

0 (0s):

Alright, it's time for episode three of A New Hope. Well, I'm so glad that you guys are here today. My name is Matt Wolf. I'm a lead pastor here to Rise Church Denver. If you're joining us online or in person, I love you. I'm so happy that you're here today. And, we are all about helping people follow Jesus here. We wanna help you follow Jesus and for you in turn to help others follow Jesus. Because following Jesus is the path of the fullest life and the only path to eternal life. So, we want that for you. And today we are gonna be in part three of our series, A New hope, A new hope. There were two men who were severely ill and both of them were placed in a hospital room and one of 'em was so sick that he couldn't even sit up in his bed.

0 (42s):

The other man was put in a bed up against the wall where he could see out the window, but the first man couldn't. So the man near the window would, would look out every day and tell the other man what he could see out the window. He, he would describe the sunrise in the morning, describe the, the beautiful blue skies, the, the big tree that was growing the, the green grass. And next to it was a small pond where there would be ducks some days and even some kids that would come and, and they would drive a remote controlled boat in the pond. And every day the, the man who couldn't look out the window, he was so encouraged, hopeful, and even felt happy because of, of what this man was describing to him every day out the window.

0 (1m 28s):

But then that man died. So the, the man w was thinking, Hey, I, I would like to be able to, to see out the window too. So he asked, he said, Hey, before you move some other patient into this room with me, could you move me by that window so I could be able to look out as well? So they listened to his request and they rolled his bed over by the window. But when he looked out that window, all he saw was a brick wall. You see what's fascinating about that story is that the man was empowered, he was encouraged, he found hope even in what he could not see with his eyes. There is something powerful about our imaginations in what we can see in our minds eyes, even when we can't see it with our physical eyes.

0 (2m 17s):

But there's also something else interesting about that story because yes, hope is a powerful force, but we also need to have hope in something that's true, something that lasts someone or something that can actually come through for us. So in this series, we're calling it a new hope. And I know that there are some people who are discouraged, who are down, depressed, maybe even have thought about taking their lives. And I hope to give you a new hope. I really hope this series will give you a firm strong hope. But it's not just okay to be hopeful about anything. You can't just be, let's be optimistic, okay, glass half full people, the sun will come up tomorrow. Like that isn't enough.

0 (2m 59s):

We need hope in something real. So what we're gonna talk about is that real hope and that shining in our mind's eye until we can see it with our own eyes, And, we call that faith. So these two concepts, hope and faith really tie together so closely. They're like hand in glove. but I want to make sure you guys understand

how they fit together. Because today we're going to focus on the concept of faith and how we need it to have true hope. Rubin Alvez is a, was a Brazilian Brazilian theologian and I think he, he explained it pretty well and he said this, he said that a hope is the ability to hear the music of the future.

0 (3m 41s):

Faith is the courage to dance to it today. So hope looks forward to something that will happen in the future. But faith is how we act and live today when we're waiting for that, faith sees in our mind's eye that hope of good things to come. If I had to paraphrase it in a much less poetic way, I would say that hope is what you see coming. Faith is how you live until it comes. So those two things fit together and what we're talking about this series, I hope, will give you a new hope for what God can do and will do in the future. It's a beautiful, blessed hope, a living hope. And yet what we need right now is faith.

0 (4m 24s):

And I'm gonna challenge you today and our big idea, I'm, I'm pulling this directly from the scripture today. It is the most famous verse known, maybe even the most famous phrase to come out of this book of Habakkuk. And I wanna make sure you get it. Okay. And it's this, the righteous will live by faith. The righteous will live by faith. This is so important. I need you guys to say it too. Can you say it with me? The righteous will live by faith. So important, the righteous will live by faith. I want to make sure that this gets deep in your soul because this is what we need. And this is actually comes from Habakkuk chapter two verse four. We're gonna really focus on that one verse today. So, if you have your bibles open with me to that tiny book, three chapters in the Old Testament and the minor prophets.

0 (5m 8s):

It's not minor though it, it has some major themes but it's very short what Habakkuk says. And in Habakkuk two, four and If, you have your smartphone. Get the YouVersion Bible app And. you can find our event right there in the app and save it to your phone. But in Habakkuk two, four, I wanna read this verse, which is the most famous verse outta this book, And. We are gonna focus on it today because it is so important for us to understand as people of faith what it means to live by faith. So it says in verse four, see the enemy is puffed up, his desires are not upright. But the righteous person will live by his faithfulness. The righteous person will live by his faithfulness.

