

1. We are going to continue this morning with our word from the Lord for 2023.
2. Can anybody remember what that word is???
3. This is your year of Jubilee.
4. When the children of Israel in the Old Testament entered into the promised land, they were commanded by God to observe a year of jubilee every 50 years.
5. In that 50th year, all properties that had been sold would revert back to the original owner, and anyone who had sold themselves or their families as servants would be given their freedom.
6. The word jubilee means liberty or freedom.
7. In the year of jubilee God would restore the liberty and freedom he had intended them to live in. It was a year of restoration.
8. The message the Lord wants us to receive is this. This is your year of jubilee.
9. In 2023 God wants to restore to you, and for you, and in you, everything he originally intended for your life.
10. Whatever has become damaged or distorted or broken as a result of living life in this crazy world can be renewed and restored by the power of God almighty.
11. I hope and pray by this point in this series that you have started honing in on some of the things God desires to restore in you and for you.
12. I hope by now you have started believing for and asking for and expecting the fullness of what God longs to do in your life.
13. And I also hope you have set your heart on the truth that God and God alone is the one who can bring about this restoration.
14. Sure we have to cooperate with what the Lord is doing, but make no mistake, what needs to be restored in us and for us is nothing short of a miracle.
15. That's because in so many cases, the size and the extent of what needs to be restored seems giant sized.
16. Similar to the giant that David faced in 1 Samuel chapter 17.

17. When faced with this 9 foot 9 monster who was as scary and terrifying as could be, David shows us the secret to seeing our giants fall and that is faith in the Lord God.
18. Not faith in ourselves, but faith in the Lord.
19. **1 Samuel 17:45-46** David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. **46** This day the LORD will deliver you into my hands..."
20. David took this giant-sized obstacle and put it in the proper perspective. And the proper perspective was to compare the size of the giant not to himself, but instead to God.
21. He put this giant-sized obstacle in the proper perspective by reminding himself and everyone around him that the battle is the Lords. That it all hinges on Him.
22. That's faith. So, the only way the giant-sized obstacles in our lives can be restored to us and in us is through faith.
23. This morning as we continue, I want us to consider how faith is built in our life.
24. If giant sized obstacles only fall by faith, then how is that kind of faith built into our lives so we can be victorious?

TEXT: **Leviticus 25:8-11** "Count off seven sabbath years—seven times seven years—so that the seven sabbath years amount to a period of forty-nine years. **9** Then have the trumpet sounded everywhere on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement sound the trumpet throughout your land. **10** Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each of you is to return to your family property and to your own clan. **11** The fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you;

TITLE: **How faith is Built.**

INTRO:

1. In this passage we are able to see how this year of jubilee was announced and kicked off.
2. Verse nine says have the trumpet sounded everywhere. Sound the trumpet throughout your land.
3. Now, the word trumpet here is not what we would consider a trumpet to be. (pull out trumpet)

4. In the Old Testament a trumpet was actually a shofar or rams horn.
(show picture)
5. The shofar was an instrument that was used extensively in the life of the Israelites.
6. The shofar or trumpet was sounded when they were to break camp and move.
7. The shofar was sounded when the army was to get into ready positions.
8. The shofar was sounded to stop the army from attacking when they were in the middle of battle.
9. The shofar was also used to announce that a new king had been crowned.
10. And in each case, the sound that was made with the shofar or trumpet was distinct. Meaning, similar to our ability to recognize a song, because it doesn't sound exactly like every other song, the blowing of the shofar for battle was different or distinct from the blowing of the shofar to break camp.
11. So in Leviticus chapter 25, the year of jubilee was to be announced by a distinct and specific series of sounds that were different than all the other sounds the shofar could make.
12. It was in essence God's way of communicating to his people that something amazing was going to happen.
13. When the people heard the distinct sounding of the shofar to kick off the year of jubilee, it would have produced excitement, joy, hope, and faith. They knew something big was about to begin.
14. If we have these giant-sized obstacles that can only be conquered by faith, then how is that faith built or produced in our life?
15. It is built in our lives much in the same way as the sounding of the shofar. Our faith is built as we hear communication from God directly and distinctly to us.
16. The writer of Romans says it this way. Romans 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (KJV)
17. To put this verse in Romans in context, we need to know that the writer is talking about faith in Jesus Christ. It is talking about salvation through Jesus.

