



“Star Wars: A New Hope”

Theme: Mentorship through Paul and Timothy, Obi-Wan and Luke

Scripture: 1 Peter 5:1-5

Things I'd like to remember from today's sermon

My life would have been very different if I had not met

Meditation Moments for Monday, August 7: Read *Jethro and Moses – Exodus 18*

Being mentored by someone requires vulnerability and openness for the relationship to be fruitful. When reading about Jethro and Moses, think about the people in your life with whom you are able to be vulnerable and open. What happened in that relationship that allowed you to get to that place of openness?

Prayer: Lord, thank you for the people you've provided in my life whom I can trust with both the good times and the bad times. Thank you for the grace you've shown me, and help me to be that open and vulnerable person to someone else who needs that. Amen.

Tuesday, August 8: Read *Elijah and Elisha – 1 Kings 19*

After the victory over the priests of Baal, Elijah is at one of his lowest points, on the run from the very people God told him to save. In the midst of this place, God tells Elijah to go recruit a young man names Elisha. Why do you think God brought Elisha into Elijah's life at this point, when Elijah is at his lowest point rather than right after the victory over the priests?

Prayer: Lord, in those times when I feel alone and hopeless, help me to remember to put my trust in You and Your promises. Lead me to other people going through similar hard times so we can help each other stay focused on You and the plans you have for our lives. Amen.

Wednesday, August 9: Read *Naomi and Ruth – Ruth 1*

In the beginning of Ruth, the author tells us that when Naomi is left with no one else but her daughters-in-law, she tries to send them away, but Ruth refuses to leave Naomi's side, saying:

“Don't ask me to leave you and turn back. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord punish me severely if I allow anything but death to separate us!”

What is Ruth risking when she chooses to follow Naomi rather than return to her own family? What do we risk when we choose to follow someone and learn from them?

Sometimes when we grow in our faith it means leaving behind the things or people that turn us away from God – are there people or things in your life that distract you from loving God and the people around you?

Prayer: Lord, help me to stay focused on You, even when it seems like I am alone in doing so. Use me to bring Your light to the world and to spread hope and love everywhere I go. Amen.

Thursday, August 10: Read *Samuel and Saul* – 1 Samuel 15

In this chapter we see an example of a mentoring relationship that has begun to break down. We see Samuel give Saul commands from the Lord that Saul disobeys in his own way, through his own arrogance.

Why was God upset with Saul, even though Saul was *close* to following God's command? Why do you think Samuel spent an entire night crying out to God after God rejected Saul?

Sometimes it can be hard to admit when we've messed up. When that happens, the best thing we can do is check our own egos, humbly apologize for our mistakes, and do better next time.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for the people you've put in my life who are able to call me out when I mess up. Help me to be humble in accepting correction, and eager to turn back to you and on the path to righteousness. Amen.

Friday, August 11: Read *Paul and Barnabas* – Acts 14

In this chapter of Acts we see Paul and Barnabas spreading the gospel all over the Mediterranean Sea, facing crowds both antagonistic and welcoming to the message.

Zig Ziglar often shared a story about the Giant Belgian Horse. A breed of horse that can stand 7 feet tall and weight 3,000 pounds. Alone, the Giant Belgian Horse can pull approximately 7000 pounds. However, harness him to another Giant Belgian and together they can pull over 15,000 pounds. Horse trainers have learned that when you teach a team of horses to work together, rather than trying to pull independently of one another, they can pull up to 25,000 pounds – Almost double what the same two horses can pull working independently.

How effective can we be if we just follow Christ's example alone? How much more can we be effective for the God's Kingdom if we work together with other people?

Prayer: Lord, I pray for perseverance to do the work you've set out for me. Bring me alongside other people doing the same work so we can glorify you in much greater ways than I can by myself. Amen.

Saturday, August 12: Read *Jesus and Peter* – John 21

When Jesus shows up to Peter and the other disciples on the beach, this is a huge moment for Peter. Earlier we see Peter denying that he knows Jesus three times, and this is the first time we see Peter talking with Jesus after all of that happens.

