

The Amazing Power of Faith (Amazing Race #2)

Sermon by Todd Lester

February 21, 2016

2 Timothy 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Romans 4:20 Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God.

1. FAITH IS CHOOSING _____ FOR MY LIFE

Proverbs 29:18 (KJV) Where there is no vision, the people perish...

Ephesians 3:20, Jeremiah 32:27, Psalm 2:8

3 ways to find God's vision for your life: a) Dare to _____ b) Believe God's _____ c) Think of something _____ than yourself

2. FAITH IS BEING WILLING TO _____

Acts 15:26 ...who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Daniel 3:17-18, Proverbs 29:25, Galatians 6:4

2 ways to eliminate fear of failure: a) _____ failure b) Never _____ yourself

3. FAITH IS EXPECTING _____

Philippians 1:20 For I fully expect and hope that I will never be ashamed, but that I will continue to be bold for Christ, as I have been in the past. And I trust that my life will bring honour to Christ, whether I live or die.

Matthew 9:29, 2 Corinthians 6:8, Hebrews 11:1

4. FAITH IS _____

Psalm 31:24 So be strong and courageous, all you who put your hope in the Lord!

Psalm 119:109, Proverbs 24:16, Galatians 6:9, Mark 9:24

If I Knew I Could Not Fail ...

Sometimes the fear of failure keeps us from trying new things or striving for accomplishments. For this Jump Start, think of things you would like to do in your life *if you knew you could not fail*. Write down your answers in the space provided and then take turns sharing your answers with the group.

If I knew I could not fail, one thing I would like to do around the house is ...

If I knew I could not fail, one thing I would like to accomplish at work or at school is ...

If I knew I could not fail, one thing I would like to try in my social relationships is ...

If I knew I could not fail, one thing I would like to try regarding my personal improvement is ...

If I knew I could not fail, one thing I would like to do in my family relationships is ...

If I knew I could not fail, one daring, risky thing I've always wanted to do is ...

If I knew I could not fail, one thing I would like to do to serve God is ...

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Icebreaker/Introduction

The 'If I Knew I Could Not Fail' activity connects to Todd's statement in the message: 'what would you attempt for God if you knew you wouldn't fail?' Allow time for participants to answer each question (or have them pick 4, say) and then take turns sharing answers (allow people to share any number of their answers if time allows)

Ask if there was anything from this week's message that stood out – either a point that was made which really resonated with them, or perhaps a question or difficulty that came up for them.

Todd talked about the kind of person that God uses. Share about someone that you feel God has used – either personally in impacting your own life, or someone who may be more well-known.

Consider **Romans 4:20** – Does your example from the last question fit into this idea that Todd pointed out about faith - they were not afraid to trust God completely?

This passage also emphasizes that Abraham's faith grew stronger. Do you feel that your faith is growing stronger? Why or why not might that be.

Todd said that he could preach a full year on how to grow in faith but was focusing on 4 ways in this message. Before considering this week's points discuss ways that Christians can grow in their faith. Try to be practical.

1. FAITH IS CHOOSING GOD'S DREAM FOR MY LIFE

Focuses on Proverbs 29:18, Ephesians 3:20, Jeremiah 32:27, Psalm 2:8

Discuss Todd's statement: "dreaming is an act of faith." (everything we see in the world started as an idea)

3 ways to find God's vision for your life: a) Dare to ask b) Believe God's promises c) Think of something bigger than yourself

What do you think of Todd's idea about setting a bigger vision for your life and then taking longer to accomplish it?

Todd said that "you haven't really trusted God until you've attempted something that you couldn't achieve through your own power."

Do examples of this for you pop to mind? How often does this happen for you?

Consider Todd's question: "What would you attempt for God in 2016 if you knew you couldn't fail?"

2. FAITH IS BEING WILLING TO RISK FAILURE

Focuses on Acts 15:26, Daniel 3:17-18, Proverbs 29:25, Galatians 6:4

How much of a risk taker are you? Have you ever needed to risk anything for God?

Share about a time when you went ahead and did something even though you were afraid.

2 ways to eliminate fear of failure: a) Redefine failure b) Never compare yourself

Can you recall how Todd said to redefine failure? (that it's not being unable to attain a goal, but not having one in the first place)

Do you find these 2 suggestions helpful?

Todd reminded us that God calls us to be the best we can be – taking into consideration our gifts, abilities and experiences. How can this be helpful in realizing we should not compare ourselves to others?

3. FAITH IS EXPECTING GOD TO USE ME

Focuses on Philippians 1:20, Matthew 9:29, 2 Corinthians 6:8, Hebrews 11:1

Do you think people who are given big dreams by God can also struggle with a big ego?

How does God keep you humble?

Do you agree with the idea that if you have more success then you experience more criticism?

Discuss Todd's statements that we are all a collection of strengths and weaknesses and that humility is not denying your strengths but is being honest about your weaknesses.

Todd pointed out that Hebrews 11:1 encourages us to be "confident and assured" about the dream God has given. He asked, "Do you feel that? And if not, why not?"

4. FAITH IS NEVER GIVING UP

Focuses on Psalm 31:24, Psalm 119:109, Proverbs 24:16, Galatians 6:9, Mark 9:24

Do you think it's true that most people today want to do what is convenient, comfortable or popular? Todd said the world needs people of compassion, consistency, character and competence – how rare is that? Can you think of some examples?

Read and discuss Psalm 119:109. What parts of life may hang in the balance? What does it mean to 'not stop obeying your instructions'?

Discuss Todd's statement that 'God works in your life according to your faith.'

What do you think of Todd's challenge to get up each morning and asking God: "what can I do today that will require faith?"

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This week's message focused on one of the most important qualities that God is looking for in the people he recruits and rewards. That quality is faith. This message will challenge people to take risks and live by faith.

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Romans 4:20 Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God.

1. FAITH IS CHOOSING GOD'S DREAM FOR MY LIFE

Proverbs 29:18 (KJV) Where there is no vision, the people perish...

3 ways to find God's vision for your life: a) Dare to ask b) Believe God's promises c) Think of something bigger than yourself

Ephesians 3:20 Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.

Jeremiah 32:27 I am the Lord, the God of all the peoples of the world. Is anything too hard for me?

Psalm 2:8 Only ask, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, the whole earth as your possession.

2. FAITH IS BEING WILLING TO RISK FAILURE

Acts 15:26 ...who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Daniel 3:17-18 If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. But even if he doesn't, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up.

Proverbs 29:25 Fearing people is a dangerous trap, but trusting the Lord means safety.

Galatians 6:4 Pay careful attention to your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else

2 ways to eliminate fear of failure: a) Redefine failure b) Never compare yourself

3. FAITH IS EXPECTING GOD TO USE ME

Philippians 1:20 For I fully expect and hope that I will never be ashamed, but that I will continue to be bold for Christ, as I have been in the past. And I trust that my life will bring honour to Christ, whether I live or die.

Matthew 9:29 Then he touched their eyes and said, "Because of your faith, it will happen."

2 Corinthians 6:8 We serve God whether people honour us or despise us. Whether they slander us or they praise us.

Hebrews 11:1 Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see.

4. FAITH IS NEVER GIVING UP

Psalm 31:24 So be strong and courageous, all you who put your hope in the Lord!
Psalm 119:109 My life constantly hangs in the balance, but I will not stop obeying your instructions.

Proverbs 24:16 The godly may trip seven times, but they will get up again.

Galatians 6:9 So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up.

Mark 9:24 The father instantly cried out, "I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!"