

## CCC KEEP ON BELIEVING Part 8

### How to Rebound From Disappointment

#### Achieving Through Believing

A few years ago I had an opportunity to meet with several pastors from around the Washington and Baltimore area. During this time I was spiritually challenged and emotionally refreshed. One of the things we did is we shared our most embarrassing moment in the ministry. One pastor of a large church in the southern Virginia said he was speaking to a packed crowd one Sunday and was really dramatizing the fact that Peter went to the tomb. In talking what he meant to say was, "On Easter morning, Peter ran to the tomb. He stooped and peeked in the tomb." But he got his words mixed up and what he said was, "On Easter morning, Peter ran and pooped in the tomb." He

said he started laughing and the people got to laughing so much they had to dismiss the service!

While I was there the Lord gave me a simple word for Calvary. I felt a definite word from the Lord during that time and I really never have shared and it's the title of today's message. I felt like God wants to say to us as a church, "Keep on believing!"

I think the basic message of our church is "Don't give up! Keep on believing!" Don't give up on your job! Don't give up on your kids! Don't give up on the Lord, but keep on believing!

I think that's a word all of us need to hear. That's what I want to say to you this morning. Keep on believing!

But how do you do that? Galatians 6:9 *"Let us not become weary in doing good. For at the proper time*

[underline that] *we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.*" Keep on believing!

How do you keep on believing when all the circumstances discourage you? How do you keep on believing in spite of difficult circumstances? There are two keys to having a persistent faith, the faith that keeps on believing no matter what, a faith that says don't give up and these two keys are:

1. Understand how God works in your life.
2. Learn to wait on God.

And were going to be talking about those two keys over the next two weeks as we continue in our series Achieving through Believing. Today were going to look at

## **I. UNDERSTAND WHAT GOD WANTS TO DO IN YOUR LIFE.**

If you don't understand how God works in your life, you're going to get discouraged and you're going to give up. The Bible says very clearly that there is a specific pattern or process that God performs in our lives. I call them the six phases of faith. See friends, God knows what He's doing even when it looks like He doesn't know what He's doing in your life. If you don't understand these phases of faith, you're going to get discouraged and you're going to give up.

The first phase is:

### **1. God gives you a dream.**

That's the starting point. God gives you a dream, an idea, a goal, a challenge, a promise, a desire, an ambition. When God wants to do anything, He starts with a dream. This church began as a dream. God begins with a dream. God gave Noah the dream of building an ark. God gave

Abraham the dream of being the father of a great nation. God gave David the dream of being the king. God gave Nehemiah the dream of rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem. God always starts with a dream. Nothing happens until somebody starts dreaming. This pattern goes throughout scripture that God starts with a dream.

The second phase is:

## **2. A decision.**

You make a decision. Am I going to follow the dream or am I not? A dream is worthless unless you choose to go for it. The decision-making stage in the process of faith is a time when you invest. You decide to invest. You lay it on the line. You invest your time, your money, your reputation, and your energy. You make the decision. Are we going to go for it? The decision-making stage in the process of faith is the moment of truth where you decide if

you're going to lay it on the line, take the plunge, and go for it. If you're going to walk on water friends, you've got to get out of the boat! The decision phase in the process of faith always involves letting go of security. You decide to let go. There's always a decision-making time. Why? Because faith is a verb. It's not passive. The first phase the dream, then the decision.

The third phase is:

## **3. Delay**

This is where some of us get bogged down. We don't like Delay. But there is always a delay when God works in your life. He gives you a dream but He does not fulfill the dream immediately. There's always a time lapse, a waiting period, a delay. Nothing is more common in the life we live than waiting. We have to wait on everything and yet nothing do we hate more than waiting. We wait on traffic. We wait in

doctor's offices. We wait at the restaurant. [Why do they call that other guy the waiter? I'm the waiter! I'm waiting for my food, the bill, for everything.] Now as we've gotten into the technological age we wait on other things

Sometimes we have to wait on God. Have you ever said, "Hurry up, God! Let's get in action here! Answer me!"

Every believer in the Bible has had to go through God's school of waiting. Dream - Decision - Delay. Noah waited 120 years for it to rain. That's a wait! Abraham waited 99 years for a son. Moses waited 40 years in the desert. Jesus waited 30 years for 3 years of ministry. Joseph waited years in prison, falsely accused. David was anointed king as a young man but he waited for years to become the actual king of Israel.

Why does God take us through the delay stage? Because it teaches us to trust Him. A typical reaction is, "What's

wrong, God?" We start to doubt. Did I miss the dream?

We may learn that a delay is not a denial. A delay is a delay. Part of maturity is learning the difference between "No" and "Not yet". Your children have to learn that.

When you say, "Not yet" they think that means "No". Not yet means not yet! No means No.

A delay will never, never destroy God's purpose in your life. Never! Delays are a part of God's purpose in your life.