How do you think Peter felt during this conversation with Jesus?
Why does Jesus repeat his question three times?
What does Jesus mean when he tells Peter to “Feed my sheep?”

As mentors or mentees, what lesson can we learn from this interaction about grace and forgiveness?

Prayer: Lord, you know when I've failed and when others have failed me. Help me to show grace and love to those who have wronged me, and help me be humble in the times that I fail and ask for forgiveness. Thank you for your ever-present grace and love. Amen.

INTRO

Good Evening/Morning everyone! I'm really glad to see you all here. My name is Tim Schrag, I am the Director of Youth Ministries here at FUMC. I've been here full time for a little over two years now, and before I came on full time I was a volunteer with Jesse while he was the youth director.

BACKGROUND – Mike and Brett, different mentors who both impacted my life in positive ways

Before I get into the meat of my sermon I wanted to give you a little background about myself and where I come from.

I grew up in the church my whole life, but I remember when I was ten, I accepted Jesus into my life in this small trailer park in South Carolina in the middle of a thunderstorm. God started working in my life pretty much immediately, I remember sitting on our porch reading the book of Matthew, and something really clicked for me. I got it. Throughout our time in South Carolina I kept having these moments that helped me build a solid foundation for my faith.

We moved to Cortez after that, where my dad became a pastor at a small church called Grace Fellowship, and I went to High School over at the high school in Cortez.

High School was really the time that I started going to youth group and getting connected with a really good group of friends — God was definitely looking out for me, cause at that time Cortez was a place where it was really easy to get in with the wrong crowd. But through all the friends and the peer relationships I built, there are two relationships that have impacted me even today, and helped me become the man I needed to be to survive college and beyond. I'd say they are the reason why I'm in full-time ministry now.

Both of them were my youth pastors — the first was Mike Wagner — and he was one of the first people to get me excited about the bible, and learning that there is so much more than just the words on the pages, that the people in the bible were living, breathing people with real emotions and problems just like us. One thing he had us do — I loved this — he broke us up into three teams, and each team had some time to prepare for the trial of the century: Who killed Jesus? So each of us were tasked with proving the innocence of our "clients," the Pharisees, Pontius Pilate, and the Romans. That day I learned I would never be a lawyer.

But when we were through presenting our arguments Mike showed us that "who killed Jesus" was the wrong question to ask, but that our focus shouldn't be on the people around the event, but the sacrifice that Jesus made so that we could be saved and have a personal relationship with Jesus.

The other youth pastor, who was the exact opposite personality from Mike, was Brett Pejsa, and he was the one who showed me that Christians come in all different shapes and sizes, and can disagree on a bunch of stuff while still being united as the body of Christ.

He was a rough-around-the-edges kind of person, in his early years he had traveled to a bunch of different countries playing music, he was really into the outdoors, he took us camping and biking, and being out nature and exploring God in the middle of His creation — he was the one who got me excited about music and worshiping God. While Mike was the academic, Brett was the artist, and I'd say he helped me see that a relationship with God isn't just confined to the Bible, but that you can experience God through the relationships and beauty around us.

(Message Notes and Meditation Moments for August 7-12, 2017)

He also showed me how to love other people. Brett was one of the most loving, generous, caring men I've ever met. He and his family weren't well off by any means but they were generous with their time, the resources they had, and he always, always had his eyes open for someone to help. On one of the camping trips I talked about before, me and my best friend were riding up in the care with him to the site, and we came across this guy on the side of the road whose car had broken down on the side of the road. So Brett stopped the car, got out, started talking to this guy, asked if he needed any help, that kind of stuff. The guy already had someone coming to pick him up, but it struck me at that time how little I noticed stuff like that. I barely noticed this guy on the side of road, and by the time I saw him Brett was already best friends with the guy. His awareness of the needs around him and his willingness to serve others has stuck with me through today.

I mentioned those two guys because today I am going to be talking about mentorship, being a mentee, a mentor, and how God works through that.

INTERACTION – Who changed your life?

