

**THE WORD**  
**OLD & NEW TESTAMENT LESSONS**

Selected Verses which will be read as a part of the sermon.

**SERMON**

**“A Scout Is Friendly”**

When one gets a phone call on a Wednesday and is asked to lead worship in just 4 days on the following Sunday, I am ONE who would ordinarily say, “no.”

However, it is difficult to say, “no,” to Alice Martin when she asks you to do something.

And when she told me it was “Scout Sunday,” as a parent of an Eagle Scout, I responded, “I’m in!”

So, my first question on this Scout Sunday is: what makes scouting stand out in comparison to other young people’s organizations?

I believe it is their emphasis on God.

For example:

**The Brownie Promise:**

“I promise to do my best, to love God and my country...”

**The Cub and Boy Scout Promise:**

“I promise to do my best, to do my duty to God  
and my country...”

**The Girl Scout Promise:**

“On my honor, I will try: To serve God and my country...”

Scouting gives our young people the opportunity to build their lives on timeless principles.

The late John Wayne, that famous actor, was a Boy Scout in his younger days.

Later in life he was honored by President Gerald Ford at a black-tie benefit dinner.

**BTW President Ford was an Eagle Scout**

**When it came time for John Wayne to speak, he recited the Boy Scout Law, which says:**

***A Scout is  
trustworthy,***

***loyal,***

***helpful,***

***friendly,***

***courteous,***

***kind,***

***obedient,***

***cheerful,***

***thrifty,***

***brave,***

***clean,***

***and reverent.”***

**John Wayne spoke about the final point, being reverent:**

***“Keep God at the top of what you believe in. With Him,  
life can be a beautiful experience.***

***Without Him, you’re just biding your time.”***

**The emphasis on God at all levels of scouting and John Wayne’s words reminds me of what Jesus said in Luke 10:27**

***“Love the Lord your God with all your heart  
and with all your soul and with all your strength  
and with all your mind’;  
and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’***

**Whether you are a scout or not, this one verse from Luke can easily be the spiritual foundation of our faith in the Lord.**

**Baden Powell, who was instrumental in starting the scouting program, believed that duty to God should be at the heart of all scouting.**

He said, *“Faith means recognizing who and what God is,  
second it is making the best of the life God has given us  
and third it is doing what God wants of us.  
That is mainly doing something for others.”*

Reminds me of our Presbyterian ‘mantra’ – “Saved for Service.”

Lord Powell, who grew up as a minister’s son,  
recognized that when a young person includes  
God and service to others in his or her life, it is a life well lived.

One person who discovered the power of service to others was  
a 13-year-old Boy Scout named Frank Wilson.

This story takes place on Christmas Eve.

Frank was depressed because it was the first Christmas  
without his brother Steve, who lost his life in a car accident.

It was especially painful because Frank and his brother were very  
close.

On that Christmas Eve afternoon, Frank, in his despondency,  
needed to get away from the house.

He put on his **new** winter coat,  
put all **his** Christmas gifts on to his **new** sled,  
tied them down and began to walk.

As he went through a rundown section of town,  
Frank looked in the window of a house  
and saw a crying woman who appeared to be  
as discouraged as he felt.

On impulse, Frank knocked on the door and told the woman,  
“Choose any presents you would like for your children  
from the sled.”



The lady was astounded and said, "Why God bless you"  
and selected  
some candies,  
a game,  
a toy airplane,  
and a flashlight.

As he was about to leave, she asked his name. Frank answered,  
"Just call me the Christmas Scout."

Frank left with an unexpected flicker of joy in his heart, but he was  
not finished.

Along the way, he found other needy people  
and gave the rest of his gifts away, including his new winter jacket.

As Frank made his way home, he knew he was in trouble.

And sure enough, his parents were highly upset  
at their son's erratic behavior;  
they were convinced their son had made some poor choices  
and ruined the family's Christmas.

Frank, on the other hand, felt alone and confused.

He thought he had done the right thing  
when he did his good turn and his duty to God.

He did not expect that type of family fall-out.

The next morning, the local television reported the following:  
"Crippled boy has a new sled,  
another youngster has a fine winter jacket  
and several families report that their children  
were made happy last night by gifts  
from a teenage boy who simply called himself the  
'Christmas Scout'."

Frank's mom and dad realized the Christmas  
that started out on a bad note was really one of the best.