0 (5m 48s):

This verse is actually quoted three times in the New Testament and we're gonna look at all three of those times. And each time it, it is with just a simpler phrase, the righteous will live by faith. And that's why we're going to use that as our big idea today. The righteous will live by faith. So what is going on here? Let me catch you up in week one of our series, A New Hope, we were introduced to Habakkuk who was a prophet. And a prophet normally is known as a spokesperson for God. So God says something, they say it, they write it down. But habakkuk's a little bit different because he was actually upset, angry, mad at God because his nation Judah the god's people, they were not living the way they should. Morals had gone bad. Like there

was no justice in the nation.

0 (6m 29s):

Things were not good. So he cried out to God in his first complaint, that's what it's called in the NIV, the title of the section, his first complaint to God. Like what are you doing? Where are you? Why aren't you doing anything to fix our nation? There's bad people in charge and bad things are happening. And God responded to him in week one and said, oh don't worry, I'm gonna do something. I'm going to send the Babylonians to sort out all the bad people living in your country. So God had a plan this whole time. And what we learned in that one was to embrace God. 'cause sometimes it's hard, but we gotta take our questions, our doubts, our our anger to God and just hold on, embrace him. but it left the question in Habakkuk's mind and in ours, okay, well then why would God allow the evil Babylonians to come in?

0 (7m 11s):

Because they were even worse than the bad people that were running the nation at the time. So that led us to his second complaint where he yells at God like what are you doing? How could you A, allow this kind of evil, even use this kind of evil? So last week we had a very heady message. You know, he was very philosophical as we pondered the the problem of evil And, we actually saw in the passage five reasons why God allows Evil And. we covered a huge chunk of scripture, 26 verses that we covered the rest of chapter one and all of chapter two. And it was a lot that we got last week. And I told you that was gonna be one you had to think about. But today's message is, is is one for our lives.

0 (7m 53s):

Okay? How do we practically live? We might be able to intellectually understand that God is allowing evil for our good and his glory. But how do we practically live now when things are so hard? That's what today's message is for. And instead of focusing on 26 verses, we're gonna focus on one verse and really just one phrase, the righteous will live by faith. Now If, you noticed in our verse it says the righteous person. Okay, that's a pretty easy jump to go from righteous person to righteous, right? The righteous will live by faith. Okay, that's simple. But then you might be wondering, well why do you say faith instead of faithfulness? What's actually interesting is that this verse is quoted three times in the New Testament and this is Hebrew.

0 (8m 34s):

The New Testament is Greek. And the Greek word faith actually could be translated as faith or faithfulness. And really when I look at it, actually theologians debate this and fight over which, which word are we gonna use to translate right here. But they actually I think are two sides of the same coin. And when we say the righteous will live by faith, I want you to think both things, faith and faithfulness. Let's think about it a a little bit more I. think it is impossible to have faith in someone If. you do not have faithfulness to that person. Lemme explain. I'm married, okay? I'm married and I have been married to Melissa. We're coming up on 15 years this June. Yeah, that's pretty great, right? 15 years we just, we're celebrating our 16th Valentine's Day this year.

0 (9m 16s):

Okay? And I have faith in Melissa. I know we exchanged vows, we said, you know, in sickness and in health till death do us part, right? So I have faith in her and her word that she will stay true to me and stay faithful to, to me, right? That's my faith in her. Now, I don't think it's possible to actually have faith in someone, but not be faithful to a person. Okay? Because what if I was like, yeah, I believe her, she's gonna stay true to me, but I'm gonna get a a a side piece just in case. What? Like, that's terrible, right? No. In order to have faith in someone, I also must be faithful to that person. I'm gonna stay faithful. Now you could reverse that. And if I'm like, I I'm gonna stay faithful to Melissa all the time, but I don't trust her.

0 (9m 59s):

I'm always looking over her shoulder like I, I'm worried about her. I think she's, she's gonna leave me like, no, no, no, that doesn't work either. You've gotta be faithful to a person and have faith in them, in their word. They both go hand in hand. And it's the same way in our relationship with God. We have faith in him. We trust him, we take him at his word and we're gonna stay faithful to him and live according to his word. Now you can't say you have faith in God and don't do anything he says. So Jesus said like we actually have to obey his word and and do what he tells us to and listen to him. And that's why even when we're first introduced into faith in the Bible with Abraham, it says that Abraham believed in God, he had faith in God.