But before I get into that I want you all to look at this question up on the screen:

(SLIDE 1 – “My life would have been very different if I had never met... [fill in the blank.]

I put this question in your meditation moments, and sometime this week I would like you to reach out to this person and thank them for the impact they had in your life, or reconnect or just say hi. I'm going to do this too.

When I'm teaching at youth group I love putting interactive things in my lessons with my students, so what I'd love for you all to do right now would be to turn to the person next to you and share with them who you wrote down and why you chose them. I'll give you guys about two minutes to do that.

Alright, now we get to the good stuff: as I said before I'm going to be talking about mentorship today, and the movie I chose is Star Wars: A New Hope.

INTRODUCE STAR WARS – How it affected my life, and brief overview of movie (SLIDE 2) – Star Wars ANH Title Image)

Star Wars has been a part of the cultural landscape since 1977 when it was first released in theaters. My whole life, as long as I can remember, I've been obsessed with Star Wars and everything to do with that universe.

Some of you may remember but Star Wars: A New Hope was rereleased in theaters in the 90s, and it was the first movie I ever saw in theaters, I was blown away by this tale of good vs. evil, of these larger than life characters with mystical powers, the dogfights in space, the blaster fights, everything about it dug its claws into little Timmy's mind and hasn't let go since.

Through middle school I devoured every Star Wars novel I could get my hands on, novels that continued the epic stories of Luke, Leia, and Han Solo. There was one book series set long after the movies that ripped my middle school heart to shreds, because Chewbacca died by having a moon crashing into him. But don't worry! Those books aren't part of the official canon anymore.

I went to midnight showings of the Star Wars prequels, and endlessly annoyed my family with my lightsaber sound effects when I played with my Star Wars legos. Even today, my friends

(Message Notes and Meditation Moments for August 7-12, 2017)

and I will play some Star-Wars themed tabletop games, we've gone to midnight showings of the new movies, and I even got a lightsaber for Milo, which I brought today!

(Slides/Video of Milo)

And if any of you were at Trunk or Treat last year, these were Erin and Milo's costumes:

(Slide of Erin and Milo)

Really quick, raise your hand if you have seen any of the Star Wars movies? Raise your hands if you've only seen the original trilogy with Luke Skywalker, Han Solo, and Princess Leia? Now raise your hands if you're tired of hearing about Star Wars all the time!

I'm going to lay some groundwork for the movie we're looking into today:

Star War: Episode IV: A New Hope was originally just "Star Wars" and was the first to be released back in 1977. Now there are 8 movies total (9 if you include the CGI animated movie set between episodes 2 and 3). The whole saga is a space opera about the eternal struggle between good and evil, the Jedi

(SLIDE 3 – Jedi)

And the Sith **(SLIDE 4 – Sith)**.

Both sides are able to use this mystical energy called The Force, that is described as "An energy field created by all living things. It surrounds us, penetrates us, and binds the galaxy together."

The Jedi use the Light Side of the force for good, the Sith use the Dark side for evil. Pretty simple stuff.

STAR WARS – Getting into why I chose this movie

This particular movie, A New Hope, tells the story of Luke Skywalker, and the beginning of his journey into becoming a Jedi to save the galaxy from the evil Darth Vader and the Galactic Empire.

When we first meet Luke he's a farm boy living on a backwater planet in the "Outer Rim" of the galaxy, and he's got big dreams — he wants to be a pilot, and join the Rebellion against the Empire, but he can't leave, because his Aunt and Uncle need him to help with harvest on their moisture farm. He desperately wants something more out of his life, but his dreams keep getting shot down.

Until one day, these two droids R2D2 and C-3PO come upon their farm, and Luke finds out that they are carrying a secret message to this strange guy Obi-Wan Kenobi **(SLIDE)** who

was once a war hero, general, and Jedi Knight, but is now living as a hermit on the same planet that Luke is on. How lucky is that? What a crazy random happenstance!

INTRODUCE OBI-WAN – Mentoring Relationship

This scene I'm about to show you gives us the first glimpse of the relationship between Luke and Obi-Wan Kenobi.

