

THE STORY (A Discipleship Course)

Chapter 4 – Between the Words of the Story

Teaching Notes

February 24th, 2021

EVERYTHING IN LIFE IS WORKING TO KEEP YOU FROM LIVING THE STORY ORDAINED FOR YOU.

- Disease, storms of life, poor marital relations, pandemic, etc.

1 A QUICK REVIEW

- **Story Matters**—Story is how God designed life to unfold.
- **Chapter 1**—From the beginning, the creation story shows the contrast between LOVE and FEAR.
- **Chapter 2**—Meaninglessness and the power of Sin spread through the land because of the “fear of death.” The only solution was to introduce The Son into the story.
- **Chapter 3**—Ultimately, the call of God into the Kingdom is to believe Him again. So, Jesus gifted us the powerful tool of REPENTANCE & BAPTISM—not as a way to win God’s affection, but as an ongoing daily process of restoration to a pre-Fall lifestyle of presence and mission.

2 HIDDEN BETWEEN THE WORDS OF OUR STORY, THERE EXISTS A PRINCIPLE...A POWER...THAT IGNITES EVERYTHING GOD HAS SEEN AND BRINGS IT INTO OUR REALITY.

- At the center of Jesus’ teaching on the “abundant life,” Jesus gives us the principle of believing in and living by the UNSEEN.
 - As soon as Jesus spoke the Words, “I came that you would have...abundant life,” it created a tension within us. It spoke to something inside.
 - Every time we hear a real Word from the Lord it shakes something inside.
- Consider the most impactful and powerful moments of your life...you believed something you could not see, today; and because you believed it, it produced far more than you could imagine.
 - Consider these decisive moments:
 - “Let’s get married.”
 - “I’m going to go to college.”
 - “Let’s get pregnant.”
 - “Let’s go on vacation.”
 - “Let’s start a new business.”
 - As soon as you spoke it, it activated something!
 - It created VISION.
 - It created a PROCESS.
 - It engaged OTHER PEOPLE.
 - It spoke to a greater COURAGE in you.
 - It called you into an ADVENTURE.
- The BIG QUESTION: What is this activating substance to our story?
 - It is the thread between the Words of our story that brings it all together.
 - It creates the scenery around our lives and the context through which we travel this journey.

3 **YOU CAN ONLY BE LED INTO THE SUPERNATURAL ADVENTURE OF THE KINGDOM WHEN YOU LIVE BY THE UNSEEN, INITIATED BY A "WORD OF FAITH."**

- **Romans 10:5–17 (ESV) — 5** For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. **6** But the righteousness based on faith says, "Do not say in your heart, "Who will ascend into heaven?" " (that is, to bring Christ down) **7** "or "Who will descend into the abyss?" " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). **8** But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); **9** because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. **10** For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. **11** For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." **12** For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. **13** For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." **14** How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? **15** And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" **16** But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" **17** So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
- As soon as we declare our belief in what God offers, it ACTIVATES that promise to begin working in our lives.
 - The "Word of Faith" is like a starting gun to a race...
 - And like a race, the starting gun is just the beginning. My faith is my response to the gun, and then, how I run the rest of the race.
- Faith (belief) is initiated by the WORD OF THE LORD. (v.10)
- My believing, followed by speaking the Word, initiates new DIMENSIONS to my story.
 - Speaking the Word means I speak it, I dream with the Word, I plan with the Word, I partner with others for the Word, etc.

4 **ONCE I START THE RACE OF FAITH, FAITH KEEPS ME CONNECTED TO A STORY BUILDING PROCESS WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

- **John 14:26 (ESV) — 26** But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.
- FAITH comes alive in the Presence of the Holy Spirit—in other words, the Spirit is WORD in us calling to our FAITH.
 - Again, that which is currently unseen, but being spoken by the Lord, drives us in the Kingdom of God.
 - This is God creating a "Garden" reality in the now.

- **Galatians 3:1–14 (ESV)** — **1** O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. **2** Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? **3** Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? **4** Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain? **5** Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith— **6** just as Abraham “believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”? **7** Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. **8** And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.” **9** So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. **10** For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.” **11** Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for “The righteous shall live by faith.” **12** But the law is not of faith, rather “The one who does them shall live by them.” **13** Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”— **14** so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

- There is “Hearing” the Word of God, and then there is “HEARING WITH FAITH.” These are not the same.
 - Faith takes God at HIS WORD.

 - Faith believes with absolute certainty that God is and DESIRES TO WORK in the lives of His sons and daughters. (Hebrews 11:6)

 - Faith believes that my actions to trust God’s Word to me is going to yield GREAT FRUIT.

 - Faith cannot manifest the unseen when I’m AFRAID of God.

5 DEVELOPING GREATER VISION FOR THE USE OF YOUR FAITH

- “All things are possible to Him who believes.” (Mark 9:23)
 - What if you set your goal to make every promise of Scripture real in your life?

- **John 14:8–14 (ESV)** — **8** Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” **9** Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? **10** Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. **11** Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves. **12** “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. **13** Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **14** If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.”
 - God in Jesus, and them in us, call us to produce “THE WORKS” of heaven.
 - There is a “Word of Faith” in us!
 - Whatever Jesus did and does, you can do that and more. Think about it...Why would Jesus teach us this? It produces in us a faith tension.

- Talk and live the lifestyle of one filled with the PRESENCE OF GOD.
- 6 **ANOTHER HUGE CONSIDERATION: TO TRULY BE LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT INTO THE GREATER STORY, YOU MUST COME TO THE END OF YOURSELF.**
- **John 12:24 (ESV) — 24** Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.
 - A seed contains everything it needs for the LIFE intended for it.
 - A seed is what it is; it can't be anything else.
 - You gotta accept the seed that you are!
 - A seed must be placed into the right ENVIRONMENT in order for its design to take over.
 - When we refuse to be planted according to our assignment, we cannot flourish.
 - Everything in the flesh wants to PRESERVE itself—to hide and isolate.
 - This is why the enemy's favorite tactic is to inflict pain and fear.
 - Your SURVIVAL instinct will often-times silence the "Word of Faith" growing in you.
 - Survival is a loud voice!
 - Faith trusts in the PLACE where God desires to PLANT us.
 - "God, here am I; send me!" (Isaiah 6:8)
- 7 **SOME FINAL THOUGHTS ON FAITH**
- You already HEAR well.
 - Grow accustomed to believing in something greater than your comfort.
 - Fuel your IMAGINATION with growth-minded information.
 - Most of what we hear and read has to do with what's wrong rather than with the opportunities to grow.
 - Make faith-filled TENSION a normal reality.
 - We don't normally like tension, but it's tension that leads us to the "greater works."
 - Give the HOLY SPIRIT opportunity to challenge you.
 - If you simply ask the question, daily, you will be led into more.
 - Believe HIGHER than your willingness.
 - Define where you're willing to go and take one step further.
 - Be more than spectators; be a spectacle.
 - Don't just watch others create; you create.
 - Live by LIGHT rather than darkness.
 - Believe the light in you is greater than the darkness without.

- Never stop REACHING for the impossible.
 - When you stop reaching, you start dying.