0 (10m 40s):

And then when God told him to go to a country he'd never been to, he left his home and went and his faith was credited to him as righteousness. Which was it? Was it his act of, of being faithful and doing what he was supposed to do or his faith in God? Yes, they go hand in hand, don't they? Yes. Faith in God and faithfulness to God and So, that is what God is telling us is how the righteous person is supposed to live. So now we ask the question, what does the word righteous mean? I wanna define that for you. Very simple. The righteous, we might not say it 'cause we're past the eighties, right? The only time you hear it now is like someone is self-righteous. It's almost a bad thing. But what it actually means is to be right in the eyes of God. To be righteous is right in the eyes of God, what God is looking for.

0 (11m 25s):

So what this passage is telling us and why it's such an important concept for all of us to understand and we're gonna focus a whole message on one phrase, is because what God is looking for is not these perfect people who do every single thing he says and never fail. 'cause we all fail. He he isn't even saying, Hey, you've gotta say these special prayers and make sure you quote a lot of scriptures and it's gotta be real fluffy and nice and then you'll be a good religious person. What does it actually say? The righteous person, the people who are right before God are those who live by faith. The righteous will live by faith. That's what God is telling us. This is what I want, this is what I'm looking for. And these are the people I re will reward. These are the people I will save.

0 (12m 6s):

The righteous will live by faith. So we're gonna learn three different things. 'cause like I said, the New Testament quotes this one phrase three different times. So in each one of the three instances, we're gonna learn a different aspect of what this faith means. And it's so important for us because we need that faith in our world today. 'cause we see things, these are not the way I want things to go. The world looks like it's getting worse. Our country's going downhill or, or in my own life things are not going the way I want to. I may have lost my job. I have a health issue that I'm worried about. The diagnosis scared me or that person I thought was gonna be committed to me and faithful to me has left me. When you get in those tough spots, when life is hard, what we need is to walk by faith. The righteous will live by faith.

0 (12m 46s):

So what are the three things we are gonna learn today? The first one is that faith is not self-reliance. Faith is not self-reliance. We have to define what it's not in order to define what it is. I'm just saying faith is not self-reliance. So let's look again at our verse, Habakkuk chapter two verse four. And in it we read this, he says, see the enemy? That's the Babylonians. See the enemy, he says is puffed up. He's puffed up. And in verse five it says that he is arrogant at never and rest, but he compares the Babylonians to us or the people he wants us to be.

0 (13m 27s):

And he says, but the righteous person will live by his faithfulness. So if the righteous person lives by faithfulness, it is not living in a puffed up arrogant manner like the Babylonians. They're puffed up. They're like, I got this. I can rely on myself. I am strong. And the Babylonians were strong. In fact, at the very end of the first section of this book in Habakkuk chapter one, verse 11, we read this, the Babylonians are deeply guilty. God says why for their own strength is their God. They were like, we're strong, we're powerful and we're going to trust in ourselves. It was faith in themselves.

0 (14m 6s):

It was self-reliance. And that's not the faith that God is talking about here. Now the Babylonians had a reason to have faith in their strength because they were the most powerful nation on earth. They were actually emerging right then and they were taking land after land and they were an incredible military force. And they practiced a very stealthy form of warfare. They were practicing blitzkrieg long before Germany ever came around. Okay? They were moving in fast into different nations, attacking quickly, destroying, taking captives and then keep moving on and on before anybody could catch their breath. And because they moved so quickly, their strength just grew and grew. They took over more nations and they were dominating everything. It made sense why They had some self-reliance.

0 (14m 48s):

They thought I'm good. We're we know what we're doing. We are more powerful than everyone else. And they trust it in themselves. And what God is telling us is that makes us guilty, makes us puffed up

self-righteous. Not the type of righteousness that he wants. The righteousness he wants is faith based on him. Now I'm telling you this because I talk to a lot of people who are like, oh, I'm not a person of faith, I'm not religious. That is bogus, okay? Everyone is, and most people in our country, not all, but most people in our country, if they're not a person of faith or religious, they actually have faith in themselves. Even the people that are like, oh, I've looked at all the different religions.