18. And the writer of Romans sets it up this way. Romans 10:14-15 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can anyone preach unless they are sent?
19. So, on the one hand it is a message about how faith in Jesus brings us to a place of salvation.
20. But I also believe it is appropriate to use verse 17 as a stand-alone verse. Meaning, if all we do is quote that one verse, it still contains truth we can apply to our lives.
21. And what is that truth. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Our faith is built up as we hear God communicating to us, similar to how the faith of the Israelites was built when they heard the distinct sound of the shofar.
22. How many are still with me?
23. One of the great things I believe the Lord wants to do for us in this year of jubilee is he longs to restore our ability to hear his voice, which in turn will build our faith, which in turn will allow us to believe for the removal of the giants in our lives.
24. The Lord wants to restore our hearing from him, so our faith will be built, so he can lead us to a place of restoration in every area of our lives.
25. Now, as a point of clarification, I am not saying that the lord is going to begin speaking to us again. This is not a restoration of his communicating with us, it is a restoration of our ability to hear him speak to us.
26. I believe God is continually speaking to us. I believe that because we are told in 1 Corinthians 6:19 that as believers in Jesus, our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit.
27. If the Holy Spirit is in us, and if it is by the Holy Spirit that the Lord communicates to us, then the source of that communication has never left the building.
28. So, what needs to be restored is not the communication, but instead our ability to hear the communication.
29. The prophet Isaiah illustrates this restoration of hearing in Isaiah 50:4-5 The Sovereign LORD has given me a well-instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear

to listen like one being instructed. 5 The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears;

30. One of the aspects of this year of jubilee is that there will be an awakening. An awakening of our God given ability to hear him, an awakening that is so powerful that it will be as if we are sitting in front of God himself being instructed by him.
31. It is a restoration of intimacy with the Lord. I wrote that word intimacy in my notes and then decided to see what similar words existed and I was pleasantly surprised to find that the word confidence is closely related to intimacy.
32. When I am intimate with the Lord and I am hearing his voice clearly it builds confidence or faith in my heart toward the Lord and his power.
33. Isaiah says in verse 5, the Lord has opened my ears. So that got me to thinking, what are some things that can cause my ears to be closed, and hinder my ability to hear from the Lord?
34. I encourage you this morning to jot these things down or go to our website batesvillefirst.org and under the media tab find my notes.
35. Things that can hinder my hearing from the Lord.

Asking the wrong questions.

1. I want to approach these things from the perspective that everyone listening to me today wants to hear God's voice.
2. I am going to assume that everyone wants to hear from the Lord and that finding ourselves with one of these hinderances doesn't mean we are rebellious or away from the Lord. Is that fair?
3. What can hinder our hearing from the lord? Not asking him the right question.
4. Several years ago, I had been praying for a pretty lengthy period of time, asking the Lord to give me guidance and direction concerning a situation I was facing, and I just wasn't hearing from the Lord.
5. No matter how much I prayed and spent time alone with him, no matter how much I spent time reading his word, I just wasn't hearing his voice.
6. If I'm being transparent, I started to get frustrated with the Lord. Finally, with quite a bit of attitude I blurted out to God.
7. God, why won't you speak to me? My heart is pure. I want to hear from you so I can obey you. Why won't you answer me?

8. And just as clear as can be, without missing a beat, I sensed the Holy Spirit say to me, because you're asking the wrong question.
9. Up till that time it had never occurred to me that I could be asking the wrong question and that might be what was hindering my ability to hear from him.
10. Now, what I was asking God about is going to remain between him and me, but let me give you a couple of light-hearted examples of asking the wrong question, and I'm going to ask you to apply this to your life.
11. Lord, should I buy the black shirt or the blue shirt? Oh, and Lord, they have a grey shirt? Should I buy that one? Crickets.
12. What if the real question is...should I buy a shirt at all?
13. Lord, should we get the mid-size suv or the full-size pickup truck. No answer. What if the question is Lord, is it your will that we buy any vehicle at all or wait?
14. Lord. Should I date him/her. They are really nice. Silence. What if the real question is, lord, do you want me dating right now or do you want me to slow down?
15. I can't speak for you, but I can speak for myself when I say, if I'm not careful, I can get ahead of God because of emotions, because of wants, because of impatience, and I wind up hindering my ability to hear him at all because I am asking the wrong question.
16. What else can hinder our ability to hear from the Lord?

Developing the habit of tuning God out.

1. About 30 years ago my wife and I moved to a railroad town. And the house we were living in was literally 3 houses from the train tracks.
2. If I remember correctly the trains came through about every 4 hours. Six times a day the train passed 100 yards from our front door.
3. Because there were several railroad crossings, the train started blowing the whistle about a half mile before it got to our house and continued blaring the horn another half mile past our house.
4. The week we moved in to the house I became convinced that I would never sleep or rest again. It woke me up twice a night.
5. But guess what? After about a month, I got to where I didn't even hear

the train or the whistle. I stopped waking up at night.

