



We have spent several sessions discussing leading with the influence we have in all the areas where our opinion makes a difference in other lives. The greatest expression of that influence is in the context of your faith. It means your advocacy for Jesus is the leading edge of your person, and those around you understand Jesus is essential to your journey under the sun. But we have stepped back timidly from leading with our faith. We need to know the issue of faith is essential—our faith matters—and we need to acquire a bold faith.

An Essential Question

Matthew 24:45–47 (NIV84[®])

⁴⁵ “Who then is **the faithful and wise servant**, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? ⁴⁶ It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. ⁴⁷ I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

Matthew 25:21 (NIV84[®])

“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! **You have been faithful with a few things**; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’”

1. In what areas of your life have you given more attention to self-gratification than self-sacrifice?
2. Where have you seen the faithfulness of God’s people diminish as a whole? What effect is that going to have on future generations?

I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE FAITHFUL?

Hebrews 3:1–3 ¹ *Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, **fix your thoughts on Jesus**, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. ² **He was faithful** to the one who appointed him, just as **Moses was faithful** in all God’s house. ³ Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself.*

A. Obedience

B. Do Difficult Things

Luke 18:31–33 ³¹ *Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, “We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. ³² He will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him, spit on him, flog him and kill him. ³³ On the third day he will rise again.”*

Acts 9:15–16 ¹⁵ *But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. ¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”*

Acts 26:19 *“So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven.”*

2 Corinthians 11:24–28 ²⁴ *Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, ²⁶ I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. ²⁷ I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. ²⁸ Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.*

C. Overcome

John 16:33 *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I **have overcome the world.**”*

Philippians 4:12–13 ¹² *I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³ **I can do everything through him who gives me strength.***

Ephesians 1:9–10 ⁹ *And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰ to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—**to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.***

Exodus 3:9–12 ⁹ *“And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. ¹⁰ **So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh** to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.” ¹¹ But Moses said to God, “Who am I, that I*

should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"¹² And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."

Revelation 21:7–8⁷ **He who overcomes will inherit all this**, and I will be his God and he will be my son.⁸ But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

Romans 12:21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

D. Say "No" to Self

Luke 9:23–26²³ Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.²⁴ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.²⁵ What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?²⁶ If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels."

E. Endurance

Hebrews 12:2–3² Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him **endured** the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.³ **Consider him who endured** such opposition from sinful men, **so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.**

Galatians 6:8–9⁸ The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.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.

Isaiah 40:30–31³⁰ Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall;³¹ but **those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength.** They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

F. Perseverance

James 1:3–4³ because you know that **the testing of your faith develops perseverance.**⁴ Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

2 Thessalonians 1:3–4³ We ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing.⁴ Therefore, among God's churches we **boast about your perseverance and faith** in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring.

3. When have you retreated from a difficult situation because the perceived risk of obeying the Lord was too great?
4. In what ways have you been more of an "overlooker" than an "overcomer"?
5. Where can you take an uncomfortable step this week in demonstrating your faith?

PRAYER

God has uniquely blessed us --- the best is yet to come.

God has heard our prayers.

God has healed our bodies.

God has restored our marriages.

God has protected our children.

God has delivered us from oppression.

We live in a season of shaking. God is shaking the earth.

He is restoring the Jewish people and purifying His Church.

If we look at the things which can be shaken we will be filled with terror.

If we look at the eternal Kingdom of our Lord, we will be filled with anticipation.

Our determination as we gather today is to declare before one another & Almighty God

WE WILL NOT STOP.

We are not satisfied.

We are not distracted.

We are not weary in doing good.

We are not discouraged.

We have our eyes on the cross and our hearts set on the prize.

We believe the One who has promised is Faithful.

We believe the Holy Spirit is our Helper.

We believe that what we ask in Jesus' name our Father provides.

We believe that the King of Kings is returning to the earth in all of His glory ---

and we intend to be about His business until that moment in time.

WE WILL NOT STOP.