0 (15m 28s):

They're just, none of 'em quite fit what I believe or I think of the world. Oh, so you're saying your religion's better than all the other religions? That's arrogance. They're saying, I believe better than everybody else. I know better. My reason is powerful enough that I can figure out better than everybody else what's right. And I can trust in myself and my reasoning to figure it out. I can trust my heart, trust my gut. It's a self-reliance. There's even a whole movement of like self-help around this. Right? And what do they literally tell you? And I learned this from like first day of public school, right? Believe in yourself. That's literally what they say, right? Believe in yourself. It's self-reliance. It's a type of religion that you can have the smarts, the strength, the skills, the talent, the the tenacity that you can keep pushing forward.

0 (16m 13s):

If, you rely on yourself. You can make it through anything. In fact, they'll say, If, you dream it, you can do it. What a lie. Okay? don, don't care how many dreams you have about flying. No matter how fast you move your arms, you ain't gonna fly, right? And some of you, you might have bad eyes or motion sickness, even If, you train, you can't fly a plane, right? And there are other dreams that we have that we're gonna fail. Okay? I love basketball, but this five 11 white boy ain't never playing in the NBA. No matter how hard I would've trained when I was young, there's no way I could play in the NBA.

0 (16m 56s):

It's, it's just impossible, right? No matter how big my dreams are, no matter how hard I try dig within myself, And, you know what happens if we have the religion of self-reliance? That's what our faith is in inside of ourselves. What happens is either one, we'll achieve some of those dreams, achieve some of those things we've been longing for, hit our goals. And then what happens? Puffed up arrogant. And guess what? Nobody likes you. I'm honest. People might hang out with you because you're rich and you're famous And, you've achieved stuff but they don't actually like you. This is why those people that are rich and famous are some of the loneliest people around. They're like, don don't know if anybody actually likes me. God doesn't like you either. 'cause you're puffed up, you're conceded. So that's what happens, If, you achieve your goals, but If you don't.

0 (17m 38s):

Which is all of us, we feel miserable like a failure. We're not good enough. And man, every single one of us, at some point, even if we do achieve all these dreams, we're all gonna lose. No matter how fast you run, you can't outrun death. We invent all these technologies. We have these sciences, we get these special diets.

But no matter how well you eat the Mediterranean diet, you're not gonna live forever. We're all going to lose. If we were rely on ourself for everything, you will fail. Self-reliance is a terrible faith because that God will let you down. And that's why God says, that's not the type of faith I'm looking for.

0 (18m 20s):

And now, now this also emerges in a religious way. A lot of religious people are like, Hey, well you know, I believe in something outside of myself and therefore I'm gonna work as hard as I can to be a really good person because I'm gonna be good enough and then I'll get to heaven. This is what almost everybody I talk to says. They're like, well, I'm a good person. I think I'll, I'll get in at the end. Like, oh, okay, we all think we're gonna be good enough. Do enough good stuff, go to church enough, volunteer enough, serve enough, give enough money, be be kind to that person on the side of the, well I did that one nice thing for my grandma once. I'm definitely good, right? And, we look at our works And, we say, Hey, I'm good enough. There's other people who do it religiously even though they're not religious. And we call them like cause people, okay, do you know any cause people, they might devote themselves to their cause.

0 (19m 6s):

They're like, I'm gonna do this thing and I am gonna save the whales. They give their money, they give their time, they volunteer, they, they do whatever they can to help the homeless. They pick their cause and then what happens to them? Whether they're the religious person in, in church or they're religious person with their cause, they get puffed up, man, are they annoying? Right? Self-righteous. Nobody can be as good as them in their specific works or nobody can be as good as them with their causes. But both of those fail too. If you're the religious good person, you'll realize at some point I am failing. I I can't do all of the religious rules. I I've I've let myself down. You will fail at some point, whether you recognize it or not or if you're a cause person.

0 (19m 46s):

And even If, you save the whales. Look at the white rhinos over there. You, they all died. I thought you called yourself a conservationist, right? You're gonna let yourself down and others down because we're not good enough. We're just not. And, and that's why Paul picks up this verse and, and he applies it to how we try to rely on ourselves. In Galatians chapter three, verse 10, he says, for all who rely on the works of the law, doing whatever they can to be good are under a curse as it is written. This is 'cause. This is what the Bible says. Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the book of the law. Have you done everything written in the book of the law?

