

### **Thoughts from Pastor Paul – May 2019**

I've got a pair of jeans in my closet that I use when things might get messy. They are jeans I don't worry about getting stained or torn. They are jeans that already have a hole or two. There's a hole where a belt loop got ripped off. There's a hole at the corner of the back pocket that is gradually getting larger. And quite frankly, there is a hole where you really don't want a hole. They are jeans that are a bit too short, but fit otherwise. These jeans are still functional and I don't want to wear a good pair of jeans and risk putting a hole in those as well.

The problem is not that I have a pair of jeans like that in my closet. The problem is that I have four pairs of jeans like that in my closet. And one in the garage. They all have different issues and different levels of public viewability, but they all function to some degree. It's actually quite hard to completely wear out a pair of jeans, but at some point, I need to reevaluate my need for all these jeans.

Do I want my neighbors seeing me in some of these jeans? Would I wear them into Walmart or Buccilli's or even McDonalds? I can't imagine wearing them to church. Not when I've got nicer jeans to wear. And yet I think we do this regularly.

We sometimes put a face on our faith that we shouldn't wear out in public. Our actions, our efforts, our interactions with others, and maybe even some of our ministries, are not of a caliber that brings glory and honor to our Savior. The problem is that even some of the worst of these still function to a certain capacity. They may make us feel good. They might be easier to deal with in our busy lives. And we definitely hate to throw out what is comfortable.

Perhaps it is time for some of these things to be reevaluated. It might be time for mending. It might be time to work on the stains that don't leave a good impression. It might be time to throw the old jeans away and put on some different ones.

I hope you will join me this month and go through your spiritual closet as I go through mine. Start thinking about the purposes your actions serve. Think about the public image they might portray. What needs mending and what needs tossing out? What is the face of my faith that the people around me see? Am I truly bringing glory to God?

I know it's hard to let go when it still serves a purpose. I actually threw a pair of jeans away a month or two ago. Yes, I still have five pairs of these jeans, but it is a start. I don't expect that any of us will change overnight, but I think it is always the right time to begin the process.

God loves you and so do I!

Pastor Paul