

## IF I COULD TELL YOU ONE LAST THING

### #4 – NEVER GIVE UP FAITH

Sermon by Todd Lester

September 24, 2017

Matthew 9:29 (NIV) According to your faith let it be done to you.

Hebrews 11:6 And it is impossible to please God without faith.

#### ***FAITH IS SEEING FROM GOD'S POINT OF VIEW***

Hebrews 11:1, Ephesians 1:18, Genesis 21:19, 2 Kings 6:17, Luke 24:31

#### ***WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE SEE WITH EYES OF FEAR?***

WE \_\_\_\_\_ OUR DIFFICULTIES (Numbers 13:31-32)

WE \_\_\_\_\_ OUR ABILITIES (Numbers 13:33)

WE GET \_\_\_\_\_ (Numbers 14:1)

WE START TO \_\_\_\_\_ (Numbers 14:2)

WE GIVE UP AND \_\_\_\_\_ (Numbers 14:3)

#### ***WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE SEE WITH EYES OF FAITH?***

FAITH SHRINKS OUR \_\_\_\_\_ (Genesis 18:14a, Matthew 19:26)

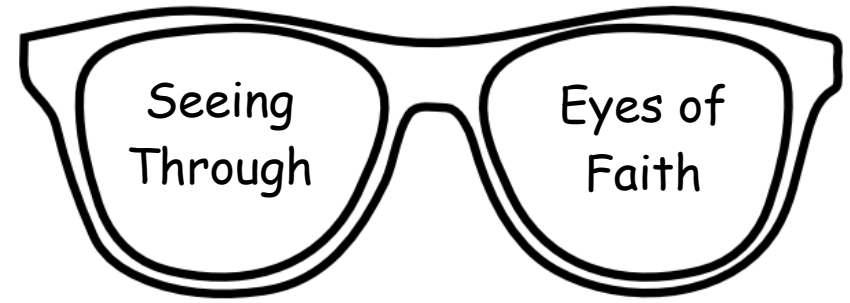
FAITH OPENS THE DOOR FOR \_\_\_\_\_ (Mark 11:22-24)

FAITH MOVES GOD TO \_\_\_\_\_ (John 14:12)

FAITH UNLOCKS THE \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Corinthians 1:20a)

FAITH TURNS GOD-GIVEN \_\_\_\_\_ INTO \_\_\_\_\_  
(Ephesians 3:20)

FAITH GIVES ME THE POWER TO \_\_\_\_\_  
(2 Corinthians 4:8-9, John 3:3)



**Encourage one another with examples of times when you have seen God acting.**

1. What is a Bible story that stands out to you where God acted in a powerful way?
2. When is a time in church (or world) history where you feel God intervened to fulfill His purposes?
3. Can you think of a specific time when you recognize God working in your life?
4. What is one area where you feel that you need to see more clearly that God is present and active in your life today?

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Hebrews 11:6 And it is impossible to please God without faith.

#### ***FAITH IS SEEING FROM GOD'S POINT OF VIEW***

Hebrews 11:1 Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see.

Ephesians 1:18 (NIV) I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you....

Genesis 21:19 Then God opened Hagar's eyes, and she saw a well full of water. She quickly filled her water container and gave the boy a drink.

2 Kings 6:17 Then Elisha prayed, "O Lord, open his eyes and let him see!"

The Lord opened the young man's eyes, and when he looked up, he saw that the hillside around Elisha was filled with horses and chariots of fire.

Luke 24:31 Suddenly, their eyes were opened, and they recognized him.

#### ***WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE SEE WITH EYES OF FEAR?***

##### **WE EXAGGERATE OUR DIFFICULTIES**

Numbers 13:31-32 "We can't go up against them! They are stronger than we are!" So they spread this bad report about the land among the Israelites: "The land we traveled through and explored will devour anyone who goes to live there. All the people we saw were huge."

##### **WE UNDERESTIMATE OUR ABILITIES**

Numbers 13:33 Next to them we felt like grasshoppers, and that's what they thought, too!

##### **WE GET DISCOURAGED**

Numbers 14:1 Then the whole community began weeping aloud, and they cried all night.

##### **WE START TO COMPLAIN**

Numbers 14:2 Their voices rose in a great chorus of protest against Moses and Aaron. "If only we had died in Egypt, or even here in the wilderness!" they complained.

##### **WE GIVE UP AND BLAME GOD**

Numbers 14:3 "Why is the Lord taking us to this country only to have us die in battle?"

#### ***WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE SEE WITH EYES OF FAITH?***

##### **FAITH SHRINKS OUR PROBLEMS**

Genesis 18:14a Is anything too hard for the Lord?

Matthew 19:26 With God everything is possible.