0 (20m 27s):

I haven't. You haven't. None of us have. So we're cursed. We're not perfect. Clearly Paul says, no one who relies on the law is justified before God. Because why? The righteous person will live by faith. The righteous will live by faith. That's why he quotes it. It He's like, don't rely on yourself in a religious way in a causeway. Don't just dream it. You can do it. Don't believe in yourself that will fail you in the end, the righteous. Instead

live by faith because lemme tell you the good news now our faith, our good news tells us that Jesus, the son of God was actually the one perfect righteous one.

0 (21m 10s):

He fulfilled all of the law. He did everything he was supposed to and he loved people. He cared for people. He served people the lowly he cared about. He looked 'em in the eye, he showed compassion to them. He cared for them and he did everything right And he should have been blessed, not cursed. And yet he still went up on a tree and it says in the law, cursed is everyone who was hung on a tree. And there was Jesus taking our curse upon himself, taking our sin upon himself. The punishment we deserved was on him. And what we believe in our faith, and this is why faith is so important, is that on the cross a great exchange happened. The reward and blessing that he deserved is given to anyone who puts their faith in Jesus Christ.

0 (21m 53s):

And the punishment and the suffering and the curse that we deserve is placed on Jesus. It's not fair, lemme tell you that. But in faith we receive it And, we know that that actually happened on the cross because on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead to prove that God has power over all of those things in our lives. That's the gospel. And it's by faith. The righteous will live by faith. So that's the first thing. It's not self-reliance. You wanna know that the thing it is though, it's God confidence. Faith is God confidence. Okay, I don't know if I made up this word, but I'm saying it right now. Can you say it to the person next to you? Get some God confidence.

0 (22m 37s):

This is what we need. A God confidence. It's a confidence that comes from God. And I think this is so important because there are so many people, even some good meaning Christian religious folk who will just be like, I'm no good, I'm miserable and it's this false humility. I can't do anything right. I'm your right. Okay? But that's not the kind of faith we have. The faith we have is God confidence. We can walk forward and be bold and confident. Not because we're relying on ourselves, but because we're relying on God. In in verse three A, God actually tells us he wants to have this what it means for the righteous to live by faith. And back at two three he says, for the revelation awaits in appointed time.

0 (23m 18s):

So something good is coming, I just wait. And he says, it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it. It will certainly come and will not delay. Be certain, have confidence, I'm coming. I'm gonna do a new thing and it's gonna be good. God wants us to have a confidence. In fact, in Hebrews 11 one, we're told this is the definition of the faith he wants. Now faith is what? Confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. We need to walk in faith means to walk in confidence. It's God confidence that we have knowing that God will come through.

0 (24m 1s):

This is how Paul picks this up in Romans chapter one. The same thought when he quotes Abba two, four. And in Romans chapter one, verse 16, Paul says, for I am not ashamed of the gospel, I am bold and confident in what I believe because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes. That's faith. For in the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed a righteousness that is by what? Faith. From first to last, just as it is written, there's our verse. The righteous will live by faith. So I Paul's picking it up here, I am confident. He says, I'm not ashamed.

0 (24m 41s):

I can walk boldly and tell people the only way you will be saved is by believing in Jesus Christ. We can have a boldness. Some of you are timid with your faith. You walk outta here And you like, I don't know, I'm people, think I'm just a weirdo Christian. Well you are. Get over it. Okay? We don't have to be ashamed anymore because we have a God who conquered over sin and death in Jesus Christ. I'm not ashamed of that. I have a God confidence and I can move forward boldly no matter what comes my way because I know even if I suffer, struggle or even die in this life, there is hope for me on the other side. I have confidence.

0 (25m 21s):

You know, I, I'm not gonna pick any sides in today's Super Bowl. I really don't care who wins as long as the Chiefs lose. I'm a Broncos fan. But, but you know, I've really started to, to like Brock Purdy, don't know if you guys have noticed this. Brock Purdy, but Brock Purdy. Brock Purdy is, is really interesting because he is Mr. Irrelevant. Have you guys heard this title? He's Mr. Irrelevant because he was the last person drafted in the 2022 draft. And that's just kinda the title, okay? You're like the afterthought, the very last person, hundreds of other people are picked before you and then you're the last one.

