

1. We are continuing with our theme, **This is your year of jubilee.**
2. This is the year where God restores to you, and for you, and in you what he originally intended for your life.
3. Specifically, the word jubilee means liberty or freedom.
4. This is the year where the Lord restores in us the freedom that he has intended all along.
5. The title of last week's message was stay the course.
6. We talked about the fact that when we begin moving toward the restoration and freedom the lord is bringing to our lives, there will inevitably be opposition to that forward movement.
7. That opposition is meant to get us off God's path, and cause us to look back, and go back to the way things were before.
8. Because, when everything is in turmoil around us, when what we are experiencing is painful, our human nature is to want to get away from the pain.
9. And because it can seem like the pain from where we came from is less than the pain we are experiencing, our tendency is to want to look back and go back.
10. But the destination is worth the pain. Because the destination is freedom.
11. What I want to talk about this morning is that as the Lord leads us toward restoration and freedom, he will often show us a glimpse of that freedom in the future.
12. He will begin to speak to us and show us things and help us get a picture of what that restoration and that freedom will be like on down the road.
13. Here is the problem with pictures, however. **Pictures can be deceiving.**
14. I remember before we left for Costa Rica in 2003 getting some pictures of the apartment, we would be living in.
15. The pictures looked so wonderful. We got so excited about our new apartment.

16. What the pictures didn't show however were the mice that were so brave they would run around the floor during the daytime, while we were in the house.
17. It also didn't show that the kitchen was continually flooded with ants. You couldn't leave any food out for more than a few minutes, or it would be covered in ants.
18. It also didn't show the roaches that were an inch and a half long, and that sometimes they crawled in the bed with you.
19. Based on the pictures we saw; we had an expectation of what it would be like. But the reality of what it was really like when we got there didn't live up to our expectation.
20. Keep in mind. No one tried to deceive us. We just couldn't see the whole picture from our perspective.
21. Years ago, I used a certain pre-marital counseling material by Dr. Kevin Lehman.
22. He talked about the expectation of what marriage would be like, vs. the reality of what it was actually like. He made a statement that has really stuck with me.
23. Expectation, minus reality, equals disillusionment.
24. **Expectation – reality = disillusionment.**
25. We tend to think of being disillusioned, or disappointed, or let down as a negative thing.
26. But Dr. Lehman calls it a good thing. He says, when you are living under an illusion, it means you aren't seeing clearly. Another word for illusion is deception, mirage, or a trick.
27. But when we become disillusioned, what we couldn't see clearly before, now begins to be clearer.
28. We see stories of this very thing happening in the lives of God's people. Especially when what God is showing them to is the fulfillment of His perfect will for their lives.
29. I'm convinced those stories are there as a source of encouragement for us.

**TITLE:    **Seeing with eyes wide open.****

1. We are going to look at three men in the Old Testament. Abraham, Joseph, and David.
2. For each of them we are going to begin with the word picture that God gave them, and we're going to talk about what they might have expected, vs. what the reality was.
3. Keep in mind, we have the advantage of hindsight. Meaning, we know the whole story from beginning to end.
4. But like us in our real lives, they didn't know the whole story up front.
5. They had to live like we have to live.
6. God will speak something to us or show us something and then he asks us to move toward his goal by faith. Not by what we see, but by faith that what God has shown us will eventually come to pass.

## Abraham.

1. Genesis 12:1-4 The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. 2 "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." 4 So Abram went, as the LORD had told him;
2. Based on that passage, and Abraham's responses later, we can get an idea of what Abraham expected.
3. He expected the land he was going to, to be a good land.
4. He expected to have lots of children and become a large people group.
5. He expected a life of purpose. God says I will bless you, make your name great, and make you a blessing.
6. Now, all of those things eventually did come true. God wasn't trying to trick him. But the reality was, the pathway toward that outcome didn't turn out the way Abraham anticipated it to.
7. What was the land like? According to Genesis 12:10, it was a place that was susceptible to severe famine. Starvation, food crisis, lack and disparity.
8. To be clear, it was a good land, but it wasn't a perfect land with no problems.
9. How soon did children come? Well, from the time God made the promise until his first son of promise was born was 25 years. By that

time Abraham was 100 years old, and Sarah was 90 years old.

10. To say the least, the reality didn't match his expectation.
11. Did Abraham's life feel like a life of purpose during those 25 years of waiting? Not really.
12. **Genesis 15:1-3** After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward." **2** But Abram said, "Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" **3** And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir."
13. Translation. Without a son to inherit all I am building; this is all pointless. His life didn't feel purposeful, it felt pointless.
14. Now again, God did eventually fulfill every part of the promise perfectly, but not before the reality of the situation left Abraham disillusioned.