6. Over a period of time, I adjusted to the sound, and I learned to tune it out.
7. Our son Jeremy was born while we lived in that house and as a baby he didn't even wake up when the train came through.
8. Before long, the train just became background noise.
9. I believe it is the same in our spiritual life. I believe the Lord is speaking constantly, but if we develop the habit of taking what he says lightly, or we develop the habit of passively resisting what he is saying, eventually we will stop hearing him.
10. If we develop the habit of not obeying when he speaks, it will affect our ability to hear his voice.
11. **James 1:22** Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.
12. According to James, if we develop the habit of listening to the word of God, either in prayer or his word the bible, and yet we don't do what the word says, we can drift into a place of deception.
13. And when that happens, because the lord is a gentleman, because love is only love If we are given a choice, then his voice will begin fade away.
14. One more thing that can hinder our ability to hear from the Lord.

Too many distractions.

1. I heard a story recently.
2. The wife comes home. The husband is sitting on the couch. The TV is up pretty loud, and he has his head buried in his phone.
3. She starts talking to him, but he doesn't look up from his phone. She calls his name but still he doesn't respond. She moves over closer to where he is sitting and talks even louder and still, he seems to be in another world.
4. Finally, extremely frustrated, she throws her hands up in the air and screams, I'm sick and tired of you not listening to me.
5. The husband looks up at her and says, well that's a pretty rude way to start a conversation.
6. She just shakes her head and walks away.

7. I'm not here to tell you how bad the world is and how society as we know it is going downhill. But what I will tell you is that society as we know it has never been more distracted.
8. Never before have we had so many interruptions, pulling at us from every direction to get a slice of our attention.
9. Never before have there been as many streams of information being thrown at us. Many people in our world today are on overload.
10. But here's the thing. We have a choice. **Just because that's the way it is in this world doesn't mean it has to be that way in our world.**
11. According to the book of Genesis, mankind was created to rule and have dominion and authority over this world and not the other way around.
12. But if we passively allow all the things around us to successfully grab our attention the result is that we are no longer ruling, but instead we are being ruled.
13. And a good way to tell who is ruling who is by evaluating how much time and attention we give to the Lord each day.
14. Every single day we need to spend time hearing from the Lord. We need that time. Our spiritual and physical lives will become a jumbled mess without connecting with and hearing from the lord.
15. We wake up one day to find ourselves where the children of Israel were. Nobody is where they are supposed to be. Very little is as it should be, and we will spend more and more time wondering if serving God really matters. It does matter.
16. But to be clear, we are going to have to fight to carve out that time. And chances are the only way we are going to have sufficient time to hear from God is to chose to lay something else down.
17. I'm not telling you what to do, not in the least. I do however want to share a decision I found to be necessary in my life about two and a half years ago.

Conclusion:

1. Two and a half years ago I made the decision to disconnect from and eliminate all social media in my life.
2. That decision was a process. Over a period of weeks, I found myself

more and more distracted and spending less and less time in personal prayer and reading God's written word.

3. Finally, one morning, after getting up and spending 30 minutes catching up on all the things social media brought my way, I realized something sobering.
4. I had heard that so and so's aunt is crazy.
5. I had heard about somebody's neighbor who is always causing trouble.
6. I had heard about what he was having for dinner and what she was wearing to work.
7. I had heard about this person's child who won the championship.
8. I saw a picture of this person I knew, pretending to have the perfect life when I knew first-hand their life was crumbling around them.
9. And then it dawned on me I hadn't heard from God in several days. I hadn't taken the time to stop and listen for his voice.
10. I realized that I was 5 days behind in my daily bible reading, a reading plan that only takes 15 minutes a day to read the entire bible through in a year.
11. I realized I was more "connected" to a bunch of people I barely knew than to the one who gave his very life for mine.
12. And I realized, something has to change. Something has to go.
13. But what I can't miss is daily, getting alone with the Lord, spending time communicating to and listening to him in prayer, spending time reading his written word the bible.
14. Because without those things, my life starts to get really messy and really overwhelming. And I find myself no where near where God wants me to be. And I find that my faith feels weaker and weaker and weaker.
15. Please here my heart this morning. This message isn't about passing condemnation, this message is about victorious living.
16. This message is about having the kind of faith necessary to face the giants in my life.
17. Prayer.
18. Salvation call. Are you hearing the Holy Spirit call you to surrender your life to Jesus.

19. We are going to practice this message this morning.
20. Hand out communion elements.
21. 1 Corinthians 11:23-24 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."
22. The king of kings and the lord of lords gave his very body for us. Can we give him our undivided attention?
23. 1 Corinthians 11:25-26 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
24. The Lord God almighty, the great I am shed his blood so we could be cleansed from our sins. Can we give him our undivided attention?