0 (26m 3s):

Do you remember that on the, in the school yard? Okay, being the last one picked, you're Mr. Irrelevant. And that was his title. And he had to fight just to make the team that summer with the 49 ERs. And then when he made the team, he was the third string quarterback and he played most of the season on the bench. And it's only because the two guys in front of him got injured that he even got a chance to play it all. Talk about Mr. Irrelevant. But he's doing pretty good now, isn't he? And another fascinating thing about him is that he is making \$930,000 this year. Now for most of us we're like, that'd be pretty nice. Like I'll take that as a salary. But, but Patrick Mahomes, you know the opposing quarterback for the chiefs is make making \$45 million this year.

0 (26m 48s):

\$45 million. Brock Purdy is one of the lowest paid players on his team. Mr. Irrelevant coming outta nowhere. You mean nothing? What a lowly guy you would think for most of us that would get in our head, right? But he has a God confidence. I love this. In an interview he was asked about getting paid so little. This is what he said, listen to this. He said, if you're trying to chase status and money and all this stuff, you'll lose your life. Rather than denying yourself, picking up your cross, keeping your eyes on Jesus and his

promises, he said, that's a life worth living.

0 (27m 29s):

Don't you like that? That's God confidence. He doesn't care what people think. He doesn't care how much he makes. He's gonna have a confidence, a God confidence in Jesus today. And I think that's the kind of confidence we all need no matter what comes our way and how bad things are to have a faith that can see what God will do in the future, even when we don't see it with our eyes now. And that leads us to our third point. Our third point is that faith never, lets go. We talked about this with the embrace in the first week. The name Habakkuk means embrace. It's like wrestling with God. Even when things are hard, things are going bad. Just keep holding on, never let go.

0 (28m 9s):

That's what faith is. It's not just for the moment that you believe And, you say a prayer and accept Jesus into your heart. That's the beginning of faith, that's the seed of faith. We have our faith until the very end. We never let go. In Habakkuk two, three, God said that. He said Though it linger, wait for it, wait for it, hold onto it. It will certainly come and will not delay. It might take years, decades for Habakkuk. You might not see it in your lifetime, but wait for it. I'm coming and I'm gonna do something good that's holding on.

0 (28m 51s):

That's what faith is. And the author of Hebrews picks up this verse in the same way. And I want you to see this, this whole passage. So we're gonna look at Hebrews 10 36 through 38. The author of Hebrews says, you need to persevere, keep pushing forward, holding on, never letting go, So that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised for. In just a little while, he who is coming will come. Now he's quoting our verse right and will not delay. And in verse 38 he says, and but my righteous one will live by faith and I take no pleasure in the one who shrinks back. God says that you can't shrink back.

0 (29m 31s):

You can't let go. That's not faith. Faith is holding on even when you can't see, even when nothing else makes sense. That's how the righteous will live by faith, never letting go, holding on through everything through thick and thin. Now, now this is important for us because what our eyes see does not, and and sometimes goes against what we read in God's word. But as people of faith holding on in faith, we live by what we see in God's word more than what we see in the world.

0 (30m 12s):

This is what we need to hold onto God's promises and what he tells us. Because if we see that in our minds eyes, it's way more important than anything we see in the world. Even if our nation is going to a pot, our city is going to hell in a hand basket. If our world is crashing around us, And, we are struggling and life throws every hand grenade at us And, we can't block it. It's everything's falling apart. Even still. We trust what God says in his word. This is what we need to do while we wait. While we wait, go it linger, wait for it, wait for it.

Hold on. Never let go. Because while we are waiting, God is actually doing something.

0 (30m 54s):

You might not see it with your eyes, but he's doing something. And that's what we look at in faith. Now there's something powerful about our minds. I don't know if you guys know this. Okay, we have powerful brains. There was a study done a few years ago and they asked people just to think about their favorite movie for a while. And what they did is they, they checked those people's brains and they found that those people's endorphins increased by 27% just by watching their favorite movie in their head, right? We don't need to see with our eyes, if we can see in our mind, it can even affect our body. There was a study done on stroke patients who had lost the movement in some of their limbs and they asked these people to move those limbs and so physically they couldn't move them.