We've been waiting over 4 years for our Expansion

Program. That's nothing compared to some of the waits they had in the Bible. Four years is insignificant.

But, how do you handle the waiting rooms of life?

We'll we can start here because this I do know... How you handle the waiting rooms in your life them determines your faith. Waiting is an act of faith. First comes the dream.

Then comes the decision to invest time and money and effort. Then comes the delay.

The fourth phase is:

#### **4. Difficulties**

Are difficulties a part of God's plan? Definitely. Two kinds: critics and circumstances. Imagine the difficulties these men had to go through in fulfilling God's dream. Think of the difficulties **Moses** faced leading a half million Jews across the desert. The logistics of food and water and restrooms... They didn't have port-o-potties in those days! Can you imagine the logistics of handling all that?

**David** was anointed by Samuel to be king. For the next several years he was chased all over the countryside by Saul, trying to kill him, hiding in caves.

**Joseph** -- his whole life was downhill. He comes to his brothers and says, "One day I'm going to rule over all you guys!" That went over like a lead balloon! They sold him into slavery. He's sold as a slave into Potiphar's house, accused of rape, put in jail. His whole life is downhill for the first 40 years.

**Noah** -- imagine the difficulties he had organizing a floating zoo. You can't put the snakes next to the birds. You don't put the mice next to the elephants. Difficulties! They're part of God's plan.

Finally you come to the end of your rope and you think you've exhausted the limits of your ability. You've done everything you could. You've tried. God's dream just doesn't work. We're at the end of our rope. And that brings us to the 5<sup>th</sup> phase.

## 5. Dead End

The situation deteriorates until it becomes an impossibility. There is no way out and it looks hopeless. Are the any of you here today that I am speaking to... Are any of you here this morning? Are you at the end of your rope? Do you feel like you're boxed in a corner? Humanly speaking, there's no way out. You're out of gas and the situation looks hopeless.

I find it interesting that God made a promise to Abraham that he'd be the father of a great nation and then He waited until he was 99 yrs old -- when it was physically impossible for Abraham to have kids -- to give him a son. At age 85, God said, "I'm going to change your name from Abram to Abraham which means 'Father of many nations'." Wouldn't that be embarrassing? You walk into

Ledo's... "What's your name?" Abraham. "Great! How many kids do you have?" None. "How old are you?" 99. We looked at Romans a few weeks ago. The Bible says that Abraham looked at his body and said, "No way, Jose!" He looked at his wife Sarah who was also old and said, "Double no way!" Isn't that typical that God waits until it's spiritually, physically or impossible from a human standpoint -- you come to a dead end! This is the principle taught all through scripture that's called the Death of a Vision. Later Abraham did have a son. And God told him to take Isaac (who was not a young man at that time. He was probably 30-35. He could have resisted but he cooperated with God's plan, too!) and said, "Abraham, I want you to sacrifice Isaac." Why? Isaac the one son he had waited for, for 99 years, and now God says "I want you

to sacrifice the very thing that represents the promise I've given you." Death of a vision.

Jesus brought in a vision of the kingdom. The disciples were excited! But one day He was nailed to a cross and crucified. The disciples are bewildered and disillusioned. "What happened?" Death of a vision. For three days they wander around in a dazed attitude. It's over. We're finished.

At this stage in your life you begin to question. What's going on, God? Did I misinterpret Your plan? Did I miss Your vision? Did I miss Your dream? Did you bring me this far just to drop me?

I think the best illustration of Phase 5 is the children of Israel at the Red Sea. We talked about it last week... God pushed them into a cul-de-sac. Mountains on either side of them. An enemy army at their heels, coming to kill them,

and an ocean in front of them. They were boxed in! There was no way out. They were at a dead end. They began to grumble. "Maybe it would have been better if we had stayed in Egypt. At least there was security there." They began to complain.

The question is: Did God make a mistake leading them into that dead end? The answer is... Not at all! God had them exactly where He wanted them.

Some of you are boxed in right now. Everything is falling apart, and I am here to tell you today... you're right where God wants you to be!

The name of the place where they were boxed in at the Red Sea was called "Baal-Zephon". That means "God's hidden treasure." When I think there is no way out and it's a dead end and I've done everything I could, there's a hidden treasure there. When you're flat on your back, all

you can do is look up to God. God often asks us to believe in impossible situations. Because that's where faith comes through. God was preparing you for Phase 6.

## **6. Deliverance**

God does a miracle. God provides the solution. He delivers. He makes good on His promise. He supernaturally fulfills the dream, not by human effort but supernaturally. He parts the Red Sea. He gives Abraham a son at 100 years of age. Later when he's sacrificing him, He provides a ram out of the thicket, miraculously. He provides a solution.

