

Faithful Disciples

The background of the slide is a photograph of a person's legs and feet walking on a sandy, textured ground. The person is wearing dark shorts and white socks. The feet are positioned in the upper center of the frame, with one foot slightly ahead of the other. The sand is a warm, golden-brown color with some darker, wet-looking patches. The overall lighting is soft and warm, creating a serene and contemplative atmosphere.

By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked. - 1 John 2

Godly Good-byes

Reality of Life in This Place

Saying Hello and Saying Good-bye

- Shared Life
 - laughed and cried together
- Shared Spiritual Experiences
 - trusted God & prayed together

Seasons – Eccl. 3:1 *“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:”*

Important to do this well, for those going and for those staying”

Natural Tendencies

For Those Here

- Feel Abandoned
- Close Your Heart
- Tear Away the Connection

For Those Going

- Slip off into the next season
- Isolate Yourself
- Not reflect and offer honor & thanksgiving

1. Grieve Well

a) identify the loss

- Acts 20:36-38 *“And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they accompanied him to the ship.”*

- will be a change in doing life

b) express what matters

- Acts 20:28-31 *“Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰ and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears.”*

- intentional about giving thanks
- intentional about giving encouragement
- intentional about identifying markers

c) commend one another to God

- Acts 20:32 *“And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”*

- intentional about entrusting those you love to God's care in the next season

2. Gain Some Perspective

a) God is In Control

- Isaiah 48:9-11 *“for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,’ calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it.”*

- God has placed you in this world (Acts 17:26)
- God has prepared works for you to participate in (Eph.2:10)
- God is able and at work

Psalm 135:5-6 “For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods. Whatever the Lord pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps. He it is who makes the clouds rise at the end of the earth, who makes lightnings for the rain and brings forth the wind from his storehouses.”

b) My role is to trust and accept

- His Love is constant – Rom. 8
- His plan can be trusted – Jer. 29
- He will build His Church – Matthew 16:18
- Gain some Thanksgiving

- 1 Thess. 5:16-18 *“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”*

3. Extend A Blessing

- pattern in Scripture to bless one another

a) Recognize God at Work

- Acts 13:2-3 *“While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.”*

- God moves his people in his work

b) Be Willing to Send

- 1 Thess. 3:1-3 *“Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone, and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's co-worker in the gospel of Christ, to establish and exhort you in your faith, that no one be moved by these afflictions. For you yourselves know that we are destined for this”*

- send knowing God has a purpose

c) Bless them as they Go

- 1 Thess. 3:11-13 *“Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.”*

So What

For Those Going on.....

- Recognize and give thanks to those significant
- Be intentional about encouraging the faithful
- Identify your growth and lessons from here
- Pray for your church, ask to be replaced
- Determine now to ground and grow well
- Don't compare in the place God takes you

For Those Continuing On....

- celebrate what God has granted
- encourage those going specifically & intentionally
- pray for your brothers & sisters
- release them to God's plan with a blessing
- prepare to embrace others to journey with