

All In

When Jesus is your Plan "A"
you don't need Plan "B".



Magnolia Bible Church Men's Group

Thursday Nights at 6:30 PM | October 11 – November 15, 2018 (Lesson #4)

In this series we're talking about the "All In" concept. *All in* means totally committed, no turning back, reaching the point of no return, burning the boats, and leaving it all on the field (these are just a few of the phrases we use in today's world). To be brutally honest, as men very few of us are *All In* when it comes to our commitment to Jesus. Vying against our commitment to Jesus are a tremendous number of distractions and pressures that seem to pull us in every direction except the one that counts.

In this 6-week series we're going to take a real, hard look at what we need to do to **make Jesus Plan A**. Provided below are topics we'll be covering in this series. Each topic has been specifically selected to drive us towards building a life where we don't have to make any excuses in living for Jesus.

1. October 11 Finding the "Why?" in your life.
2. October 18 What's Your "game"? Discovering God's specific plan for your life.
3. October 25 Roadblocks: areas of sin and weakness that prevent success.
4. November 1 **It's all about TRUST: Making the leap of faith.**
5. November 8 Developing God's *Game Plan* for your life.
6. November 15 Putting it all together and living with purpose for Jesus.

In tonight's lesson we're going to explore "TRUST: Making the leap of faith". Since starting this series we've discussed finding the "Why?" in your life and exploring "What's your Game?". In last week's lesson we talked about sin and its impact in being a roadblock in our lives as followers of Jesus.

This week we're going to talk about trust, and specifically the trust associated with being a committed follower of Jesus. In this lesson I'm going to use *trust* and *faith* somewhat interchangeably. However, faith is where we're going to place most of our focus.

There are three primary translations of the word 'faith' in Greek used in the New Testament:

- The noun form is 'pistis' (πίστις)
- The adjective form is 'pistos' (πιστός)
- The verb form is 'pisteuo'. (πιστεύω)¹

Each form's meaning is a variation of the word 'trust'. Hence 'pistis'(noun) is a trust in *someone or something*; 'pistos' (adjective) is trusting *as in a trusting person* and 'pisteuo'(verb) literally means *I trust*. So, when we encounter 'faith' in Scripture we read it as 'trust'. From a Biblical standpoint *trust* and *faith* have the same meaning.²



¹ <https://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Lexicon.show/ID/G4100/pisteuo.htm>

² <https://www.biblword.net/trust-and-faith/>

Why is Having Faith Difficult?

As men we pride ourselves in our ability to get things done. As Americans we use the terms “self-reliance” or “self-made” with pride. As popular as these concepts might be among our fellow Americans, when it comes to God’s Kingdom we’re in trouble. The main message in the New Testament is self-sacrifice and a willingness to put others before ourselves – hardly the traits of a self-made man!

At the end of the day I think faith can be difficult, if not impossible for me, because we’re all afraid of something. We don’t want to admit it, but to put faith in God and His plan for our lives can be flat out scary. We are driven by fear far more than we would like to admit. Think about some of the things either you’ve asked or you’ve heard others ask or say when it comes to trusting God.

- What if God calls me to sell all my possessions and move to another country to be a missionary?
- What if God wants me to give up my career?
- What if I fail? I’ve worked hard to get where I am and can’t imagine giving all this up for something that might not work out.
- I don’t like change and I’m comfortable where God has me right now.
- I really don’t want to work that hard. That’s fine for people in fulltime ministry, but I don’t think I want that level of commitment.

In 2 Timothy 1:7 Paul penned the following words to young Timothy:

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind (NKJV).

At a very real level *fear can be paralyzing*. It prevents us from seeing the world as God does. When full blown, fear limits God’s work in our lives. As we discussed last week, before we can experience a deeply-committed **Lifestyle** in Christ we must first **Believe** and establish confidence in God’s plan for our lives. This is reflected in the following graphic.



When you and I believe in God’s plan for our lives and step out in faith, tremendous things are possible.