Why does God allow the dreams that He gives us to die? 2 Corinthians 1:8-9 tells us. It says God allows the dreams to die so that we will rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. If God can raise the dead, He can raise a dead marriage. If God can raise the dead, He can

heal cancer. If God can raise the dead, He can get us 850,000 for the Expansion Program. If God can raise the dead, He can do anything.

Our impossibilities are simply God's opportunities.

God loves to turn crucifixions into resurrections. He loves to turn deadends into deliverance. He loves to turn night into day. He specializes in resurrections. Then He gets the credit.

So, in order to handle the discouraging times of life, you need to understand how He works. Then you need to learn to wait.

What do you do while you're going through the six phases of faith which are inevitable for a Christians life? I could have used anybody in the Bible to illustrate this. It's taught all through scripture. What do you do? How do you wait on God? There are Four things, God's word, the Bible

shows us. But let me say this, “Waiting is not passive... it’s not just sitting there, twiddling your thumbs. And next week will look at the... **“LEARN HOW TO WAIT ON GOD.”**”

**Let me ask the Praise Team** to come forward and will are going to have some time to reflect on this message. Sometime to do some self evaluation.

**Let us Pray:**

Are you at the end of your rope? Are you boxed in? Are you backed into a corner financially, physically, mentally, in your relationship? Do you find yourself saying, "Hurry up, God!" If so, God has a word for you this morning. Keep on believing! Get ready for a miracle. Remember that God's delays are not God's denials. "Not yet" does not mean "No." You may be stuck in the Delay period or the Difficulty period. Or you may be stuck at the Deadend. You're still trying to figure it out on your own cleverness.

Maybe you're trying to take a detour. Maybe you're just trying to do something different. God wants to say, "You're at the Deadend, but I want to do a Deliverance."

I don't know why God has delayed some of my deepest requests. But I do know this: God is in control. I don't know why God hasn't answered some of your deepest prayers but I do know that God is in control.

I challenge you to pray this prayer in your heart, "Lord, help me to withstand discouragement. Help me to hold my ground against the devil and against his doubts, the darts of doubt and discouragement and depression and the temptation to detour. Lord, help me to keep on praying and believing and anticipating Your answer. Help me to trust that Your timing is perfect."

Thank You, Father. Thank You for giving us these examples and truths in Your word so that we might

understand how You work in our lives and then not be discouraged by it. Help us to keep on believing even when we come to the delays and difficulties and even to the dead end. Lord, we know that without faith it's impossible to please You. So we thank You in advance for what You'll do in our lives and in our church. Help us to withstand discouragement, doubts. Help us to anticipate Your answer, to never stop praying and to always trust that Your timing is perfect. Lord, we know that You're more interested in building our character than anything else. Make us ready for the blessing You want us to receive. In Jesus' name. Amen.

## KEEP ON BELIEVING

### How to Rebound From Disappointment Achieving Through Believing - Part 9

*"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up!" Galatians 6:9*

#### TWO SECRETS OF PERSISTENT FAITH

##### I. UNDERSTAND HOW GOD WORKS IN YOUR LIFE:

God knows what He's doing even when it looks like  
He doesn't know what He's doing in your life.

(The Six Phases of Faith)

Examples:

Noah (Genesis 6-9)	Joseph (Genesis 37-45)
Abraham (Genesis 17-22)	Moses (Exodus 2-15)
Jesus (John 14-20)	David (1 Samuel 16-32)

PHASE 1: \_\_\_\_\_

PHASE 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Decide to invest:

Decide to let go of:

PHASE 3: \_\_\_\_\_

PHASE 4: \_\_\_\_\_

PHASE 5: \_\_\_\_\_

PHASE 6: \_\_\_\_\_

(2 Corinthians 1:8-9)

Our impossibilities are simply God's opportunities.

##### II. LEARN HOW TO WAIT ON GOD.

**W** \_\_\_\_\_

*"Put on the full armor of God so that you can withstand against the devil's schemes ... stand firm ... and take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish the flaming darts of the evil one."*  
Ephesians 6:11, 13, 16

3 "Darts":

*"Be strong, take heart, and wait for the Lord" Psalms 27:14*

**A** \_\_\_\_\_

*"I am expecting the Lord to rescue me again, so that once again I will see His goodness to me..." Psalms 27:13 (LB)*

*"I wait eagerly for the Lord's help..." Psalms 130:5 (GN)*

**I** \_\_\_\_\_

*"Jesus told a parable to show that we should always pray and not give up." Luke 18:1*

*"Morning by morning I lay my requests before You and wait in expectation." Psalm 5:3*

**T** \_\_\_\_\_

*"Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust Him to help you do it and He will. Be still before the Lord, wait patiently for Him to act." Psalms. 37:5&7 (LB)*

*"Everything that happens in this world happens at the times God chooses. He has set the right time for everything." Ecclesiastes 3:1&11*