

WEEK 5: UNFINISHED BELIEF

MESSAGE NOTES:



SMALL GROUPS GUIDE

TEACHING AND TESTIMONY VIDEO

Play Teaching and Testimony Video for Week 5. Share reflections from the video. Then, pray for this testimony before you begin the rest of the lesson. Watch the video at eastside.com/unfinished.

OPENING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Have you ever been the only person who believed something when no one else did?
- 2 Would you consider yourself a person of belief or a person of unbelief?
- 3 What is one hope, one prayer you have for Eastside as we embark on this Unfinished journey? Write these down as a group as we prepare to make our commitments.

FURTHER DISCUSSION FROM SCRIPTURE

Read the following Scripture passage and discuss the questions as a group. You may want to have each group member journal their answer first in the provided space before discussing together, as a means of encouraging all to participate more deeply.

BELIEVE BIG WITH A HUMBLE SPIRIT

Genesis 18:16-32

When the men got up to leave, they looked down toward Sodom, and Abraham walked along with them to see them on their way. Then the Lord said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just, so that the Lord will bring about for Abraham what He has promised him.”

Then the Lord said, “The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me. If not, I will know.”

The men turned away and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the Lord. Then Abraham approached him and said: “Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked? What if there are fifty righteous people in the city? Will you really sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous people in it? Far be it from you to do such a thing—to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?”

The Lord said, “If I find fifty righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake.”

Then Abraham spoke up again: “Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, though I am nothing but dust and ashes, what if the number of the righteous is five less than fifty? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five people?”

“If I find forty-five there,” he said, “I will not destroy it.”

Once again he spoke to him, “What if only forty are found there?” He said, “For the sake of forty, I will not do it.” Then he said, “May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak. What if only thirty can be found there?”

WEEK 5: UNFINISHED BELIEF

He answered, "I will not do it if I find thirty there."

Abraham said, "Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, what if only twenty can be found there?"

He said, "For the sake of twenty, I will not destroy it."

Then he said, "May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak just once more. What if only ten can be found there?"

He answered, "For the sake of ten, I will not destroy it."

- 1 The point of this story is relentless prayer for people who need to be navigated to God. Something to remember as we talk about this story is that Jesus had not come yet as an atoning sacrifice for the world. When Jesus came and the gospel story was fulfilled, He literally paid for the sins of the whole world - of every single woman and man - so that people in cities would not have to be destroyed as a result of sin. God uses this story to remind us that it is important for us to pray big, bold prayers, believing God will act in accordance with His Word. Are you a person of big belief in what God can do? Do you pray big, bold prayers?

- 2 This Unfinished journey is not about raising \$54 million dollars. Any of us who still think that have missed the point. This Unfinished journey is about 100% of us going before God and determining what a big, bold, believing faith, a humble spirit, and a sacrificing heart looks like as it relates to our generosity. It is about 100% of us laying it on the line for God and holding nothing back. Is this what you're doing for Unfinished? Is this how you've been thinking about your giving and sacrifice? Are you going to believe big that God will use you to navigate unfinished people to Him in ways He has never done before in your life or mine? Reflect on this and share your heart, thoughts, nervousness, excitement, prayers with your group as it relates to this.

3 How can this Small Group be praying for you as you make your Unfinished commitment this upcoming weekend?

4 Big, bold, humble, sacrificial prayers are what move mountains for God. Write out some of those big prayers of belief you have for Eastside in the next two years. Write them out, and then pray with your group about each one in a bold fashion, believing God can and will fulfill these prayers in accordance with His Word. Write them below:

WEEK 5: UNFINISHED BELIEF

COMMITMENT ALLOWS GOD TO DO IMMEASURABLY MORE THAN WE COULD ASK OR IMAGINE

Ephesians 3:14-19

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Allow this passage to be a final encouragement and inspiration as we seek to surrender to Him and His UNFINISHED path for us and to honor Him with our UNFINISHED commitments. All He is asking is that we boldly trust Him with faith beyond the horizon. He has provided promises to us, but He is now asking us to respond. Will we? Will we honor Him with all that we have and all that we are? Will our commitment be something that causes us to say we are standing before Him with confidence, knowing that we have made a decision that causes us to rely only on Him, for Him to chart our path? His power will be at work within us, so long as we commit our lives to boldly trust in Him. Immeasurably more generosity. Immeasurably more commitment. Immeasurably more impact both in us and through us. This is the UNFINISHED journey.

WEEK 5: UNFINISHED BELIEF

EXERCISE TO DO AT HOME PRIOR TO COMMITMENT WEEKEND

- 1 List the financial commitments you currently have – those that go beyond a one-time payment, but that have a time duration to them. Examples would be a home mortgage, a lease agreement, a car loan, a cellphone contract, your child's tuition for school, your own tuition for school, etc.

- 2 Now list the commitment you are planning to make for the Unfinished initiative. Where does it fall in the priority of these other commitments? Do you need to change or modify one or more of these other commitments to be able to fulfill your Unfinished commitment? What if you wanted to raise your Unfinished commitment? What would that require? Is there a financial commitment you currently have that appears to be prioritized above your ability to make a sacrificial commitment to help rescue and empower disciples for Jesus?

3 If someone who didn't know you looked at your financial commitments, what would they say you value?

4 Would that statement be true about you? Or is there something that needs to be explained or modified?

WEEK 5: UNFINISHED BELIEF

- 5 “Choose this day whom you will serve.” (Joshua 24:15). Choose to make your giving to God the priority you want it to be. What will that mean for your Unfinished commitment?

- 6 If you keep this commitment over the next two years, what type of spiritual change will that cause in you?