0 (31m 43s):

But what they found in their brain was that their, their brains were actually giving the same motor function as if they had those limbs and, and doing it correctly for a while. It could even lead to some healing in those limbs because our brains are powerful things. Even if we can't see it, we can wait for something. This is the same thing I do every week as a preacher. I preach my entire message in my head before I ever see you guys. This is what athletes do. They imagine what they're gonna do on the field or or in the arena before they ever do it. That there's something powerful. Musicians do it. There's something powerful about rehearsing in our mind, even if we can't see it with our eyes.

0 (32m 23s):

That's what faith is. We can't see God working with our eyes, but we know he is based on his word. And I'm telling you, this is how we're gonna make it through. How we're gonna wait if the righteous will live by faith. I needed to get a new pair of dress shoes last year, okay? I've always bought cheap dress shoes and I don't have to wear 'em too often as a pastor. I don't usually wear 'em on, on stage, but I do weddings, funerals, you know, and, and, and so I need some new dress shoes and they always, I always buy cheap ones and they wear out. So I was like, I'm gonna do some research, get some really good long lasting shoes. So I, I did the research, found the shoes I wanted and I ordered them last year and I was gonna get 'em for our event because we have one fancy event here a year called the Shine Awards And.

0 (33m 12s):

we do it every year to honor all our volunteers, all the people who serve in our church. And If you are not serving right now. You should So that. You can go to our Shine Awards at the end of April. It's like that, that good. It's an awesome event. It's like we, we try to do it formal and and really good and it's for anybody who's serving at least one time a month. So you can still sign up And, we will, you'll be invited to the Shine Awards this year. So last year I was like, oh, I'll get my new shoes for the Shine Awards that year. And I ordered 'em and after I placed my order, I got an email confirmation saying your shoes will arrive in 12 to 16 weeks. I was like, oh my gosh. Like in, you know, that's maybe not that long of time, but in the day of

Amazon, right? When you can get something in two hours shipped to you or get a chef made meal served to your door in 30 minutes by DoorDash, right?

0 (33m 56s):

12 to 16 weeks, that's forever to wait, right? And I was like, oh man, should I cancel the order? Find some different shoes? And I was trying to, I was thinking through that over a couple weeks. And then a couple weeks later after the confirmation I got a, a new email and this email had this picture of this small town in northern Italy where a small batch of leather was being created, crafted into your shoes. It even had a video interview with a guy named Umberto who was cutting the leather for my shoes. And I know that this was just email drip, you know, but I was like, that's kind of cool, Umberto's cutting my leather. A couple weeks after that I got another email and this one had a picture of Nancy who was stitching together my shoes that week.

0 (34m 42s):

And then a couple weeks after that I got another e-mail from Ivan and Henry who were mounting my shoes. I don't even know what mounting was, but I was like, that's cool. Had a little picture of them. And then a couple weeks after that there was Miguel who was putting the sole on my shoe. And I was starting to get excited about this, right? Like this 12 to 16 weeks is kind of like, oh this is cool. I'm getting this whole process because as I'm waiting there are these master craftsmen working on my custom pair of shoes. So while I'm waiting, they're working right? And I'll tell you what, those shoes came in week 16. We had our Friday night event. They literally got to my door Friday afternoon two hours before the event.

0 (35m 26s):

but I put on those shoes and I walked in with confidence that night. And these are those shoes right now. You can get a little close up right there if you're watching online. And I'll tell you what, God isn't just a craftsman making some shoes. He's the master craftsman weaving together all of human history, every aspect of your life, all the things you're running into, even the evil things. He's working in what Satan intends for evil. He intends for good, he's weaving, he's working, he's the master craftsman. And even when we don't see it, he's working. Even when we don't feel it, he's working. He never stops.

0 (36m 6s):

He always keeps going and he's putting everything together. And that's why even when we don't see it in his life, even when we feel lonely and even God has abandoned us, God has promised us, never will I leave you and never will I forsake you. Jesus promised us his spirit would live inside of us and he would be with us to the very end of the age. And that's why we can know even when we're struggling and suffering and there's hardship, God promises us that in all things, God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. He's working, he's gonna figure out how to make everything work together. If, you are struggling financially. We know that He promises us that he will provide for all our needs according to his glorious riches that are in Christ Jesus.

