

Today's Message

Fifteen Years As Senior Pastor

A Pastoral Message to Greenhills Christian Fellowship

2 Timothy 1:13- 2:7

After 15 years as Senior Pastor of GCF, I feel very senior as I also feel very finite and very mortal. Finite beings mark time. As GCF marks her 30th year, it means that half of her history now has been under my watch as successor to the eminent founding pastor David Yount. With God as my witness, I can say that I have never regretted having accepted this post. I have learned many valuable lessons in ministry and I have found the fulfillment of my lifetime in my pastoral role here. As far as I am able to foresee, I will be with GCF until Jesus comes again for the church or until he takes me home.

So where have we been and where do we go from here? And what markers have we pegged to benefit those who come behind us? What do I see as my future role at GCF? Succession planning is indispensable; retirement is inevitable; mortality is unavoidable. Man proposes but only God disposes. Being senior by age and position, I share these words realizing the limits of my perspectives and my rights to implement plans. From this same mindset, Paul, a prisoner awaiting his end, shared his sentiments and instructed Timothy with ideals of continuity and progress for the church.

1. Continuity may be assured by unchanging standards (constants), 2Tim. 1:13-14.

- a. "Keep the pattern of sound teaching", v. 13.
- b. "Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you", v. 14

2. Progress may be assured by changing strategies and organizational models (variables), 2Tim. 2:1-7
Note the variables from four metaphors applied by Paul to Timothy and other Christian workers.

- a. A son is mentored unto maturity and ensures the future by mentoring others, vv. 1-2.
- b. A soldier strives to focus on spiritual warfare and recognizes proper authority, vv. 3-4.
- c. An athlete exercises personal discipline and competes according to the rules, v. 5.
- d. A farmer works hard with other partners and patiently awaits his share of the crops, v. 6.

3. Lessons of the past and projections beyond the 15 years.

- a. We have set biblical patterns of sound teaching and church life in our constitution.
- b. Our mission and vision as one church with satellites in strategic areas worldwide should remain.
- c. Being Senior Pastor of Ortigas Center and of all GCF satellites was workable for me only when there were less than 5 satellites. With 16 satellites today and more planned, that dual role is no longer efficiently functional for me although it might still be workable for another Senior Pastor.
- d. As notified, the Board of Elders has begun the search for a new Senior Pastor who will assume the post, the Lord willing, no earlier than December 31, 2010.
- e. Subsequent to that, if the Board of Elders decides that I remain as a GCF Pastor to fulfill assigned tasks and to assist all the other satellites, I will make myself available and will retire in due course.

Fifteen years ago at my inaugural service, I did not preach the inaugural sermon as expected. Instead I prayed the lengthy Inaugural Pastoral Prayer. As your Senior Pastor for 15 years today, having observed my strengths and weaknesses, triumphs and failures, I ask now that you all say a brief prayer for me and my wife as we serve you for however long the Lord has planned for us. The privilege to serve as GCF Senior Pastor is mine but whatever glory may be deserved belongs to the Lord.