(CLIP 1 – Your Father's lightsaber)

(Message Notes and Meditation Moments for August 7-12, 2017)

We start to see Luke realize his identity through Obi-Wan, who knows his history, knows his father, and knows that Luke is capable of much more than he realizes. Before this, the most Luke expected of his life is that, best case scenario, *maybe, someday*, he'd be able to enter the Academy, but here we learn through Obi-Wan that Luke is destined for greater things. Obi-Wan sees Luke and he says "Your dreams aren't big enough, there's something more incredible for you out there." He's opening Luke's eyes to a whole new galaxy of possibility.

Throughout this movie we see them develop a strong mentoring relationship. Obi-Wan is my favorite character of the entire series because of this — he's level-headed, cool, and he has this aura of gravitas and experience that draws you into this relationship.

He's patient with Luke, but at the same time challenges him to really stretch out of his comfort zone. He sees the potential in Luke, but he can't just give him that lightsaber and say "Go fight Darth Vader," it's a process build on trust and faith.

Through a series of events Luke and Obi-Wan are able to escape from the Imperial Stormtroopers who are hunting them down, and leave the planet with a smuggler named Han Solo, who they hire to transport them to the planet Alderaan, where they plan to meet up with the rebellion and help with the fight against the Empire.

On their way, Obi-Wan begins to mentor Luke and push him in new ways.

(CLIP 2 – Lightsaber training)

It's through these moments that Luke realizes that while there might be great things out there for him to experience, it's going to take a lot of work, and the road is going to be difficult.

I want to bring us back to the question I asked earlier:

More Personal Stories

(SLIDE) "My life would have been very different if I had never met..."

I can guarantee that you are where you are today because of someone else. Whether they pushed you to be better, or maybe they were the type of person that you know you didn't want to end up as, but none of us live in a bubble, and the people we grew up with and the people around us do affect the people we become later as adults.

The sign of a good mentor is someone who can see the potential in you, and help you see if for yourself. As we go through our normal day-to-day routine it's sometimes difficult to see what gifts God gave us that we may not be using. Sometimes we get distracted, we get down on ourselves, or we think less of ourselves.

I've struggled with depression for awhile, and when I was deep in those dark places the last thing I saw myself as was someone who God loves, someone who God blessed with gifts and talents to be used for his glory. It took mentors like Mike, Brett, and Jesse DeNier to help me see what I could become with God's help. Going through life alone is awful, and God put people in our lives so that we wouldn't have to be alone, we don't have to wallow in our own junk just being "okay" with the status quo.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES of Mentors

There are countless examples of great mentors in the Bible — Jethro and Moses, Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, Ruth and Naomi, David and Samuel, Jesus and his disciples, Paul and Barnabus, the list goes on and on. This week you'll get a chance to explore some of these

(Message Notes and Meditation Moments for August 7-12, 2017)

relationships in your Meditation Moments, but there is one particular relationship that I want to highlight today, and that's the one between Paul and Timothy.

The first time we meet Timothy is in Acts chapter 16 v. 1-3. — Check this out **(SLIDE)**:

“Paul went first to Derbe and then to Lystra, where there was a young disciple named Timothy. His mother was a Jewish believer, but his father was a Greek. Timothy was well thought of by the believers in Lystra and Iconium, so Paul wanted him to join them on their journey.”

Paul sees something in Timothy, he sees this great potential in this young disciple who has already distinguished himself in his hometown. We don't get a sense of whether or not Timothy had any big plans to travel the Mediterranean to share the gospel, but he was being faithful where he was, and Paul saw that.

Throughout Paul's letters we see this relationship develop into something deeper and stronger. In 1 Timothy 1:2 **(SLIDE)** Paul addresses Timothy as his “true son in the faith.”

MENTORSHIP — Parenthood, Pacesetting...

Pastor Rick Warren talked about 3 stages of a Mentorship relationship to describe the transition as they grow together. This first step is the “Parenthood” step — where the mentor helps the mentee get a grasp on the knowledge and experience they need to move forward.

