



Magnolia Bible Church Men's Group

Transforming Faith Series (Fall 2019) | Lesson #2, Thursday, September 12, 2019

Transforming faith is a play on words. Faith is transforming in and of itself, but the adding word “transforming” as an adjective or descriptor gives our faith a dynamic element as mature in Christ. Faith is necessary to be saved from the “penalty of sin”, but it’s amazing how as Believers we can failure to experience salvation from the “power of sin”.

Faith is evidence of God’s work in our lives. Scripture tells that it is *impossible to please God without faith* (Hebrews 11:6). I’ll go a step further - absent faith and an underlying belief in God’s ability to accomplish anything, we will never be able to accomplish all God has called us to do. When we truly get hold of this concept, we will be in a position to move mountains. Now, that is transformational living!

In this series we’ve got four goals:

1. Explore what the Bible has to say about faith and learn from our “Heroes of the Faith”.
2. Try and understand WHY faith is important to us. The WHY drives the HOW and WHAT.
3. Identify areas in our lives where faith can really transform our Christian living.
4. Have fun! Following Jesus is the greatest experience we can have. We of all people should enjoy life.

Series Bible Verses

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1 (KJV)

⁵ *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.*

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NASB)

Series Quote

Faith is acting like it is so, even though it is not so, so that is might be so, simply because God said so!

Dr. Tony Evans

Provided below is the outline for our 6-week series.

1. **September 5th:** Why is faith important to us as followers of Jesus in how we live?
2. **September 12th:** **What’s the opposite of faith? Taking shortcuts limits God’s work in our lives**
3. **September 19th:** Exercising the muscle of faith – it’s got to be exercised!
4. **September 26th:** Houston, we have a problem. How lack of faith is impacting Christians in America.
5. **October 3rd:** Faith’s role in salvation – stepping to *Sanctification* from *Justification*.
6. **October 10th:** The Power to Move Mountains and the peace that surpasses all understanding.

Tonight’s lesson is focused on ***What’s the opposite of faith? Taking shortcuts limits God’s work in our lives***. Sometimes when I have a hard time answering a challenging question or addressing a complex topic, I think about the opposite (I can’t admit to making this up as I borrowed the idea from Alan Greenspan, former Chairman of the Federal Reserve). As an example, if some asks me if I value my family all I have to do is think about what would happen if my family no longer exists. At that point I know I have the answer: *Definitely, my family means the world to me!*



Some will say the opposite of faith is having no faith. I would disagree as the opposite of having faith in God is having faith in another person, systems / organizations, or ourselves. The problem with all of these is they are unbiblical and do not represent God's original design for mankind.

During our lecture time we'll hit the following points:

- As followers of Christ, what does it look like to take shortcuts?
- Explore the meaning in Isaiah 40:31: *They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles.*¹
- Look at some Bible heroes who took shortcuts and didn't wait on the Lord's timing:
 - Abraham and Sarah
 - David and Bathsheba
- How can we practically put ourselves in positions where we have to trust God?
 - Put ourselves in positions where we have no other option but to trust God.
 - Pray expecting God to do amazing things in our lives. This requires that we pray specifically and not in generalities.
 - Make a conscious decision to not take shortcuts and wait on God's Hand.
 - Identify areas in your life where you are prone to taking shortcuts.

Small Group Discussion Questions

1. Do you find waiting on God to be challenging? Do you prefer to try and make things happen based on your timetable?

2. Consider the following statement. What does this statement mean to you in terms of trusting God for the plans He has for your life and waiting on His timing?

A weak prayer life is a Declaration of Independence from God.

3. Tell the group of a time when you did the following and what was the result:
 - a. Waited on God
 - b. Did not wait on God (you were impatient).

4. If you were to counsel a younger man on the importance of learning to wait on God, what would you tell Him? In recounting stories from your life, would you share with him the dangers in not waiting on God?

¹ The Hebrew word Isaiah uses for "wait" is *Qavah*, which means "to wait, look for, hope, expect."