

“Before I See It”

Series Title: Still Believe

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Sunday Morning, 9:30am Stream

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{All scriptures are “NIV84” unless stated}

Current Series:

Still Believe

This series continues to discuss faith.

what it is, what it looks like

and how we can grow it.

Message Title:

“Before I See It”

Here is the question to open up today:

Can I Trust God Before I See That Anything Has Changed?

Last week we talked about distractions...

what you see influencing what you believe.

how that causes doubt

well THIS time...let's still use what we see...

And ask the question:

What If You Don't See Anything Yet?

What we'll find out is our eyes can trick us.

so we can't go by JUST what we see...

****Everyone hold your hands in front of your face****

****close your eyes****

****What do you see?****

****But where are your hands?****

****Just because you don't see them doesn't mean they aren't there****

Let's revisit another story of how your eyes can trick you.

2 Kings 6:8-10

8 Now the king of Aram was at war with Israel. After conferring with his officers, he said, "I will set up my camp in such and such a place." 9 The man of God sent word to the king of Israel: "Beware of passing that place, because the Arameans are going down there." 10 So the king of Israel checked on the place indicated by the man of God. Time and again Elisha warned the king, so that he was on his guard in such places.

The king of Aram was at war with Israel.

Before we get into the details of the story...let's start here.

"The king of Aram was at war with Israel."

For years I've read this and my eyes never caught this.

This is written saying that Israel's enemy was at war with them.

they were the ones making the moves against Israel.

Just a side note here for you own research one day.

Sometimes People Can Be Planning Against You When You're Not Planning Against Them!

You see it when you find people

competing with you when you weren't competing with them

disliking you when you didn't do anything to them

trying to trap you when you weren't even thinking about them

But even with this being a side note...it still fits...why?

You Don't Have To Fight Everyone Who Wants To Fight You. God Knows What They're Planning Before You Do!

So we read that anything Aram did to try and get the King of Israel...it never worked...

because Elisha would warn the king...

and the Lord was telling Elisha.

Aram failed a lot because Israel had cheat code.

2 Kings 6:11-14

11 This enraged the king of Aram. He summoned his officers and demanded of them, "Will you not tell me which of us is on the side of the king of Israel?" 12 "None of us, my lord the king," said one of his officers, "but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedroom." 13 "Go, find out where he is," the king ordered, "so I can send men and capture him." The report came back: "He is in Dothan." 14 Then he sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city.

So we know that no matter what Aram did.

Israel was prepared for it.

Can you imagine how they must have felt?

any time they're trying to do anything against their enemy...

they were ALWAYS prepared.

and it's not even a secret how Israel is winning.

it's Elisha...so go get him.

2 Kings 6:15-17

15 When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked. 16 "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." 17 And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

The servant wakes up, walks outside, and sees the enemy army surrounding them.

Of course he'd be scared!

“Oh, my lord, what shall we do?”

Because based on what he can see, they're finished.

But Elisha says:

“Don't be afraid...Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”

Elisha speaks with confidence...

like he knows something the servant doesn't.

Then Elisha prays:

“Open his eyes so he may see.”

And when the servant's eyes are opened, he sees the hills full of horses and chariots of fire.

Here's what we see here:

The Lord Didn't Send The Army After The Servant's Eyes Were Opened. The Army Was There The Whole Time!

What the Lord was doing did NOT change...

the servant's ability to see it did.

Another point about this:

Just Because You Can't See God Working Doesn't Mean God Isn't Working!

So let's talk about sight for a moment.

We've been taught all our lives to believe what we see.

so let's talk about our sight.

Before I See It:

1. What You See Is Real; But It Might Not Be The Whole Picture!

I want to make sure we understand that our eyes DO give useful information...

The army surrounding Elisha was real.

both Elisha and the servant could see this.

The problem was the servant assumed that what he saw was all the information available.

Faith Doesn't Ignore What's There. Faith Refuses To Believe That What You See Is All There Is.

Faith doesn't want you to say your eyes are useless.

God gave you your eyes...

it's okay to use them to "see"

it's okay to acknowledge what you "see:"

the diagnosis is real,

you aren't giving the devil glory by saying what it is.

the bill is real,

it won't go away by ignoring it in Jesus name.

the conflict is real,

the delay is real,

the loss is real.

Faith isn't about pretending those things don't exist.

But:

If You Only Trust Your Eyes, You're Not Seeing Everything!

The servant saw the enemy.

He couldn't see who was surrounding them.

Before I See It:

2. Faith Trusts God Before The Answer Shows Up!

We see this in how the servant acted vs how Elisha acted

The servant sees the enemy and says "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?"

imagine his anxiety.

They will be captured and likely put to death.

what he sees brings him fear.

The servant needs a different sight before peace.

Elisha already has peace.

And that's mature faith.

Elisha doesn't say:

"Lord, show me something so I can calm down."

He says:

"Those who are with us are more..."

He already understands.

This is where everything lines up.

Week 1:

He knows who he believes.

Week 2:

That belief affects how he responds.

Week 3:

What he sees doesn't allow doubt to get into his faith.

Week 4:

He trusts before the evidence becomes visible.

Faith Doesn't Wait Until It Sees Something To Start Believing Something!

Before I See It:

3. Sometimes The Answer Is Already Moving Before You Notice It!

This takes us to a new story.

Matthew 8:5-10

5 When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. **6** "Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering." **7** Jesus said to him, "I will go and heal him." **8** The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. **9** For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." **10** When Jesus heard this, he was astonished and said to those following him, "I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in

Israel with such great faith.”

Wait...Stop

We talked last week about Jesus talking to Peter

who was walking on water...

and Jesus told him he had little faith

Yet this man had great faith...

why??

Jesus says:

“I will go and heal him.”

The centurion basically says:

You don't have to come. Just speak.

And Jesus is amazed by his faith.

What makes his faith extraordinary?

He doesn't require:

Jesus in the room,

Jesus touching the servant,

a visible sign,

some type of confirmation first.

He says:

Your word is enough.

Then Jesus says:

“Go! It will be done just as you believed it would.”

And the servant is healed **at that very hour.**

It works because the Centurion has to go ALL the way back home before he sees what he believes.

He has to go home based on **a word.**

That gives us:

Sometimes Great Faith Has To Move Before It Sees The Answer!

Jesus speaks here.

The healing happens there.

The centurion has no live updates.

No text message.

No FaceTime.

He just has:

“Go.”

And he goes.

He can't see the evidence until much later.

Faith Believes God Before The Evidence Arrives!

That's why this message is titled: “*Before I See It.*”

{Closing}

So let's tie the whole thing back together in closing.

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

I hope we see this different now than we did 4 messages ago.

Faith isn't *pretending that something is good when we don't believe it.*

Faith isn't positive thinking.

Faith isn't confidence that I will always get what “I” want.

Faith Is:

- I Know Who God Is. (Wk 1)
- I Move According To What I Believe. (Wk 2)
- I Don't Let Doubt Overrule What God Has Shown Me In The Past. (Wk 3)
- And I Can Trust Him Before I See The Evidence.

(Wk 4)

This is the whole series wrapped up.

We've spent the month talking about still believing.

No matter what you see,

still believe

No matter what you hear,

still believe

You know who God is

You know he's capable.

As we get closer to finishing the Year of the Comback...

let's start believing and trusting him for what he's going to do.

Let's not let our doubt prevent ANYTHING he's wanting to do in our lives.

Before we see what he's going to do...

we've seen what he's done...

and because of that...

let's Still Believe!