We see this with Obi-Wan and Luke as Obi-Wan shares this story of the past with Luke, and begins to help him understand where he came from, and I saw this with my experiences with Mike and Brett. Both of them had a wealth of past experiences that they shared with me so I didn't have to start from scratch.

The second stage he mentions is “Pacesetting” — being the example of what mature ministry looks like.

2 Timothy 3:10-12 Paul says **(SLIDE)**:

“But you, Timothy, certainly know what I teach, and how I live, and what my purpose in life is. You know my faith, my patience, my love, and my endurance. You know how much persecution and suffering I have endured. You know all about how I was persecuted in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra — but the Lord rescued me from all of it. Yes, and everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.”

How do you think Timothy got to that point where he knows Paul so well? Spending time together, working together, listening to Paul and following that example.

Paul is being real with Timothy here, he's living his faith and reminding Timothy that their calling is not easy. Paul was stoned close to death in Lystra for preaching the gospel.

In Star Wars, Obi-Wan has been working with Luke for not a whole lot of time, but Luke still has a chance to see how Obi-Wan lives out his faith in the force.

BACK TO STAR WARS — Put your money where your mouth is.

I'm going to setup this next scene for you. On their way to meet up with the Rebel Alliance, their ship is captured by the Empire, and they are trapped on board this giant super weapon the size of a small moon. They sneak their way into different parts of the death star, they rescue Princess Leia while Obi-Wan disables the tractor beam keeping their ship grounded. They're being chased by stormtroopers, and they've almost escaped, but then Obi-Wan is confronted by Darth Vader.

(Message Notes and Meditation Moments for August 7-12, 2017)

(Clip 3 – Obi-Wan's Sacrifice)

Obi Wan has told Luke to trust in the Force, have faith in the force, and he puts his money where his mouth is when he sacrifices himself in order to let Luke his friends escape. He set the pace of what it means to be a Jedi and sacrifice himself for the good of others, just like Paul setting the example of what it means to live a life of faith under intense persecution.

MENTORING – ...Partnership

The last phase that Rick Warren talks about is “Partnering” — Romans 16 v21 Paul calls Timothy his fellow worker, and in Philippians 2:19-23 Paul says this about Timothy **(SLIDE)**:

“If the Lord Jesus is willing, I hope to send Timothy to you soon for a visit. Then he can cheer me up by telling me how you are getting along. I have no one else like Timothy, who genuinely cares about your welfare. All the others care only for themselves and not for what matters to Jesus Christ. But you know how Timothy has proved himself. Like a son with his father, he has served with me in

preaching the Good News. I hope to send him to you just as soon as I find out what is going to happen to me here.”

Their relationship has progressed to the point where Paul has complete faith in Timothy’s ability to teach and grow the Church. This process takes time, but by the end, Paul has a partner, someone to keep him sharp in the faith, someone who can carry out the work that Paul started.

Timothy came a long way from his local church in Lystra to now being a globe-trotting missionary, but it wouldn’t have happened if Paul hadn’t taken that step of faith in listening to God and keeping his eyes open for someone who had that potential.

MENTORS AND MENTEES

Here’s the great thing about all of this — Each and every one of us can be both a Paul and a Timothy, an Obi-Wan and a Luke. Since nobody’s perfect, we’ve all made decisions we regret, we’ve gone through times that have tested our faith in God. We all have experiences that can make us good mentors to the right people.

I would even argue that the people who have gone through the most junk would probably make the best mentors. If you’ve ever thought “Oh I’m not good enough to be a mentor, I’ve done this, that, the other thing,” stop fooling yourself! Before Paul became the Apostle Paul he was out putting Christians to death. Peter, one of Jesus’ most devoted disciples denied that he knew him three times. Even Obi-Wan failed before. In the prequel trilogy we see that Obi-Wan was training Darth Vader before he became Darth Vader, and failed to stop his fall to the dark side, and when we see him in A New Hope, he’s in hiding.

God can use those mistakes, the junk in our lives to help other people though the same things we went through. Instead of being defined by our pasts, God can refine us through our pasts.

