

Talk It Over

Do Not Be Afraid (part 3) Some Invisible Things Are Powerful

SMALL TALK

1. Before the coronavirus pandemic ,on a scale of 1 to 10, how high would you rank your phobia for germs (1 being "I have no fear", and 10 being, "I can't wash enough, and I will not touch or get near anything anyone has ever touched"? How many points has it changed since the pandemic?

VIEWPOINT

2. **READ 2 Kings 6:9-12.** How was the king of Israel avoiding the king of Aram again and again? How did the king of Aram assume the enemy was getting privileged information? Where was the "security leak"?
3. **READ 2 Kings 6:13-23.** What did Elisha see that his servant could not see? What was the outcome?
4. **READ Psalm 91.** Who is God faithful to protect? What comforting similarities with the 2 Kings 6 events are found in Psalm 91? How did the evil one attempt to twist the words of Psalm 91 to tempt Jesus? (Read Matthew 4:6; Luke 4:10-11). What kind of guarantee does this Psalm give to those who take refuge in the Lord? Short term? Long term? Any term? Are there exceptions? What kind of protection did God the Father give his Son?

GETTING PERSONAL

5. **READ Proverbs 29:18.** Have you seen people "casting off restraint" and not heeding "wisdom's instruction" these days? Why do you suppose people do that?
6. **READ Hebrews 11:1-2, 6.** What is the definition of faith as it relates to what we cannot see? What pleases God? How Does God respond? How are you earnestly seeking God these days?

MAKING PROGRESS

7. What are you doing to "dwell" in the "shelter" of God most high? What are you doing to "rest" in his "shadow" and "fortress"? What are you doing to turn away from worry and fear?

March 29, 2020

Do Not Be Afraid

(part 3) Some Invisible Things Are Powerful

MICROSCOPE: I began learning about the reality of invisible things as a child. I was given this microscope more than 50 years ago. The electron microscopes being used today are much more sophisticated, and we can see high resolution enlarged pictures of what is otherwise invisible to the eye.

I. The Bad News is this: “Some invisible things are powerful”.

Isn't it interesting that we are all reeling and reacting based on something only the scientists have actually seen live, and that is only made possible through high powered lenses? But is that all the evidence we have? No. This thing leaves a visible trail, and huge amounts of observable evidence, which is why a lens was used to figure out what was causing a mysterious disease.

How do we know the coronavirus which causes COVID-19 is real? I believe it is real. By why? I don't have an electron microscope, nor do I care to get that close. Like most people, I believe it is real because there are “expert” eyewitnesses called scientists who are informing us of the source of all the observable evidence that the world is now seeing.

Proverbs 29:18 (NIV) Where there is no revelation, people cast off restraint; but blessed is the one who heeds wisdom's instruction.

Science has revealed to us things we can't see with the naked eye.

We need revelation. In science, revelation often comes through a lens. We get that. The experts study it, then reveal what they know. Then, the wise heed wisdom's instruction. If you don't believe the revelation you will cast off restraint. If you don't believe the experts, you might live carelessly and get the virus and spread it.

Are you heeding wisdom's instruction? Enough said about the bad news. I want to focus on the good news.

II. **The Good News is this: "Some invisible things are powerful."**

I believe that all truth is God's truth, and reality is reality.

Objective reality is what makes faith work.

True faith is not believing in whatever we want to believe. That is definitely not faith as the Bible describes it.

I am not interested in a subjective reality apart from the objective reality. I'm not interested in the power of believing by itself. I'm interested in the power of the God we believe in. What I'm interested in is reality, and you are too, we all are.

Our faith in the "experts" eyewitness testimony plays a role in **theology** as well as in **biology**; the parallels are remarkable.

2000 years ago, there was a contagious outbreak of GOOD NEWS. It grew exponentially as people described how Jesus was killed for what he claimed, then rose from the dead. The outbreak movement of Jesus was immediate. It did not start after the New Testament documents were written. It started in real time. There was compelling evidence at the source, and there was a huge trail of evidence from opposing viewpoints of the experts evaluating it. But the outbreak grew exponentially! Now nearly a third of the globe's population believes Jesus is who he claimed to be and rose from the dead. This is the good news.

