, WA, on April 12, 1947. He was raised in a non-Christian home. His parents encouraged Tom and his handicapped brother Lanny to be involved in the Boy Scout program, and Tom became an Eagle Scout just after he turned 15 (Tom's scouting experience was a significant foundation to all the retreats he later led as a youth leader at Boulevard). He lived until he was 18 in Port Orchard and graduated from South Kitsap High School in early June. After leaving home in late June and living with his sister and her husband in Selma, OR, he became a Christian just before midnight on July 12, 1965, at a Christian camp that his sister and husband were attending near Crater Lake, Oregon. Both Tom & Judy attended Multnomah Bible School in Portland, Oregon, Judy starting in the fall of '63 and Tom in the fall of '65 where they met in the spring of 1967. It was while Tom was at Bible college during a

Christian Service requirement that the conviction for youth ministry was planted and began to grow. During the winter of '67 when, over a nine-week period, Tom saw 27 boys receive Christ as their Savior and his journey into youth ministry began. After meeting Judy and discerning her desire to serve the Lord, Tom proposed to her and they were married on Aug. 10, 1968. Tom started as youth director of Boulevard Park Presbyterian Church on Sept. 1, 1968, and the two of them served there until Aug. 31, 1996, a span of 28 years. Since then, they have served with Rural Church Youth Ministries ever since

There have been many important people, significant events, and many lessons learned during these 57 years in the ministry. Some of the most significant ones are:

- Dr. Robert C. Wheatley, senior pastor at Boulevard Park Presbyterian Church, began a weekly Bible study with Tom from the very beginning. This continued until Bob's retirement in 1990. To say the least, this weekly time played an overwhelming role in Tom's life. Tom has often told people, in a variety of settings, that Dr. Wheatley was his "second savior" and "his love and commitment to my success was unconditional." Tom believes that God used Bob Wheatley to mold and shape him into a man God could use.
- Judy—After Tom's hospitalization of the fall of 1975 into 1976, Tom saw the role Judy played in his life was akin to that of the Holy Spirit. He came to understand that the role his wife played in the ministry and in his life was critical, and something that is unfortunately missing from far too many youth leaders today. Judy's support, encouragement, counsel, advice, help, service, convictions, comfort, love, and kindness was just what he needed to develop as a Christian, minister, husband, and father. Judy was the second-best decision that he ever made.
- The Word of God—Weekly Bible studies, Sunday school classes, discipleship, and small groups were the mainstay of the youth program. Tom prepared most of the curriculum for the youth ministry out of his own devotional times. This became a pattern for much of the training at the Way Inn as well. Not only did this practice serve well in the training of the students in their walk with the Lord, it also was extremely cost effective.
- Retreats—The retreat style of using booklets or study guides and small groups for the lesson times, while tenting or using state park type cabins and cooking our own meals, made it possible for low costs and greater frequency of retreats throughout the year. Multiple junior high, high school, and college-age retreats (around 400 of them) became a youth ministry style that the leadership at BPPC allowed Tom & Judy to develop and were the foundation to what they are doing today. Tom's brother Lanny brought his small, old ski boat on many of the summer retreats and inspired the youth group to raise the money to purchase their own church boat. These retreats proved to be foundational for the development of significant and life-long relationships and ministry style, truly a God-ordained ministry strategy.
- Ministry Camps (Rural Mission Trips)—In 1971, the first peer-to-peer rural youth mission trip to Boardman, Oregon launched the Ministry Camp strategy that has become the main emphasis of RCYM. These rural mission trips also played a big part in the purpose of the Way Inn. (This ministry is explained in more detail in Chapter 9 of this book)
- The Way Inn—Because of the number of community youth that were reached through the weekly outreach ministries in local school gyms, retreats, Bible studies, and yearly ministry camps, the Way Inn came into existence. The Way Inn was to provide a bridge between the community youth and the church as well as provide a conducive setting for preparing and equipping students for a life of service. With Bob and Lou Whitbeck as residential directors, the Way Inn became the center for training many college-age students. Bob and Lou were critical to the success of the Way Inn and became significant ministry partners and mentors. Tom has noted that he has not seen anything like the Way Inn in all his travels.