## Joseph.

1. **Genesis 37:6-7** He said to them, "Listen to this dream I had: **7** We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it."
2. **Genesis 37:9** Then he had another dream, and he told it to his brothers. "Listen," he said, "I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me."
3. So, based on the dreams, what were Joseph's expectations.
4. He expected to be elevated to a high position in his family.
5. He also expected to be elevated to a high position outside his family.
6. Again, God did eventually bring to pass everything Joseph dreamed. But in the 17 years between when Joseph dreamed the dreams, and when the dreams became a reality, Joseph passed through many seasons of disillusionment.
7. First, his brothers hated him for even telling them the dream.
8. Then they plotted to kill him. And thought better of that and decided to sell him as a slave into Egypt.
9. He becomes a slave, is falsely accused by the master's wife, and goes to prison.
10. In prison he is forgotten about and left there to suffer.
11. Finally, Joseph is elevated to the second highest position in the land

and his family and everyone else do come and bow down to him.

12. But even when that came to pass, the heartache of his struggle lasted for several years to come.

## David.

1. 1 Samuel 16:10-13 Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The LORD has not chosen these." 11 So he asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?" "There is still the youngest," Jesse answered. "He is tending the sheep." Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives." 12 So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; this is the one." 13 So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers,
2. So, based on Samuel's actions, what were David's expectations.
3. He expected to hold the highest position in the land and be crowned king. And eventually, he was in fact crowned king, but from the time he was anointed king until he actually became king was between 15-20 years, and during that time he became disillusioned.
4. He kills the giant, but is hated by king Saul for it.
5. He becomes the king's son-in-law, but later barely escaped a murder attempt on his life, by his father-in-law.
6. He was hunted by Saul and the armies of Israel for a number of years.
7. He lived in caves and desert places.
8. The people who came to help him were a bunch of troublemakers.
9. At one point he acted insane in front of King Achish and was rejected.
10. And all you have to do is read the psalms written by David to know, he did not understand why all of this was happening to him.
11. Yes, at the age of 30 he became king, but the years leading up to his coronation were filled with heartaches he never expected.
12. And if all of us were to be transparent, all of us have faced a similar experience.
13. We felt God spoke to us. We obeyed what he thought he was telling us to do. We expected what he told us and showed us to happen quickly and without any difficulty, but the reality was it was anything but smooth sailing, and some of us are still waiting for the fulfillment of what God promised.

14. As you walk this journey toward Jubilee. As you move toward God's destination of freedom and liberty, the lord is going to begin to show you things and give you glimpses of what that freedom and liberty might look like.
15. More than likely, because what God shows us is good, we may expect that the journey to that promise will be filled with all good.
16. But chances are the reality will be different. That journey will be littered with struggle and maybe suffering.
17. Well great pastor. Now that you've spent the last several minutes dashing my hopes, what is the point of all this.
18. Well, I'm glad you asked. I want to encourage you and leave you with two powerful thoughts.

### **God never wastes time.**

1. God's purpose in the struggle of the journey is not to harm us, but instead to bring us hope.
2. And what doesn't seem to make sense in the moment is really God intentionally moving us toward a lifestyle of faith that will carry us through to the fulfillment of his promises.
3. **Romans 5:3-5** We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. **4** And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. **5** And this hope will not lead to disappointment. (NLT)
4. What is the antidote for disappointment or disillusionment? Hope. But hope doesn't come as a result of smooth sailing.
5. Hope comes as a result of God proving time and time again, in the midst of our struggle, that he is faithful.
6. God is faithful. What doesn't make sense to you right now. What might not make sense to you in the future as you move toward Jubilee, is not a waste of time and energy.
7. God has a purpose. And a part of that purpose is to establish hope and faith so deeply in your life that even the threat of death wouldn't keep you from obeying the Lord.

## Conclusion:

1. The second powerful thought I want to leave you with is this.
2. While he is building this miraculous hope and faith in you through your struggles, He is continually with you.
3. **Hebrews 13:5-6** God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." 6 So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?"
4. Because your heavenly father never leaves you and never forsakes you. You and I don't have to be afraid of what we don't understand.
5. We can have confidence. Confidence in what? Confidence in the truth that the Lord is our helper. He is with us.
6. Pray.
7. The truth of God's word is powerful, and so is having other brothers and sisters in Christ to stand with you.
8. This morning as we close, we are going to put this hope into action.
9. We are going to pray for one another.
10. If you are here this morning and you are feeling disillusioned. If what you are experiencing right now in your life is not what you expected, you need to know you are not alone.
11. If that's you I want to ask you to come forward and make a line across the front of the building.
12. Why get out of your seat? First, you will be touched and encouraged. Second, someone else will be encouraged to see others responding because the devil has lied to them and told them they are the only one experiencing this.
13. Call forward those who have walked through times of disillusionment to pray.
14. Communion.