Letting Go and Going On
(Series: Reimagining Church; Message Twenty-Six)

A. The words obedience and change seems to make many people shutter
   1. It’s impossible to be obedient if we’re unwilling to change
   2. Obedience and change threaten our comfort, interrupt our rhythms, challenge our priorities, and raise our anxiety levels
   3. ...and change often catches us unprepared

B. The early church experienced numerous crucibles of change
   1. Webster defines change as “to make different in some particular; to transform, to undergo a modification, to become different.”
   2. Change can be good and healthy, but it is seldom easy or pleasant

   Change my heart, Oh God, make it ever true;
   Change my heart, Oh God, may I be like you.
   You are the potter, I am the clay; Mold me and make me, this is what I pray.
   Change my heart, Oh God, make it ever true;
   Change my heart Oh God, may I be like you.

   “Does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same pump one vessel for honorable use, and another for common use?” (Romans 9:21)

   3. Putting our lives in the hands of the Potter can be a painful process, but the results are (always) magnificent

C. Barnabas and Saul have been ministering in Antioch and experiencing revival
   1. The church is growing; suddenly God steps in and changes everything
   2. Paul has been dealing with significant change all his life

BEING READY
A. The Church in Antioch is a model of health and effectiveness
   1. Each leader was called, gifted, devoted and set apart for the Lord’s work
   2. There was incredible encouragement
   3. The preaching was deep and rich

B. The Spirit says: “Barnabas, Saul, you need to leave and go where I send you”
   1. God is full of surprises; he sees the big picture
   2. When the Lord speaks, Jesus’ disciples are to listen...carefully

C. God’s way of doing ministry is often hard to get our head around
   1. We serve a master we can’t see, listen for a voice we can’t audibly hear...

   a. People-pleasing can be a major impediment to doing God’s will
   b. There is a major temptation to promote our will as God’s will
   c. When we’re not fully devoted to God, it’s impossible to discern God’s will

   2. God’s call to obedience means a journey; a journey always involves change; change involves risk; risk means stretching our faith

LETTING GO
A. Letting Go to follow (obey) God is an indication of our trust in Him
   1. Are we willing to let go and go out before all our questions are answered?
      a. Are we willing to let go of control and micro-managing?
      b. Are we willing to listen for God’s voice in his Word...?
      c. Are we willing to set aside our agenda and risk change/obedience?
   2. Most churches are simply focused on maintaining the status quo

B. 13:3 - “When they had fasted and prayed... they sent them away.”
   1. When Barnabas and Saul heard the community’s discernment, they jumped!
   2. Believers trusted believers to listen to and discern God’s will
   3. More change. Why would they leave the safety of Antioch for that?
      Because God called! They changed everything for the sake of obedience.

STAYING PLIABLE
A. How do we keep the clay of our lives pliable?
   1. We need to remove all limitations so we stay open to what God has for us
   2. We need slow down so we can hear God when he speaks
   3. We need to let need to let God be God
   4. We need to be ready to say “yes” when God asks
   5. We must stop comparing ourselves to our fellow believers...

B. Is your life ready to be molded and shaped by the potter?
   1. If you’re walking close to God, you know what he is asking you to do...
   2. See the water below. Take a deep breathe. Now, jump!