PERSONAL STORY

I mentioned having depression earlier, and if you have it you know how hard it can be to tell other people. But during our Fall Retreat last year I shared my story with my students, how during one of my darkest moments I came very close to taking my own life, and God literally

saved my life. If you want to hear the full story I’ll be glad to share it with you one-on-one, but I shared this with my students, and because I put that out there and showed that vulnerability,

(Message Notes and Meditation Moments for August 7-12, 2017)

one of my students was able to get the courage to tell their parents about something that was happening to them at school, and they were able to get the help they needed.

Being a good mentor requires vulnerability, and a willingness to say, “here’s a time when I was weak on the brink of losing it, here’s how God was able to bring me through that.”

We’ve heard time and time again throughout this sermon series the verse “As iron sharpens iron so one man sharpens another.” And a bunch of the sermons have been about recognizing that we need help, that we’re not alone, that we are loved by God.

Even if we are mentoring someone, it’s important to have someone else who’s mentoring you. Having someone to help guide you through some of life’s worst moments will strengthen both of you, and you’ll have a relationship that will last a lifetime, and it shows God’s love through us to another person.

Finding a good mentor, someone to help you see yourself as God sees you — with incredible potential to carry out God’s work — finding someone to help you cultivate those gifts and watch them grow; finding someone to push you out of your comfort zone and into a space of growth — that’s experiencing God’s love through someone else.

CHALLENGE — Be a mentor/mentee

So I have a double-sided challenge to you this week in addition to the meditation moments — pick one or the other, either one is great, both would be even better:

- 1) Find someone you look up to, someone you want to emulate or
- 2) Find someone you want to invest in, someone who you see has great potential or someone who might be going through similar things you went through.

Invite those people out to lunch or coffee or something. If you start working on a mentoring relationship, going either way, God is going to use that to grow you and your new friend closer to Him and his will for your lives.

And this is a cycle, just as Mike and Brett mentored me, I’ve found myself in a position where I can be a similar person for my students, and my hope is that some of them will take these experiences and mentor someone else down the road.

Some of you sitting here might have had some bad experiences with mentors, I know I have too. Maybe they’ve hurt you, maybe the relationship ended in a bad way. Or maybe you’ve never been mentored, or the people who you wished would mentor you weren’t the best examples of what it means to live a life focused on Christ.

We’ll be entering into a time of Communion here in a few moments, which invites us to remember the example of Jesus Christ, our ultimate mentor, who humbled himself to live among us sinful human beings to teach us and show us what it means to love God and the people around us. If nothing else, we can focus on Christ to show us the way.

One of my absolute favorite hymns of all time says **(SLIDE)** “Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of his glory and grace.”

No matter who you are, what you’ve done, where you’ve been, or what you think of

yourself, Jesus is there beckoning towards us, saying — “There’s something better out there than what you think. The world needs me, and I want you to be apart of this.”

WRAPPING UP — God’s got bigger plans for us.

I want to leave you with one last clip before we go — After Obi-Wan’s sacrifice, Luke, Leia and Han, and the rest of the crew escape the Empire and join up with the rebellion, just in time to assist with an assault on the Death Star. They only have a few ships left in their fleet, and they’re so close to taking down the station, and the moment we see is the moment Luke is finally able to let go of his own control and trust in the force.

(Clip — Death Star Trench Run)

Let’s pray...

Dear Wonderful and Powerful Heavenly Father,

Thank you for sending your son as a perfect mentor for us so that we can become more like you in our thoughts, our actions, and how we relate to the people in our lives. Thank you

for the perfect sacrifice so we don’t have to be defined by our pasts, and instead you can refine us through them.

Lord I pray that you would bless us as we all reconnect with the people who have made a difference in our lives for good or bad, and I pray that as we reach out those interactions are filled with your love and kindness.

And for those seeking a mentoring relationship, please put people in our paths or highlight people already in our lives who we need to hear from, or who could use our help, and help us to reach out and spread your love to those who need it most.

Be with us as we learn to live more like you each and everyday, and keep us so focused on you that the things of earth grow strangely dim in the light of your glory and grace.”

In your name we pray, Amen.