



## Magnolia Bible Church Men's Group

Transforming Faith Series (Fall 2019) | Lesson #4, Thursday, September 26, 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)

<sup>5</sup> *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. <sup>6</sup> 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 5<sup>th</sup>:** Why is faith important to us as followers of Jesus in how we live?
2. **September 12<sup>th</sup>:** What’s the opposite of faith? Taking shortcuts limits God’s work in our lives
3. **September 19<sup>th</sup>:** Exercising the muscle of faith – it’s got to be exercised!
4. **September 26<sup>th</sup>:** **Houston, we have a problem. How lack of faith is impacting Christians in America.**
5. **October 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Faith’s role in salvation – stepping to *Sanctification* from *Justification*.
6. **October 10<sup>th</sup>:** The Power to Move Mountains and the peace that surpasses all understanding.

Tonight’s lesson is focused on **How lack of faith is impacting Christians in America**. Here’s the question we’re going to explore – *how would life in America be different if Christian men in the United States exercised extreme levels of faith?* In addressing this question we’ll explore the following subjects:

- Boldness vs. Fear – what do we fear and what do our fears tell us about ourselves?
- Risk-oriented vs. Risk Averse – in life, business, and relationships.
- Action vs. Inaction – is our unwillingness to act reflected in our lack of belief relating to God’s work?
- Prayer Warrior vs. Prayer Weakling – what difference do my prayers really make anyway?



One of my favorite men in the Bible is Daniel. The older I get the more amazed I am at all the Lord did in his life. I also marvel at the spiritual maturity he exhibited, even as a young man. Tonight, we're going to explore Daniel 1 and 2, a passage many of us have read before. However, we are going to view everything in the context of faith and its impact on the following areas:

- Boldness
- Risk
- Action
- Prayer

Daniel 1 speaks of Daniel's desire, along with Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, to live an undefiled life through their eating habits. In some regards these young men were in a venerable position because they challenged authority in what was expected of them; however, because of their obedience we see three things happen. First, God caused the authority figure in their lives to show favor (verse 9). Secondly, the healthy food actually caused their appearance to exceed those of the other young men. Finally, God rewarded their obedience by giving them exceptional knowledge and understanding (verse 17).

Daniel 2 tells an even more amazing story. Early in King Nebuchadnezzar's reign he started to have dreams. As we find in reading through the Old Testament, Nebuchadnezzar could be a demanding ruler and the story in Daniel 2 is no exception. Not only did he want an interpretation of his dream, he demanded of his astrologers that they tell him the dream! If they could not, he was going to kill them (verse 5). For obvious reasons, the astrologers panicked. Due to no fault of his own, Daniel got "lumped in" with the astrologers and his fate was to be the same as theirs. Daniel petitioned the king to ask for time to address the king's request. In verses 17 through 19 we read how Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah prayed to the Lord that He would give them the wisdom to learn the dream and also interpret it. That night God answered their prayers and the rest is history.

So, here's the main question for you and me: *In what ways could we experience the miraculous work of God were we to live by faith as reflected in our having strong prayer lives, living boldly without fear, taking action by avoiding passivity, and tasking risks for the Kingdom?*

#### Small Group Discussion Questions

1. Has there ever been a time in your life when fear prevented you from doing what you knew you should do? If yes, discuss what was the source of the fear.
2. How would your life be different if you lived as if you completely trusted in God?
3. Is there a time when you stepped out in faith and lived boldly for the Lord? If yes, what was the result.
4. List several ways America would change if Christian men stepped out in faith and acted boldly for the Lord. Think about our impact at a national level in relation to areas where America is struggling.