

Introduction:

- Backstage at the circus, motivational speaker Jim Donovan noticed that the elephants were kept in place by nothing stronger than a thin rope that tied one leg to a stake in the ground. Puzzled, Donovan asked one of the trainers what prevented these powerful animals from just snapping the rope and running away. The answer? Raised in captivity, the animals are held like that from an early age when they're much smaller and weaker. They get so accustomed to the fact that they can't break the rope that they eventually quit trying. When they're full grown, they never attempt to pull themselves free. **APPLICATION** Like the elephants, how many of us go through life hanging on to a belief that we cannot do something simply because we failed at it before. Have you avoided trying something new because of a limiting belief? Worse, how many of us are being held back by someone else's limiting beliefs?
- Kelly and I sat during the last week of December and we each made a list of 'limiting beliefs.' Or a list of lies that we believed. These were things we thought about ourselves and sometimes said about ourselves as well. We exchanged the 'limiting lie' for a liberating truth.
- Kevin and Leslie McNulty will be with us at the end of January for three days of Wake to Miracles! God still does miracles! The question is: Do you really believe it? I believe in miracles for I believe in God!
- Miracles: Miracle of the mosquitos - Tad. Seeing angels with Kelly. Sixth grade: found a Timex watch and dollar bill after I started tithing. Kelly had a skin pigmentation disease (vitiligo-caused by loss of melanocytes). Rain on my father's crops. Perfect vacation-warm enough to ride horses, snowed so we could go sledding, rime ice. I.e. Our building paid off by someone.
- Here is what Jesus has to say to you about miracles: **"I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father."** (John 14:12, NLT)
 - The late, Bill Bright reminds us that, "We are called to do impossible deeds--to live supernatural lives. To live a supernatural lifestyle we must begin to think supernatural thoughts, make supernatural plans, pray for supernatural results, and expect God to work supernaturally in our own lives."
 - Bill Johnson, "I can't afford to let any thought be in my head that is not in His head. And I can't afford to not have any thought in His head that is not I'm mine."

I. Miracles Happen Because of Faith

- A. **"I ask you again, does God give you the Holy Spirit and work miracles among you because you obey the law? Of course not! It is because you believe the message you heard about Christ."** (Galatians 3:5, NLT) I.e. Healing from allergies.
 1. Faith does not come because you do something. There are no works attached to faith.
 - a) Everyone has been given a measure of faith. Ro 12:3. At the very least we have been given enough faith to get saved. And if you have enough faith to get saved you can get all the rest that God provides as well.

- b) Mustard seed faith - is a measure of faith. Mt 17:17-21.
 - (1) They can't cast out a demon. Later they ask Jesus, "Why couldn't we do it?"
 - (2) HIS ANSWER: Because of your unbelief. (Mt. 6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8). *oligopistía* is a variant in Mt. 17:20. Kittel, Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans. Unbelief
 - (3) This kind comes out by prayer and fasting. It is in the place of fasting that we get victory over unbelief. You get hungry for God!
 - (4) Even Jesus was limited by people's unbelief. *"And so he did only a few miracles there because of their unbelief."* (Matthew 13:58, NLT)
- 2. Faith comes by hearing the message/the Word of God. Roman 10:17 You believe because you hear the message! You can hear it preached! You can read it yourself. You can memorize it. You can FB it. You can discuss it over dinner. Faith comes by hearing/listening to the Word!
 - a) "...They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."
 - b) But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him?
 - c) And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him?
 - d) And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?
 - e) And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, "How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!" (Romans 10:12-15, NLT)
- B. *"Then Jesus said to the disciples, "Have faith in God. I tell you the truth, you can say to this mountain, 'May you be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and it will happen. But you must really believe it will happen and have no doubt in your heart. I tell you, you can pray for anything, and if you believe that you've received it, it will be yours."* (Mark 11:22-24, NLT)
 - 1. really believe
 - 2. have no doubt
 - 3. pray for anything
 - 4. it will be yours. Faith moves mountains!

II. Miracles Happen When There Is Desperation

- A. The Miracle of the Wine. The Wedding of Cana John 2:1-ff
 - 1. *"The wine supply ran out during the festivities, so Jesus' mother told him, "They have no more wine.""* (John 2:3, NLT)
 - 2. It is interesting that Jesus waited until their resources had run dry before he performed the miracle.
 - a) Only when the people came to the end of their supply were they ready to receive what Jesus had to give.
 - b) He tells them fill up the water pots! Take it to the guest of honor!
 - (1) To see miracles we have to do what Jesus tells us to do even if it doesn't make sense to us sometimes.
 - (2) Not long after this is when he tells the 12 to speak to the mountain.

- c) You have the potential to be most ready for a miracle when you are most desperate!
- d) *"This miraculous sign at Cana in Galilee was the first time Jesus revealed his glory. And his disciples believed in him."* (John 2:11, NLT)

B. The miracle of the oil. 2 Kings 4:1-7

1. My husband is dead, and a creditor has come threatening to take my two sons as slaves. The Woman was desperate!!!
 - a) To threaten - means to 'snatch' away. Kidnap! To be taken against one's will. This woman was in a state of panic. She was about to lose everything—her sons!
 - b) Slave: to be in bondage to. To be forced to produce for another. You do not get to enjoy the fruit of your labor. The woman's faith was being shaken to pieces. She had no faith.
2. Elisha asks, "What do you want me to do? What do you have in the house?"
 - a) Elisha was refocusing her faith. He was the prophet! He had the Word of the Lord.
 - b) This woman was about to hear the Word of the Lord and Elisha was preparing her to cross over to possess her miracle!
 - c) She had a pot of oil. So many times God takes the the last little bit from people in scripture so that they can break through! Nothing left to trust in. IE. Elijah took a mom and her sons last meal. Jesus took a boys last bread and fish. Jesus took Peters hand when he started to sink. Desperation positions you for your miracle. When you do not have anywhere else to go but to God.
 - d) She gathered the empty vessels and closed the door! There are times when you just have to close the door to the world, to nosey people, to doubt and unbelief. Put them out. (Mark 5:40) After he put them out and closed the door he raised the little girl! When you close the door to the world and trust God miracles happen in the desperate place!
 - e) This woman heard and acted, and as a reward God provided for all of her needs, immediate and future.

III. Miracles Happen Because You Fight For Them

- A. *Just then a woman who had suffered for twelve years with constant bleeding came up behind him. She touched the fringe of his robe, for she thought, "If I can just touch his robe, I will be healed."*
Mt 9:20-21
 1. She had to fight the crowd.
 2. She had to fight the culture - she could be severely punished for being in public while bleeding.
 3. She had to fight fear.
 4. BUT!: She had faith and she was desperate.
- B. I have had to contend for all my miracles. Maybe it was the faith I was contending for.

1. *"Dear friends, I've dropped everything to write you about this life of salvation that we have in common. I have to write insisting—begging!—that you **fight with everything you have in you for this faith** entrusted to us as a gift to guard and cherish."* (Jude 3, The Message)
2. Allergies
3. Back
4. Building

Conclusion:

- In conclusion—The Lord tells us in Luke 17:6 *"The Lord answered, 'If you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'May you be uprooted and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you!'"* (Luke 17:6, NLT) Both represent impossibilities.
 - I ask you? What mountains/impossibility are you facing?
 - Are you standing in front of a mountain that appears unmovable?
 - Are you standing there helpless not knowing what to do?
 - How strong is your faith this morning? If it feels weak I invite you to close the door to the world, get in communion with God and build your faith in His Word!