- Volunteer leaders—With the need for many helpers on so many of the retreats and youth activities, many parents and church leaders became part of the volunteer team in the youth ministry. Having small groups as the lesson format of mostly retreats and weekly Bible studies, many volunteers learned to serve in the youth program through the hands-on, small-group ministry experience. Strong relationships were built within the ministry team and with many of the students. Because Tom and Judy served so long in the youth ministry at BPPC many of the former students became leaders when they became adults. The youth ministry experience was a great training program for future volunteer leaders.
- Personal Testimonies—On the evening of July 12, 1965, I witnessed an event that would be an enormous, foundational principle in my life and ministry. At the first campfire at the first Christian youth camp that I had ever attended, I saw and heard students my age stand up and tell of how God had impacted their lives. This was astonishing to me. They talked as if they knew God and as if He were real to them; to me this was totally out of my life experience. God used these testimonies to motivate me to inquire more about what He was all about; subconsciously I believe I was wanting what they had. Consequently, as a young youth leader, I knew training students to prepare and share their personal testimony would be critical in their walk with God. This conviction played a big part in starting rural mission trips.
- The trip in June of 1984 to Seoul, South Korea, that Dr. Wheatley and I attended was very significant. We attended an international conference on world evangelism. It was a fantastic time. The speakers and training sessions were amazing. But the most significant event was when we took a trip to the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea. That was where there were small bunkers that had been turned into prayer bunkers for anyone wanting to seek the Lord for international peace, evangelism, and personal direction. Again, it was a very private time between me and the Lord, and I believe it was pivotal to the ministry direction the Lord was leading us to in the future. I remember that it was in that bunker that I committed myself to a ministry of world evangelism. Little did I know then that the answer to that prayer was to start a grassroots ministry that would lead others to be engaged in evangelism efforts worldwide.
- The Ministry was a Family Ministry. When Judy and I started at Boulevard Park, we did much of the ministry together. Judy would lead the singing and even started a youth choir. From the beginning, she helped on retreats primarily as a cook, girl's counselor, and small group leader. After Nathan was born, in September 1973, she continued to serve, even bringing him as a baby, and this continued even after Stacie was born in April 1978. Our two children participated in multiple retreats while growing up. We also encouraged parents of students and other volunteer leaders to bring their children on these retreats as well. I believed it was important for students to see Christian families live out their faith as they served on these retreats. Again, this was an extremely important ministry style that served us very well for so many years as I never wanted children to think that ministry was a threat to their relationship with mom or dad. I also believe that this was ministry strategy that played a big role in our longevity in youth ministry which continues until this day. It has become apparent now, while serving in RCYM, that most of those who pray and support us come from the relationships that were established from our years at Boulevard. Judy and I are very grateful and humbled by this reality.
- God also used many life experiences to help shape us into individuals He could use, such as Tom's donation of a kidney to his sister in 1971 and his illness and hospitalization in 1975 & 1976 (It was while Tom lay in the hospital at that time that the idea of a kitchen on wheels came). God used two more extended stays in the hospital in 2013 and 2021 to deepen his relationship with Him and with so many others. Then in 2001, the motor home accident and subsequent paralysis of Russ Ellis, our brother-in-law, and the passing of Judy's mother (to whom she was so very close) have all made heaven an even greater reality to us. The Lord was and continues to be faithful in every aspect of our lives.

- On September 1, 1996, RCYM (Rural Church Youth Ministry) was started. This ministry of partnership and cooperation between a larger city church youth ministry and a small rural church has proven to be a great joy and blessing to so many. For three years and four months, Tom served under the umbrella of ProYouth, (directed by R.J. Thompson) to determine the validity of RCYM's strategy. Then on January 4th, 2000, RCYM became a nonprofit organization. We have since seen well over 1000 ministry teams serving rural churches during the past 28 years. Little did we know how God was preparing Tom while at BPPC for a ministry that would impact the Pacific Northwest and beyond. It truly was a mustard seed type experience with a small, inconspicuous beginning, growing into something so widespread and life-changing. Going rural with our ministry life focus has brought many life-changing and learning experiences which we are so grateful for. We have been blessed beyond measure with many ministry opportunities and with so many meaningful relationships. We would have never imagined all the twists and turns in life that the Lord has brought us through; definitely "through it all we have learned to trust in Jesus, we have learned to trust in God."

Tom and Judy agree with the chorus, "To God be the Glory, great things He has done."

Psalm 71:18

Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, do not forsake me,
Until I declare Your strength to this generation,
Your power to everyone who is to come.

**This Book
has some of the most important Scriptural Lessons
Learned and Taught
while on our Life Journeys.**

MY SEVEN LIFE VERSES

Tom Horton

John 8:31,32

“If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

Psalms 16:11

“Thou wilt make known to me the path of life; in Thy presence is fullness of joy; in Thy right hand there are pleasures forever.”

I Corinthians 2:9

“Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him.”

Numbers 14:24

“But My servant Caleb, because he has had a different spirit and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land which he entered, and his descendants shall take possession of it.”

Isaiah 30:18

“Therefore the Lord longs to be gracious to you, and therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you.
For the Lord is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him.”

Jeremiah 9:23,24

“Thus says the Lord, ‘Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,’ declares the Lord.”

II Peter 1:3

“seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.”

(Please Note:

I was encouraged early in my Christian life to choose certain scriptures that were especially meaningful to me and ask the Lord that He would have these verses become an ever increasing reality in and through my life. You might consider doing likewise.)