

“Smoke & Mirrors”

Pastor Al Brice | Sunday, December 1, 2019

“**Smoke & Mirrors**” - Something that is described as ‘**smoke and mirrors**’ is intended to make you believe that something is being done or going to happen when it is not, unless you believe and are convinced it will happen; to take someone’s attention away from what that person is doing or should be doing; an action that takes attention away from something which causes a person to turn in a different direction; to take someone’s attention away from what they are doing, so that they stop doing it or do it wrong.

Matthew 14:28-32 NKJV: ²⁸ And Peter answered Him and said, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” ²⁹ So He said, “Come.” And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, “Lord, save me!” ³¹ And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” ³² And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

1. You must base your decisions and actions, with confidence, not on temporary circumstances (for a season) or based upon your emotions and feelings, but based upon God’s Word and His Promises.

2 Corinthians 4:17-18 NKJV: ¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, ¹⁸ while we do not look (*to fix one’s eyes upon, direct one’s attention to*) at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

* Make a permanent decision, based upon His love, power, and promises, that you will see His glory in your situation and glorify Him, not your issue!!!

2. How do we look at things not seen?

Hebrews 11:1-3 NKJV: Now faith is the substance of things hoped for (trusted in), the evidence of things not seen. ² For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. ³ By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

A. You must see as God sees!!

Joshua 6:1-2 NKJV: Now Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel; none went out, and none came in. ² And the Lord said to Joshua: “**See!**

(**1 Samuel 16:7 NKJV:** For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”)

I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor.

* Did Joshua have a promise already made and given by God concerning their enemies and their future battles?

Deuteronomy 7:24 NLT: ²⁴ He will put their kings in your power, and you will erase their names from the face of the earth (*An individual's name represented that person's existence as it would be carried into the future through generations of descendants.*) No one will be able to stand against you, and you will destroy them all.

* Do we have that kind of spiritual power?

Luke 10:17-19 NKJV: ¹⁷ Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." ¹⁸ And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹ Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

B. How do we get this kind of faith?

Romans 10:17 NKJV: ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

*Did Peter hear the Word of God? Yes. Jesus said, "COME."

* Peter heard the Word and that one word of promise produced faith in Peter. He believed it, and began walking on the water!!

3. So, why did Peter begin to sink?

Matthew 14:30 NKJV: But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"

A. The spirit of fear presented "**smoke and mirrors!!**" He got his focus and attention off of the Word of God, the Promise from Jesus, and focused on the circumstances and the reports of the spirit of fear instead of believing the report of the Lord.

B. Two, extremely, important issues that you must engage and retain to see your miracle:

1. **2 Corinthians 10:4-5 NKJV:** ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ...
2. **Proverbs 4:20-27 NLT:** ²⁰ My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. ²¹ Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, ²² for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body. ²³ Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life. ²⁴ Avoid all perverse talk; stay away from corrupt speech. ²⁵ Look straight ahead, and fix your eyes on what lies before you.

²⁶ Mark out a straight path for your feet; stay on the safe path. ²⁷ Don't get sidetracked; keep your feet from following evil.