0 (36m 49s):

We can take that to the bank. He's working and even if we face death, we know that he has gone to prepare a place for us and he's coming back. And that neither life nor death can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. That he'll take us to somewhere better by far will be given a new body. And one day he will make all the earth right where there will be no more sick ne sorrow, pain or death. Even if we don't see it. He is working. And that's why the righteous must live by

2 (37m 25s):

Faith

0 (37m 28s):

So. we say this all the time around here and I don't want you to miss this. What does that mean for me today? Faith means taking the next step. It's just the next step. What is God telling you to do is your next step of faith. You don't need to know the whole thing. You're not gonna know the whole thing. There's no way you could see all of it. But what we do is just take a next step. So what's God putting on your heart is your next step. If you're a parent here we have one next step for you. Next week. Dedicate your child. This is a big step of faith 'cause you're giving your child and trusting them to the Lord and child dedication. What we say around here is, is that it's your commitment to God and the church coming on your team.

0 (38m 10s):

Okay? That's what we do here. Maybe that's your step of faith. You're gonna, I'm gonna trust my kid. Not that I'm gonna save them and do everything, but I'm gonna trust 'em. The Lord So. that might be your step of faith of your parent. Some of you And, you can fill out that form online. Some of you maybe have had a little bit of faith privately and you've been ashamed of your faith. You haven't gone public with it. And, and what your step is, is to get baptized in two weeks. We're gonna have a baptism service here on Sunday morning. Go to rise in ru com slash baptism, fill this out. Go public with your faith. Tell the world that you follow Jesus. It's a big step of faith and it's gonna be powerful. Others of you, you've been kind of walking on your own, trying faith for a little bit, but you need other people on your team.

0 (38m 50s):

So you need to join a group. And guess what groups are launching today, okay? This week is the start of our group. So get in a group, join a group, find other people who can encourage and, and challenge you even when you don't see it. They can be around you and say, just trust God. He's got this. I'm praying for you. You need those people in your life. So get in a group today. You can go in the back or go online. We have some of the groups that have openings in the back. Make sure you get in a group. 'cause when we're real together we grow together. But you might have another step of faith. I don't know what it is, but you do. God is telling you what your step of faith is. So take it 'cause the righteous will live by faith. And I don't wanna leave this message by telling somebody in here who needs to hear it that some of you need to begin your journey of

faith.

0 (39m 37s):

You need to put your first step down. Your first step of faith is to make Jesus your Lord and Savior. And, and once you do that, he does have a better plan for you. He will will work in all things. He will give you his Holy Spirit to be with you until the end of the age. But you've got to make him your Lord and Savior to declare that you're a sinner and start relying on him, trusting him and to give some God confidence. So I'm gonna give everybody a chance right now. If, you could just close your eyes right now. I'm gonna give you a simple prayer you can repeat after me if you're already a follower. Jesus, say this prayer out loud to give some God confidence to somebody around you who needs to pray for the first time. So would you please repeat after me? Dear God, I'm a sinner.

0 (40m 19s):

I need a savior. Save me. Forgive me in faith. I declare

2 (40m 28s):

Jesus is Lord,

0 (40m 30s):

Fill me with your spirit. Give me the gift of eternal life. Help me to follow you and have God confidence even when I can't see it Now with eyes closed. If, you said that prayer for the first time. We wanna encourage you, And. we wanna give you a little book to encourage you and and celebrate with you on on your journey of faith. So. if you set that prayer for the first time and meant it, if Jesus stayed for the first time is your Lord and Savior, put your hand in the air on the count of three. 1, 2, 3. Put your hand up high, hold it up with confidence. Put that hand in the air If you, you made a decision. If you're online, go to rise Denver dot com slash follow. And Lord God, we're gonna just pray for everybody, including the two people in first service who made a decision of faith today.

0 (41m 14s):

Lord God, I pray that you would just encourage them and help every single one of us to walk with you, even when we don't see it, to trust you and know that you are more than able. And in faith we will worship you even when we can't see it. 'cause the righteous will live by faith. Amen. Thank you so much for

3 (41m 33s):

Listening to the message today. I'm Matt Wolf, lead pastor at Arise Church Denver. And we're all about helping people follow Jesus And. we wanna help you follow Jesus because of that. If you're newish, even if you're just checking us out online, go down below in the description and fill out that form at arise Denver dot com slash new. And if this message has impacted you at all, please go to rise Denver dot com slash give So that you can give back and help more people find out the message of Jesus Christ.