

## MESSAGE FOUR: CONFIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP

### SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Hebrews 11:1-6 (NASB)

"<sup>1</sup> Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. <sup>2</sup> For by it the men of old gained approval. <sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible. <sup>4</sup> By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks. <sup>5</sup> By faith Enoch was taken up so that he would not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God. <sup>6</sup> And 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 seek Him."

### MESSAGE GOAL:

The goal of this message on Living In Financial Victory is to learn five biblical aspects about faith and how each will help you confidently steward the resources God has entrusted into your care.

### INTRODUCTION:

This thing called faith meanders off of our lips so easily and yet it seems empty of reality. Yes we'll say in a moment we have faith but it doesn't seem to do very much. My fear for you and me is that we will develop spiritual Alzheimers. Remember that Alzheimers is when you forget. It is when you don't know who you are and so you find everything to be a question mark. If you, who name the name of Jesus Christ, develop spiritual Alzheimers by forgetting who you are, then you will lose the ability to enjoy your spiritual life.

Some Christians are addicted to defeat. They don't know what it feels like to not be defeated. And they would be miserable if they weren't. In fact, if you solved all their problems, they would still find something wrong.

Now I understand this thing called faith has been abused. Some offer that faith precipitates magical events. Some let poisonous snakes bite them in the name of faith. Some foam at

the mouth in the name of faith and expect some supernatural introduction in the history of God.

But I am equally aware there are many Christians who are not getting all that God has for them because they don't have faith. Their confidence in God is so paper-thin they get what they expect and that is not much. You can hear it in their prayers for the Lord to bless them. Their prayers are vague and general so that in case God doesn't come through, they haven't missed anything.

I'm going to take a step of faith and deal with this issue of what I call the confidence of stewardship. This is faith as it relates to all of life. Then I will apply it to this issue of stewardship. In doing so, I want to say five things. I'll start with the principle of faith.

### SERMON POINTS:

#### 1. PRINCIPLE OF FAITH

- Please God Through Your Faith
  - Without faith, it's impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6)
  - God will not open any windows for people who don't believe Him
- Be assured of things hoped for and convicted of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1)
  - We are to have faith that grabs hold of our hopes and desires and believe God can bring them into reality
  - Often we don't see the substance God offers in the invisible realm due to our lack of faith (see Matthew 13:58)
- Commit to a way of life characterized by faith
  - The just shall live by faith (Romans 1:17)

#### 2. POWER OF FAITH

- Place your faith in God to receive power (Mark 11:22)
  - Jesus says to have faith in God
  - Don't have faith in faith
- Find your power in the person of God and not in the amount of your faith



- Faith in a tiny God diminishes our perspective
- See God properly and your faith will grow (Romans 10:17)
  - The bigger God gets, the more your faith grows
  - When you locate God, you'll have plenty of faith
  - The power is in the person—not in the faith

### 3. STEWARDSHIP BY FAITH

- Steward your money in faith and expect to receive spiritual riches (see Luke 16:11)
  - Money is not true riches; "true riches" are spiritual riches
  - God will not trust you with spiritual riches if you are not faithful in managing your money
- Cast your bread on the surface of the waters (Ecclesiastes 11)
  - Casting your bread was investing your goods on a merchant ship that crossed the Mediterranean Sea
  - Believe God that the ship is coming back

### 4. PRACTICE OF FAITH

- Live by faith characterized by action
  - "...faith without works is useless" (James 2:14)
  - Faith in order to work must produce action — not discussion
- Trust that God will carry out your desires that align according to Scripture
  - Validate your faith by giving 10 percent as a minimum of what God requires as a tithe
- Let your belief in God control what you do in the present
  - What you believe will control how you act in the natural realm
  - What you believe about God will control how you act regarding what He says in the Bible

### 5. PERSEVERANCE OF FAITH

- Don't let circumstances detour you (see Ecclesiastes 11:4)
  - Don't let circumstances stop you from trusting God
- Don't let doubt detour you (Mark 9:20)
  - When doubt is holding you back, drag doubt to Jesus
  - You can't control the emotion of doubt but you can control whether doubts drag you down
- Don't let people stop you (Luke 18:35)
  - When people discourage you, reach out to Jesus to help you with your needs

- Don't let fear stop you (1 Corinthians 17)
  - Elisha told the widow of Zarephath not to fear even though she was down to her last meal
  - When afraid, call on somebody stronger than you are so you can overcome fear
  - You can't overcome fear by yourself
- Don't let your emotion stop you (Psalm 126:5)
  - While you're crying and while you're planting, God will change those tears into joy
  - He will turn those squeals into shouts and you will bring your sheaves with you

### SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

**PRINCIPLE OF FAITH:** In Star Trek, they could move people around because there was this piece of equipment called the transporter that would change the molecular structure of the thing that had to be moved. It rearranged it and configured it so that it could leave one zone and be delivered to another zone. But you had to be under the transporter. Faith is the transporter. While you are standing in time by faith, you reach out there in eternity and grab it and yank it back to where you stand.

