

***Watch God Make Your Life Bigger***  
**(Joshua 11:16-17, 23)**  
**By Faith sermon series**  
**By Brian Croyle, 05.13.18**

**BIG IDEA:** God intends our lives to be much bigger – and more meaningful – than merely temporal and earthly pursuits.

- 1. Joshua and the Israelites – moving from low expectations to faith-filled expectation.** (Joshua 11:16-17a, 23; Joshua 12:7-24)
  - Israel – From slaves to wanderers to the region’s strongest nation.
  - Sometimes my faith is weak; sometimes, I don’t have my eyes and priorities on things requiring faith in the first place.
  - God does not intend us to seek safety – He designed us to be dangerous.
- 2. Think Bigger Thoughts – If your thoughts are only for yourself and your own day-to-day life, then they’re not big enough.** (Colossians 3:1-4; Philippians 4:8)
  - We need to believe that God has not changed, and that God’s people today can have the same sweeping influence we see of His people in the Bible.
  - We need to “set our hearts and minds on things above”.
  - God does not lead us to small, meaningless thoughts – His Spirit inspires great, noble, lovely, world changing thoughts in His people.

- 3. Dream Bigger Dreams – If your dreams are primarily self-interested, then they’re not big enough.** (Acts 2:17-19a)
  - Jesus called his disciples to go into all the world, and he calls us to make the same commitment to reach people with his love and change the world.
  - “With God, all things are possible” – if God’s passion drives your dreams, you can know that you are partnering with God to make the impossible possible.
- 4. Set Bigger Goals – If your goals are achievable through self-effort, then they’re not big enough.** (Matt. 21:21-22; Mark 9:20-27)
  - Once you have the dream to drive you, set faith-based goals.
  - “I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!”
  - We do what we can do and trust God to do what only He can do.

**MY NEXT STEP:** *Have you ever had “big thoughts” and “big dreams” that you think came from God, but they haven’t materialized? Or have you never really thought before about how God might want to use you to make a difference in the world? What will you do this week to seek God about turning His dreams for you (and through you) into reality?*

## SIX DAY DEVOTIONAL: for Watching God Make Your Life Bigger

I want to challenge you this week to engage with God in prayer about the thoughts, dreams, and goals that He has for you. I encourage you to take the following steps, bathing the whole process in prayer.

- 1. Monday: “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.”** Read 1 Samuel 3. When Samuel was just a boy, he heard God call his name, and he responded by saying, “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.” Because Samuel always had that openness to the voice of God, God in turn continually spoke to him, and Samuel became a great leader for the Israelite people. Jesus said, “my sheep know my voice”, so we should trust that we can hear God’s voice, too. Pray that God would speak to you, and tell Him that you are open to hear what He has to say.
- 2. Tuesday: Think Bigger Thoughts.** Read Philippians 4:8. Set aside time to think of true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy things. Need suggestions? Here’s a few – think about:
  - The amazing character of God – His power, His mercy, His omniscience, etc.
  - The life of Jesus, and how his life reflected his love – both for the people around him and for you.
  - The fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) – how you see them in your life, and how God might want to grow that fruit in you so that you can be a blessing to others.
  - The blessings you recently wrote on the stone that you brought to Grace.
- 3. Wednesday: Dream Bigger Dreams.** Our talents, resources, and passions are not given to us solely for our own use and benefit – God wants us to be a conduit of blessing for others.
  - What passions do you have that align with the heart of God?
  - How do those passions intersect with potential areas of ministry?
  - How could your talents and your resources be used in that area of ministry?
  - As Grace looks to Invest in our community (per our FAITH vision), how might you offer your passions, talents, and resources to make a difference in Oro Valley, Tucson, and beyond?

- 4. Thursday: Set Bigger Goals.** We set goals to drive ourselves to *accomplish something*. Deep thoughts and lofty dreams are wasted if they aren’t applied to actionable goals. Spend today talking to God about real goals for yourself that you can write down and track. The mnemonic SMART has been applied in many forums to the task of goal setting. One such instantiation is:
  - S** – Specific – Specificity (rather than generality) helps to focus your efforts
  - M** – Measurable – It’s important to be able to measure your progress
  - A** – Ambitious – Difficult goals drive us more; low expectations cause inactivity
  - R** – Relevant – As Christians, we should set goals that lead to eternal impact
  - T** – Time-bound – Dates keep us accountable
- 5. Friday: Finding Faith in the Midst of Doubt.** Read Mark 9:20-27. Is there an area of your life where you struggle with believing God will bring about the change you need? If so, honestly identify it in prayer to God. But also speak to Him about His power and faithfulness, both in the Bible and in your own life. Then pray, like the father in Mark 9, “I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief.” Then trust that Jesus will respond to you in the same way he responded to that father – by answering his prayer.
- 6. Saturday: Integration and Resolve.** Spend today praying that God would integrate in your mind all these thoughts, dreams, and goals into a cohesive picture for your life. Then pray that, by His Spirit, He will give you the resolve to step out in action, partnering with Him to make them a reality!