##### **FAITH OPENS THE DOOR FOR MIRACLES**

Mark 11:22-24 Then Jesus said to the disciples, "Have faith in God. I tell you the truth, you can say to this mountain, 'May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and it will happen..."

##### **FAITH MOVES GOD TO ACT ON MY BEHALF**

John 14:12 I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father.

##### **FAITH UNLOCKS THE PROMISES OF GOD**

2 Corinthians 1:20a (NIV) For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ...

##### **FAITH TURNS GOD-GIVEN DREAMS INTO REALITY**

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.

##### **FAITH GIVES ME THE POWER TO PERSEVERE**

2 Corinthians 4:8-9 We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed.

John 3:3 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God."

# IF I COULD TELL YOU ONE LAST THING - #4 NEVER GIVE UP FAITH

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## Icebreaker/Introduction

The 'Seeing Through the Eyes of Faith' activity is meant to get us thinking about times when we have seen God acting. Give time for people to answer the 4 questions and then take turns sharing some of your answers.

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.

Read [Matthew 9:29](#) and [Hebrews 11:6](#). What is the role of faith in our lives? How can we reconcile these verses with the story in [John 5:1-13](#) where Jesus healed a man who didn't even know who he was (so could not have had faith in him)?

## **FAITH IS SEEING FROM GOD'S POINT OF VIEW**

Focuses on [Hebrews 11:1](#), [Ephesians 1:18](#), [Genesis 21:19](#), [2 Kings 6:17](#), [Luke 24:31](#)

Discuss Todd's definition of faith as seeing from God's point of view. What are some other ways that you describe faith? How does faith relate to words like trust, belief, reliance?

## **WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE SEE WITH EYES OF FEAR?**

Consider the headings for the 2 sections. Is fear the opposite of faith? Is 'unbelief' a better opposite? Does unbelief lead to fear? What other things does unbelief foster?

## **WE EXAGGERATE OUR DIFFICULTIES**

Focuses on [Numbers 13:31-32](#)

Discuss Todd's statement that 'the more we look at a problem, the bigger it gets.' Have you found this to be true? Does this mean we should ignore problems?

Todd said that there are always more people who are negative, fearful, worried or critical. Would you agree that the majority of people are negative?

## **WE UNDERESTIMATE OUR ABILITIES**

Focuses on [Numbers 13:33](#)

Todd talked about how other people in our lives can create an image or self-concept in us that enslaves us. Have you experienced this? He asked 'Are you still enslaved to someone else's image of you?'

## **WE GET DISCOURAGED**

Focuses on [Numbers 14:1](#)

What kinds of things tend to discourage you?

## **WE START TO COMPLAIN**

Focuses on [Numbers 14:2](#)

Discuss Todd's statement that 'it's a short walk from discouragement to discontentment.'

## **WE GIVE UP AND BLAME GOD**

Focuses on [Numbers 14:3](#)

Todd pointed out that the Israelites blamed God yet it wasn't God holding them back, it was their own fear. What are some things that God wrongly gets blamed for? Do you see the inconsistency in someone saying "I can't accept a God who would allow all of the suffering in the world" (ie. they blame God yet don't believe in Him)

## **WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE SEE WITH EYES OF FAITH?**

### **FAITH SHRINKS OUR PROBLEMS**

Focuses on [Genesis 18:14a](#), [Matthew 19:26](#)

Read the scriptures given above - how do these verses apply (or do they apply) to difficult tragedies or situations (such as a couple who longs for but is unable to conceive a child)?

### **FAITH OPENS THE DOOR FOR MIRACLES**

Focuses on [Mark 11:22-24](#)

Read [Mark 11:22-24](#). Todd asked 'what mountain needs to be moved in your life?'

### **FAITH MOVES GOD TO ACT ON MY BEHALF**

Focuses on [John 14:12](#)

Discuss Todd's statement that God is not moved by our complaining but by when we say "I'm trusting you and expecting you to keep your promises."

### **FAITH UNLOCKS THE PROMISES OF GOD**

Focuses on [2 Corinthians 1:20a](#)

In what ways can faith 'unlock the promises of God'? How does this differ from the claims of 'name it and claim it' aberrations of Christianity?

### **FAITH TURNS GOD-GIVEN DREAMS INTO REALITY**

Focuses on [Ephesians 3:20](#)

Todd said that we can limit God by our unbelief and asked us 'what are you afraid to ask God for?'

### **FAITH GIVES ME THE POWER TO PERSEVERE**

Focuses on [2 Corinthians 4:8-9](#), [John 3:3](#)

Todd reminded us that faith doesn't take us out of the problem but through it, not out of the pain but gives the ability to handle the pain. How does faith help with this?

Todd mentioned the importance of resiliency? How do we learn it? It's also an important trait outside of faith though - how do those without faith learn/develop it?