Here are some basics about God and about how faith works.

Hebrews 11:1 (NIV) Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

Again, what we “hope for” is not whatever we wish for. We place our hope in an objective reality. This hope is not wishful thinking, but trust in a reality we cannot see.

*Hebrews 11:6 (NIV2011) And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him **must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.***

A. FAITH is the only way to PLEASE God.

That's what God wants most from us. He wants us to get to know him, to know he exists. He wants us to come to him even though we can't see him. He wants us to learn how to trust that he really does exist. The writer of Hebrews mentions this several times.

*Hebrews 11:1-2 (NIV2011) {1} Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. {2} **This is what the ancients were commended for.***

B. God responds to your FAITH.

There are so many revelations about powerful invisible realities. Here is one of them.

*2 Kings 6:8-23 (NIV2011) {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. {11} **This enraged the king of Aram.** He summoned his officers and demanded of them, “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. {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 no, 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, “Open his eyes, LORD, so that 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. {18} As the enemy came down toward him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, “Strike this army with blindness.” So he struck them with blindness, as Elisha had asked. {19} Elisha told them, “This is not the road and this is not the city. Follow me, and I will lead you to the man you are looking for.” And he led them to Samaria. {20} After they entered the city, Elisha said, “LORD, open the eyes of these men so they can see.” Then the LORD opened their eyes and they looked, and there they were, inside Samaria. {21} When the king of Israel saw them, he asked Elisha, “Shall I kill them, my father? Shall I kill them?” {22} “Do not kill them,” he answered. “Would you kill those you have captured with your own sword or bow? Set food and water before them so that they may eat and drink and then go back to their master.” {23} So he prepared a great feast for them, and after they had finished eating and drinking, he sent them away, and they returned to their master. So the bands from Aram stopped raiding Israel’s territory.

If you want to get God’s attention and ignite his action for you, FAITH is required!

Hebrews 11:6 (NIV) And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Just as Elisha believed in invisible power, so did Jesus.

*Matthew 26:47 (NIV) While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was **a large crowd** armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people.*

John used the term for a Roman “detachment”. This crowd was very large. It was a crowd of hundreds (and that is understating it) of trained and armed soldiers.

*Matthew 26:52-53 (NIV) {52} “Put your sword back in its place,” Jesus said to him, “for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. {53} Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal **more than twelve legions of angels?***

A legion is up to 7,000, but was often used for a countlessly large crowd. This is 12 times that.

But Jesus did not call 12 legions of Angels. If he had, he would not have gone to the cross, and where would we be then standing before God. We would stand before God naked and ashamed and held responsible for our own sin. Jesus had a better plan.

Jesus went to the cross on purpose with our disease of sin to conquer it, and his death conquering life is our vaccine!

[FAITH](#) is the only way to [PLEASE](#) God. And God responds to your [FAITH](#).

Let me urge you to engage like never before. Faith needs two sides for it to work. God makes it work. But you must make it work as well, or it doesn't work. If your faith is not working, it is because you are not working it!

We are providing you with help. Go to our church's facebook page and you can find a daily schedule of new and live content. Engage. God responds to your faith.

Communion Instruction: Let me encourage you to express your faith this morning from wherever you are. Let us join with countless followers of Jesus who will be remembering, worshiping, and celebrating together also by taking a piece of bread which reminds us that Jesus came in a body for us, and a cup of juice which reminds us he shed his blood for us. If you don't have unleavened bread, improvise. If you don't have grape juice, improvise. What is important is to express your faith and come before him earnestly, remembering that God responds to our faith because Jesus really did what he did. He took our sins in his body, on the cross, and took them away, then defeated sin and death for us.

Now let's pray. If you would like to pray this out loud with me, feel free to do so.

Our Father in heaven,

We come to you. We believe in you and we earnestly seek you. "Your kingdom come; your will be done on earth as it is in heaven". Come with your blessings and reign over us. Bring Your kingdom power against the darkness we sense around us. Displace the kingdom of darkness with light and life through the victory of Jesus Christ. We ask you to bring protection, healing, and rescue. Whether we see this today, next week, or next month, we believe that You hear us and answer us, and we will continue to trust You, praise You, and worship you, even as we wait for answers. Please deliver us.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.