**What Frank had done was a clear example of duty to God.**

**Our duty to God includes, first and foremost,  
that we follow and live by the teachings of Jesus.**

**We must live our lives with honesty and service to others.**

**Now I want us to move from the Boy Scout Promise  
to the Boy Scout Law.**

**I could take us through each of the 12 points,  
but we would be here far longer than  
most Presbyterians can listen.**

**Therefore, I want to focus this morning  
on the fourth point of the Boy Scout Law  
– A scout is friendly.**

**Friendship is highly valued in Scripture.**

- **Johnathan & David in the Old Testament**
- **Jesus & Lazarus, Martha, & Mary in the New Testament**
- **Paul & Timothy in the New Testament**
- **To name just 3 extraordinary Biblical friendships.**

**And there are numerous verses which highlight the importance of  
friendship:**

**Proverbs 16:28 The Message**

**<sup>28</sup> Troublemakers start fights; gossips break up friendships.**

**We know the power of gossip ...**

**Friends DO NOT gossip about their friends.**

**Christians SHOULD NOT gossip about anyone.**

**Job, you remember him;**

**tested by God to discover if Job will remain true to God:**

**Job has some interesting things to say about friendship.**

**Job 2:11 - 13 The Message Job's Three Friends**

**<sup>11-13</sup> Three of Job's friends heard of all the trouble that had fallen on him.**

**Each traveled from his own country**

**—Eliphaz from Teman,**

**Bildad from Shuhah,**

**Zophar from Naamath**

**—and went together to Job to keep him company  
and comfort him.**

**When they first caught sight of him,  
they couldn't believe what they saw  
—they hardly recognized him!**

**They cried out in lament,  
ripped their robes,  
and dumped dirt on their heads as a sign of their grief.**

**Then they sat with him on the ground.**

**Seven days and nights they sat there without saying a word.**

**They could see how rotten he felt, how deeply he was suffering.**

**The friends came from everywhere  
when they realized their friend was in distress.**

**They were shocked by what they witnessed when they arrived  
and graphically showed their grief at their friend's situation**

**But notice after crying out,  
ripping their clothes,  
and dumping dirt on themselves;  
“they simply sat with him for seven days and nights  
without saying a word.”**

**You do not know what to say to your friend.**



**Silent presence is often what your friend needs.**

**While Job's friends were deeply committed in chapter 2,  
by the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of Job, verses 14 – 17, hear Job's words.**

**14 "When desperate people give up on God Almighty,  
their friends, at least, should stick with them.**

**15 But my brothers are fickle as a gulch in the desert  
- one day they're gushing with water**

**16 From melting ice and snow cascading out of the mountains,**

**17 But by midsummer they're dry, gullies baked dry in the sun.**

**Powerful mandate – even when our friends give up on God,  
we should not give up on our friends.**

**They need us to show and share God's love.**

**We may be the only way they find their way back to God.**

**And finally, from the Gospel of John 15:11-15**

**<sup>11</sup>I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you,  
and that your joy may be complete.**

**<sup>12</sup> 'This is my commandment, that you love one another  
as I have loved you.**

**<sup>13</sup>No one has greater love than this,  
to lay down one's life for one's friends.**

**<sup>14</sup>You are my friends if you do what I command you.**

**<sup>15</sup>I do not call you servants any longer,  
because the servant does not know what the master is doing;  
but I have called you friends,  
because I have made known to you  
everything that I have heard from my Father.**

**Jesus defines friendship with each other and with him.**

**Jesus gave up his life for his friends  
and that is the greatest show of love for one another.**

**Those who serve in our military,  
and our first responders embody this for me ...**

**Jesus wants to be our friend, according to John's Gospel,  
because a friend knows EVERYTHING  
about the person he or she calls friend.**

**Jesus says the difference between a servant and friend is that a  
servant does not know all the master's plans or thoughts,  
but a friend does know.**

**Jesus has shared EVERYTHING about God, the Father,  
and what is wanted by those who claim God as their Father  
and Jesus as the Son of God.**

**A scout is friendly.**

**The Biblical mandate is clear.**

**I am grateful for scouting and it's reenforcing the ideals that I hold  
precious as a Christian.**

**I am grateful for Troop 175, its leaders, families, volunteers, and  
Second Church who have raised up numerous young people who  
build their lives on timeless Biblical principles.**

**Thanks be to God.**

**\*HYMN                      "We Thank You, God, For Values"                      (Insert)**

**by Rev. Carolyn Winfrey Gillette**

**AURELIA 7.6.7.6 D ("The Church's One Foundation")**

**We thank you, God, for values that guide us day by day —  
that help us learn to follow your faithful, loving way.**

**We thank you, too, for Scout Troops — where youth are taught to be  
mature and moral leaders in each community.**

**For Scouts earn trust from others; they're loyal to the end.  
They're helpful, friendly, courteous to stranger and to friend.  
They're kind and they're obedient, they're cheerful, thrifty, too;  
They're brave and clean and reverent in all they try to do.**