

# **“Your Journey”**

***The Rev. Dr. Robert M. Zanicky***

***May 22, 2011***

***First Presbyterian Church  
Wilkes-Barre, PA  
Genesis 12:1-4a  
Philippians 4:8***

Choir, students, Mr. Wilski, thank you for sharing your talents and inspiring us this morning. Oh, and Meg I was recently at Hershey Park and found this shoe under the Tiltawhirl. Students – you all know that Mr. Wilski has a great voice. You probably also know he has a strong, carrying voice. I’ve been told in fact that it carries to two to three rooms away in school, especially when his is waiting for someone. Isn’t that right Evan?

Have you ever noticed that vein that appears on Mr. Wilski’s left temple? I think it has something to do with his blood pressure, and a bit of irritability.

Again, thank you all, for journeying to First Presbyterian church to uplift our spirits, and express the talent character and poise of your millennial generation.

We baby-boomers, and the generation X have much to be proud of, and hopeful of this millennial generation, those born after 1980. You are to date the largest generation ever.

Studies show, you are;

- Confident
- Self expressive
- Liberal
- Upbeat and open to change

You are on course to become the most educated generation in American history. For we live in a modern knowledge based economy.

Believe it or not – but the millennials generally get along with their parents. (Hey, studies don’t lie!) Millennials say that having strong morals and a good character are important. Ninety eight percent agree “it’s important for me to be a person with good character.”

We live in a post modern world, and with this comes issues of concern and interpretation – as individuals and as cultures and as societies. Feelings take precedence over reason, truth is seen as relative. A transcendent moral compass is questioned, if not disparaged. Making judgments is dismissed as narrow minded and philosophically barbaric.

Life’s journey has always been challenging and today – there are old and new challenges. The journey has the capacity to be exciting, meaningful, and fulfilling, if one chooses the correct roads and direction to follow. True (if I may use such a word) for all ages; from the greatest generation (those born before 1928) to today’s millennial generation.

You are on this journey. Where you travel, how you travel, why you travel – it's up to you! The quantity and quality is up to you!

This morning I want to remind each of you, perhaps especially the youth, that you are on a journey, and the path, the future is open! The possibilities are infinite! That's the way God created this universe! Life's journey is before you! It's open, filled with challenging and wondrous possibilities! Life – Time for learning, growth, relationships, ups and downs, clarity, disappointments – life!

I speak from the philosophy of the Judeo-Christian tradition. I hope other traditions would find consonance with this position – The Future is open, and is in God's hands. History is not cyclical, it is linear – purposeful, meaningful and that makes all the difference – in your journey!

Beware of naysayers. Beware of those who eclipse the future, who see nothing up ahead. Including those who say the world is about to end.

Believe in the future!

I am reminded of limited visionaries of the past. Here are some negative predictors of the future...

"Man will never reach the moon regardless of all future scientific advances" - Dr. Lee DeForest, Inventor of TV

"There is no likelihood man can ever tap the power of the atom." – Robert Millikan, Nobel Prize in Physics, 1923

"Computers in the future may weigh no more than 1.5 tons." – Popular Mechanics, forecasting the relentless march of science, 1949

"I think there is a world market for maybe five computers." – Thomas Watson, Chairman of IBM, 1943

"But what...is it good for?" – Engineer at the Advanced Computing Systems Division of IBM, 1968, commenting on the microchip.

"There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home." – Ken Olson, president, Chairman and founder of Digital Equipment Corp., 1977

"We don't like their sound, and guitar music is on the way out." – Decca Recording Co. rejecting the Beatles, 1962

Your journey is open to the future!

The journey of Max.

Which brings me to a truly great civilizational epic story – Abraham's call in Genesis 12. You realize that half of the world's population looks to this progenitor as their ancestor to their faith, their religion. Judaism, Christianity and Islam – all revere and respect Father Abraham, the one who then "Abram", is told by God to journey, to leave his comfortable surroundings, his status quo, and go to a new place, a new land, to discover, to create. This begins one of the greatest epic stories of the world's civilizations! Imagine, one in two people in this world trace their heritage back to this person! Imagine if he had said, "Ah, no thanks! Cannot do! Gonna stick with the old idols, and the old ways of doing things. Besides what could be better than a sharp stick to hunt with, and a chiseled stone to communicate with?"

But, instead, “So Abram journeyed, as the Lord had told him...” and the rest is history – via – the glory of Judaism, Christianity and Islam!

And along the way, via Western Civilization, Paul the Apostle, well versed in his Judaism and in Greek philosophy, shares with his friends at Philippi. He has been journeying throughout the Mediterranean area, and now is in prison for the sake of the gospel. Paul knows of Plato’s virtues, wisdom, justice, fortitude and temperance. He is encouraging them on their journey of life. Take a look in Plato’s cave, and journey with Abraham.

There are some truths that are eternal, unchanging!

Two thousand years later – my friends hear this encouragement for your journey...virtues to live by... Hear Jewish, Greek and Christian influence.

Finally, friends, whatever is true

Whatever is honorable

Whatever is just

Whatever is pure

Whatever is lovely

Whatever is gracious

If there is any excellence

If there is anything worthy of praise

Think about these things.

Commit yourself to these things on your journey!

The Lord said, “Go...” The future is open! “Abraham make your mark! Make your journey count!”

From this text and a myriad of others, and our history, we believe the future is open – waiting for creative minds to change and bless our world! And, such minds will be guided by virtues of excellence that are worthy of praise, and emulation.

“...and by You all the families of the earth shall bless themselves.”

Amen.