**POWER OF FAITH:** If you're going to take a row boat and cross the Pacific, you will not make it because it's too big of a body of water. Now if you board a cruise ship and cross the Pacific, then it's a new ball game. Anyone will have little faith in your row boat decision. But they will have a lot of faith in your cruise ship decision because it's just a lot bigger. Why don't you have enough faith? Because you don't picture a big enough God.

**STEWARDSHIP BY FAITH:** Casting your bread was putting your investment on a merchant ship that crossed the Mediterranean Sea that took it to the East in order to sell it. You wait on the return of the sales to come back across the sea from the ship selling your produce (i.e. the grain that you baked). Now here's the problem. You're standing on the dock, you farmed your grain and your wheat (i.e. your bread), you put it in sacks, and you delivered it to the ship that leaves the port. After 20 minutes you can no longer see the ship and quite possibly your bread could be gone for good. God says in essence, "Do you believe that this ship is coming back? Do you believe that if you invest in that which is eternal that I'm going to take your bread, deliver it somewhere else and not tell the ship to come back to you?" That's the question. Cast your bread into the water.



**PRACTICE OF FAITH:** We take medicine that our doctor prescribes for us because we trust him or her. Suppose we said, "Doctor I trust you but I don't think I'm going to take this medicine." Then trust becomes a word that means nothing. In order for faith to work it must be practiced.

**PERSEVERANCE OF FAITH:** When playing with small children by throwing them up in the air and catching them, they will likely get scared at first. But after three or four times of throwing them up in the air and catching them, they will know you will catch them. And after they know you will catch them, they will ask you to throw them up again. God is throwing some of you up and you're scared. The question is whether you are going to trust that King Jesus will catch you?

#### **BACKGROUND BIBLICAL HISTORY AND CULTURE:**

**MOUNTAINS:** In the Bible, mountains may sometimes refer to immovable objects or obstacles in life. See Zechariah 4:7. Mountains were symbolic for hills, which we reference in songs today: "The hills we have to climb." Mountains can represent something that is immovable. The idea is that you can't fix it or straiten it. It's just too big for you.

**MONEY:** (Luke 16:11) Wealth or property (BDAG, 614)

#### **SERMON LINES:**

This sermon will help you understand the biblical principles of faith so you can confidently steward the money God has given you.

This sermon will outline five aspects about faith that will give you confidence in applying the biblical principles of stewardship.

#### **QUOTES BY DR. TONY EVANS:**

"If you who name the name of Jesus Christ develop spiritual Alzheimers. If you forget who you are then you will lose the ability to enjoy your spiritual life."

"...faith is not a small ancillary, academic, titular detail unrelated to the significance of your spiritual life. It is the cream-de-la-cream."

"Brothers and sisters, faith is the gateway between the visible and the invisible realm. It accepts as good as done that which God has said."

"Faith is the thing, the stuff, the raw material that reaches from the seen realm, grabs the unseen realm and pulls it back home."

"Why don't we have enough faith? Because we don't have enough God."

"The stuff that makes life rich and real cannot be purchased with money."

"So if you're not honoring the Lord with your money, don't expect your prayers to be answered."

"Faith is not believing that He can do it. Faith is entrusting yourself to Him to do it."

"You say, 'Well I have bills.' And yes God is your first one."

"If you really believe God you're going to act on what He says because you believe Him."

"When doubt is holding you back, when doubt is pulling you back, you drag doubt to Jesus."

"Now you seminarians who are here, you preachers that are here, let me tell you your main job. . . is to interpose yourself between a person's fear and the fear itself. Your job is to step between that fear and that obedience to God and block the fear so that they can keep on going with the obedience."



our society's problem  
is not solely our *government's* problem.  
it is **the church's** problem.  
it is *our* problem.

**our mission field is not merely across the sea.  
it is across the street.**

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“You will be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea  
and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”  
*Acts 1:8*

**That includes in our Jerusalem. In our Judea.  
In Baltimore. Dallas. Miami. Detroit.**

**Our society's problems are not solely our government's problem.  
It is the church's problem. It is our problem.**

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churches to partner with schools to change our nation  
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is not just commendable. It's  
absolutely necessary. It is a  
comprehensive answer to  
addressing the urgent and  
pressing issue in America.”

— Tony Dungy



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