Faith as Portrayed in the Bible

The writer of Hebrew pretty much summed it all up:

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV)

Think about the meaning of this statement – without faith it is impossible to please God. There is no mincing of words here. Either we have faith or we do not. When you and I have faith in God and His individual plan for our lives, it pleases God. To a large extent God’s plan requires a complete and total reliance on Him; similar to how our children trust us for safety, security, and provisions when they are young. When we worry about the present or future, we communicate to God a lack of belief in His ability to provide for us. Any time you think about faith, go to Hebrews 11. In this chapter we read about the great “Heroes of the Faith” including Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, and the prophets.

What characterized these men is their steadfast believe in God, His plan, and ultimately His promise of what I believe to be the Messiah (Hebrews 11:39-40). The belief and trust in God is what defined them and effectively *knit them together* with the Lord in pursuing His plan for their lives.

What is Faith?

I would argue the best definition of faith in the Bible is found in Hebrews 11.

¹ Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. ² For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. ³ By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NKJV) provides us with a practical view of what trust (faith) looks like.

⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
And lean not on your own understanding;
⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He shall direct your paths.

Here is the big question tonight I'd like us to consider: ***In what area of your life do you find it most difficult to trust God?*** As part of our discussion I'd like to look at the following list and address some of the benefits we'll experience as men in putting our trust in the Lord.

1. It pleases God (and this should always be our #1 goal).
2. It gives us confidence as we see God working in our lives.
3. It brings protection (Daniel and the lion's den).
4. It brings clarity (Proverbs 3:5-6).
5. It brings hope for the future (John 14:1-6).
6. It brings insight into things unseen (Hebrews 11:1).
7. It brings salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9).
8. It gives us the ability to do what's impossible for men.
9. It brings contentedness (Philippians 4:10-13).
10. It brings stability through God's giving of wisdom (James 1:10-13).

Wrapping it Up

I am of the opinion that the measure of a man is based on his unwavering believe in God's plan for his life. Men who have faith in God are not overly-concerned with either their accomplishments or inadequacies. Rather, men of spiritual maturity are constantly pursuing the call of Jesus and are running a race that reflects His plan for their lives. *Let us be men who are recognized by a deep conviction that God loves us, He wants the best for us, and has committed to us the resources through the power of the Holy Spirit to ensure His work is carried out in our lives.*

Small Group "Tabletop" Discussion Questions

1. Do you find it difficult to put your trust in God, or do you find it comes naturally? Explain your answer.
2. As you think back over your life, has there been a time when you did not put your trust in God where you know if you had, things would have turned out very differently? Please elaborate.
3. Is there an area where you feel the Lord is calling you to trust Him to a greater degree? If you feel comfortable, please share with the group.
4. How has having faith in God impacted your life?

Case Studies from Lesson #3 on Sin

Provided below is the table we discussed during last week's lesson. Understanding we have a general "pattern" that contributes to our stumbling as sinners, let's see if we can dissect patterns associated with the following sins by looking at the following examples.

SIN	CAUSES	WHEN MOST LIKELY TO OCCUR	REMEDY (Scripture)
Anger	Unresolved conflict Previous hurts Not being heard Lack of respect	Provoked Unfulfilled expectations Things not going your way Disobedient children	²⁶ "In your anger do not sin" : Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷ and do not give the devil a foothold. (Eph. 4:26-27)
Sexual Purity	Previous sin / memories Frustration Drive!! Pattern of sin Pornography addiction Issues with wife Selfishness	Late at night Traveling After fight with wife Bored or tired Feeling lonely	You say, "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both." The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. (1 Cor. 6:13)
Worry	Lack of trust in God Trust issues growing up Feelings of inferiority Not working hard	Bad news Others disappointed in you Financial struggles	Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3:5-6)
Greed	Not enough money Too much money Status based on "things" Selfish Not trusting God	When others need help	Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?" (Hebrews 13:5-6)
Laziness / Glutton	Don't like to work Failure to accept responsibility Apathy / don't really care	Afraid of failure Under pressure Pushed by others	Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters. (Col. 3:23)
Workaholic	Addicted to success Overly-concerned with others' opinions Heavily in debt Don't trust God Escape from reality (avoidance)	During "stressful" deadlines When setting goals	Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5, ESV)