

accompanying by a circle of contrasting color in the grass; as called because formerly thought to have been made by the dancing of fairies  
fairly sharp *any of an order (Anostraca) of crustaceans formed in temporary freshwater pools in early spring, having delicate colors and a graceful swimming motion*  
fairly tale 1. a story about fairies; gossamer, magic, etc. 2. an unbelievable or untrue story; lie  
fairly well 1. in a way about fairies; gossamer, magic, etc. 2. in a manner that is not believable or untrue; lie  
fairly well 1. in a way about fairies; gossamer, magic, etc. 2. in a manner that is not believable or untrue; lie

# faith: *verb.*

in animopia and practicing the jewish religion  
fal-ate (fal'at) *adj.* [*L. falcatus < falo (gen. fairs), a sickle < ? IE base \*h<sub>2</sub>ul<sub>2</sub>g<sub>2</sub>, to pierce, needle, whence G. sickle, dagger*] sickle-shaped; curved; hooked  
fal-chion (fal'chun, -shun) *n.* [*ME. & OFr. falcion < VL. falcio < L. falo; see prec.*] 1. a medieval sword with a deep, broad, slightly curved blade. 2. [*Obs.*] any sword  
fal-ci-form (fal'shō /fōrm) *adj.* [*< L. falo, a sickle (see fal-ate)*] 2. *sickle*; *hook*  
fal-con (fal'shōn, -shun) *n.* [*OFr. falcon < L. falco (gen. falconis) falx, falces, falces falces 2. a person who hunts with falcons* . . .  
fal-con-er (fal'shōn-er) *n.* [*OFr. falconier*] 1. a person who hunts and trains falcons 2. a person who hunts with falcons  
fal-con-et (fal'shōn-et) *n.* [*dim. of FALCON*] 1. *Zool.* any small falcon, esp. any of various Asiatic kinds 2. [*U. falconet* < *OFr. falcon, FALCON*] an obsolete type of light cannon  
fal-con-gen-tle (fal'shōn-jen'tl) *n.* [*ME. falconer gentil < Fr.: see FALCON & GENTLE*] the female of the peregrine falcon  
fal-con-ry (fal'shōn-er-ē) *n.* [*OFr. falconnerie*] 1. the art of training

## Sermon-Based Study Guide Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church

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### I. Introduction

This week we continue our spring series *faith: verb.*, looking at our primary call as followers of Jesus. If you're reading along in Mark Labberton's book *Called: The Crisis and Promise of Following Jesus Today*, read chapters 4 through 6. These chapters help us to see the "where" and "how" of this call as well as more on the "what" of our call as Jesus' disciples.

### II. Connecting with One Another

What conditions are optimal for a flower to reach full bloom? Have you ever observed a flower or other plant growing up through concrete or asphalt? What does a plant like this say about perseverance and tenacity?

### III. Study and Respond to God's Word

- a. Turn to and read Jeremiah 29.1-7. The nation of Judah is in captivity in Babylon. Jerusalem is a distant memory. The people are downcast. But, God speaks through Jeremiah. What is the gist of the message? What are the people of God called to according to verse 7? What does it mean to "seek the peace and prosperity of the city?" What does that mean for us today in our city (and surrounding cities)?
- b. Take a look at Psalm 137. This poem appears to be written during this time of exile. The Psalmist reflects the anger, despair, and despondency of the people living in exile. The closing verses are a ghastly and hyperbolic expression of the gut-level feelings of the captives. How do you think this Psalmist might react to the words of the Lord conveyed in Jeremiah's letter?
- c. The metaphor of exile (as in Jeremiah's letter) contrasts with the metaphor of the Promised Land (as in the longing of the Psalmist). In which of these places – Promised Land or Exile – are followers of Jesus living today? Explain why you think this.
- d. Which might be a more conducive for growing a sincere faith and blossoming with the likeness of Jesus – Exile or Promised Land?
- e. Let's look at Mark 10.17-22.
  - i. Looking at verses 17 through 20, how would you describe the man, his ambition, his sincerity, and his perspective on himself? What seems to be his understanding of God and of how one inherits eternal life? What is his sense of his own abilities and his reliance upon himself?
  - ii. What is the "one thing" he lacks, according to Jesus? What does Jesus call this man to? Is he called to merely believe or trust in Jesus? What is the primary call to this man?
  - iii. In what ways is Jesus calling the man to a type of Exile? How would this Exile enable the man to become a follower of Jesus and a more Christ-like person?
  - iv. How would you define the goal of the Christian life based on this passage?
  - v. In his book, *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation*, M. Robert Mulholland Jr. defines spiritual formation as "The process of being conformed to the

image of Christ for the sake of others." Does this describe the goal of the Christian life? Why or why not?

- vi. Followers of Jesus are called to "bloom where we are planted," even in conditions of "Exile". We are called to follow and be conformed to the likeness of Jesus in our world, our workplaces, our neighborhoods, and in our society that is increasingly an experience of Exile. How does this happen? Read Galatians 5.16-26. As Pastor Lloyd Ogilvie states: Paul is urging the Galatians to remember that, as Christians, they have received the Holy Spirit and they are to walk and live in the Spirit. The Spirit is the supreme energizing and regulative force in their lives. If they walk in the Spirit, there is no danger that their Christian liberty will become an *opportunity for the flesh*. For Paul, the Spirit is more than the manifestation of a supernatural power, more than the giver of dramatic gifts, more than an explosive force erupting in the believer now and then. The Spirit is the daily sustaining, inspiring, and guiding power of the Christian's life. The Spirit is the domain of power, the sphere of influence which replaces *the flesh* as the energy force of our lives.
- He adds: The fruit of the Spirit is the outward expression of Christ dwelling within. This fruit grows and is expressed in any person that willingly dies to what Christ died to so that the Spirit may bring him or her to new life in Christ. Powerfully and surely the Spirit works—sometimes dramatically; sometimes slowly, almost imperceptibly—in our lives to repeat the miracle of a new creation in Christ Jesus.
- vii. How is the Spirit producing this fruit in you? You've probably heard that Christians are called to "bloom where we are planted." How is the Holy Spirit enabling you to "Become (more Christ-like) **where** you are?"
- viii. Mark Labberton notes that we are called to the "First Things" referring to following Jesus and being conformed to his likeness, and aligning with the priorities of the Kingdom of God. He also talks about the Next Things that "assume First Things but move us in particular contexts of work or ministry, of friendship or marriage, of service or advocacy, of imagination or analysis... jobs... or acts of service... where the convergence of gifts, talents, education, opportunity, passion and more draw us." How do the "Next Things" enable you to live out your call of following Jesus in the midst of ordinary actions of daily life?

### Pray

- 1) Ask God for opportunities to convey the character of Jesus to those around us through our actions and with our words.
- 2) Pray for our brothers and sisters who are living in literal "Exile" in places where strong anti-Christian forces and attitudes are in control.
- 3) For our faith community as a number of staff transitions take place in the immediate future. Ask God to refine our focus for ministry and to lead and provide through the Holy Spirit.
- 4) Lift up the continued efforts of Session's Vision Team: Elders Sue Nelson-Brown, Roberta Ramont, Milt Houghton and Pastor Curtis Bronzan. Ask God to help them describe a clear mission focus that is consistent with the unique opportunities and abilities of Good Shepherd.