

Sermon Outline for FBC Oct.27, 2019

“Two Ways Forward – Pushed and Pulled”

Today the message is entitled “Two Ways Forward!”

Theme is “Are you pushed or pulled forward to Godliness?” I believe that as we grow in our relationship with God, He both pushes and pulls us along the path He set before us. God tends to lead us by encouraging us to follow – that is pulling. God can also push us when we hesitate to follow.

Whether it is by pushing or pulling, we need the guidance of the Lord and we need to give that guidance to others who are searching for it.

J. Sidlow Baxter, in his book “Does God Still Guide?”, gives us this perspective: “Mankind is too self sufficient to accept guidance from divine Revelation, yet too erring and sinful to find his own way back to saving truth. Never before has there been such brilliantly educated godlessness, boredom, crime, unchastity, and, along with it all, in millions of hearts, a wearying sense of being lost in an existence which seems to have no dignified meaning.”¹

Baxter then gives us the rest of the perspective: “Meanwhile, those of us who have found the way of true guidance keep lifting up our voice in testimony to it, hoping that at least some will hear us. We do this with more eagerness just now because we seem to detect that today, more than for a long while, there are wistful minds all around us asking, no longer with contempt but with concern, DOES GOD STILL GUIDE?”²

Heather gave me an example from a book she read. Two ways to go forward – pulled like by the prop of a plane or pushed from behind like by the motor of a boat.

Webster’s New World Dictionary states:

Pull – to exert force on so as to move toward the source of the force.

¹ J. Sidlow Baxter, Pg. 15

² J. Sidlow Baxter, Pgs. 15, 16

Push - to press against so as to move. ³

Roget's Pocket Thesaurus gives other words to describe –

Pull – influence, sway, pressure, lead, ⁴

Push – impel, shove, start, jostle, jolt

- Propel, throw, heave, launch, send forth, set in motion ⁵

Have to pull a rope not push it, if you want to go forward.

To push an object, you first must get it to move, then keep pushing to make it go forward.

Whether we are pulled or pushed by God, we are moving forward to the place God has prepared for us.

The Israelites were pulled by God using pillars of smoke and fire –

Exodus 13: 21-22 NIV

21 By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night.

22 Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

Then Jesus pulled them by sitting in a boat:

Luke 5: 1-3 NIV

1 One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the people crowding around him and listening to the word of God,

2 He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets.

3 He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

³ Webster's New World Dictionary, Pgs. 483, 485

⁴ Roget's Pocket Thesaurus, Pgs. 49, 50

⁵ Roget's Pocket Thesaurus, Pgs. 78, 80

Pulling comes in many forms and methods. God will use the proper one with you so you can follow Him faithfully.

We need to be ready to push and be pushed when God tells us, just like the psalmist does in:

Psalm 32: 8 NIV

*“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
I will counsel you and watch over you.”*

Isaiah 30:21 NIV

“Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, “This is the way; walk in it.”

Jesus tells us of the coming of the Holy Spirit to guide us.

John 16: 13 NIV

“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.”

Paul tells us in his letter to the Romans that when we are led by the Holy spirit, we are sons of God.

Romans 8: 14 NIV

“Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.”

Jesus is talking about Himself as the good shepherd:

John 10: 27-30 NIV

27 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.

29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.

30 I and the Father are one.”

**Two Ways Forward – Pushed and Pulled
Are you being pushed or pulled forward to Godliness?**

Let's pray!

Bibliography:

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