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SERMON NOTES & TRANSCRIPT

Building a Big Life

Dream, Vision, Execution, Consistency

Everything that qualifies you for a big life was provided at the cross, but you still have to get in. A big life starts with a dream, is refined into a vision, is brought about by execution, and comes to look like the dream through consistency.

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SERIES
Stand-alone message

MAIN TEXT
John 10:10

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01

Sermon Transcript

Hey friend, thanks for joining me today as we open God's Word to receive an on-time message from the Holy Spirit. My name is Jason Mayfield. I'm the senior pastor here at Saraland Church in the North Mobile, Alabama area. In fact, we're located at 907 Shelton Beach Road, Saraland, Alabama. We invite you to come join us if you're in the area any Sunday at 10:30 a.m. We're building a Jesus-centered, Spirit-filled church for all people, and we'd love for you to come be a part of what we're building right here in a local church.

If you are not in the area, we hope you enjoy these resources and they're a blessing to you, but you can help us build as well, and you can do it one of two ways. Either one, you can share this message with a handful of people that you know need to hear it, or the second way you can do it is by visiting saralandchurch.com slash give and giving any amount towards the mission and vision of this church. Here's our guarantee to you: when you give, ministry happens. Well, I don't want to delay any further. Let's get right into today's message. Amen.

Well, this morning I want to talk to you about something that I think is going to be super helpful. The reason I want to talk about this this morning is because the school year has wrapped up. We're heading into summer. This could be considered the first Sunday of summer. Look at your neighbor, say, "Welcome to summer." Welcome to summer.

And because it's a transition moment, I want to talk to you about something that I think is going to help you, because whenever there are seasonal changes — New Year's, going into the fall, getting into the holidays, when school gets out, summer starts; when school gets back in, the fall starts. When these things happen in our calendar, they present us with opportunities. Opportunities for our life, because we're people of rhythms. We're creatures of rhythms. We may not even realize it.

And so, I mean, think about when school starts. An entire city responds to that. The traffic flows change. The schedules change. The stores change. The job applications showing up places, it goes up. Things change when you get into different moments in the year. We're going into summer, so there's a seasonal change, so there's a natural rhythm opportunity right now. And so what I want to talk to you today about is I want to talk to you on the subject of building a big life. Building a big life. Building a big life.

Now, I'm not going to be walking you through systematic theology today. And I'd like that. I'm a preacher that likes that kind of stuff. I like to get in there. I think the Word is enough. And this morning, I'm going to preach to you out of my spirit that's informed by the Word, but I want you to know that a big life actually flows from the finished work of Jesus Christ.

It flows from the cross.

> **JOHN 10:10** ESV
>
> 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

John chapter 10, verse 10 is a very well-known passage of Scripture, but it says this: "The thief comes only to steal, kill, and destroy. I came" — this is Jesus speaking — "that you may have life and have it abundantly." And we could look at that and say the thief is certainly the enemy, the thief is certainly the devil, but I think there's a lot of thieves in your life. There's a lot of things that want to rob from you. But Jesus has come that you might have life and have it more abundantly.

One translation says "life, and life to the full." Amen? And so this morning, what I want to talk to you about is a big life that flows from the finished work of Jesus Christ, because everything that qualifies you to have a big life has already been accomplished on your behalf at the cross of Calvary. Here's what you need to understand today. You are not good enough to have a big life, but because you belong to Jesus Christ, in Him you are qualified for a big life. That's a good place to say amen.

I already feel like preaching. So you're qualified for a big life, but here's the reality. Even though Jesus Christ qualifies you for a big life, you still have to get in. You still have to get in, and you have to partake in the process. We're taking a vacation this week. All right.

Sorry, I'll just stay up here and work another 12 hours every day. Amen. But no, we're going to take a small vacation this week. We're going to go down to the holy land, Orlando, Florida.

Amen. And we're actually not going into Orlando. We're going to the great municipality of Bay Lake where Walt Disney World is. Amen. So we're going to take a couple of days at Disney World. We like Disney.

We lived in Florida for over 10 years. Let me tell you something about people in Florida. Let me help y'all stop bothering your Florida friends real quick. Maybe this is for the internet. I don't know. We don't have no deals for y'all.

We don't know nothing. We don't know nobody. Nobody's getting you cheaper tickets to the park. I don't know who you think we are. Let me call Bob Iger on the phone: "Hey, I got some people coming down, Bob."

It ain't happening. So nobody's going to help you with that. But we're going down and we're going to enjoy it. We lived in Florida. So what we can tell you is all of the tricks about Disney World. We can tell you when you need to go, what time you need to go, where's the best places to eat.

So if you're going down there and you don't feel like gambling on them theme park hamburgers, talk to me. I'll help you out. I know the spots. And so we're going to spend some time while we're down there in Typhoon Lagoon. It's their water park. Someone recently referred to it as the greatest water park at Walt Disney World.

That was almost correct. It's the greatest water park in the world. Amen. It's awesome. And so we're going to go to Typhoon Lagoon. And one of the things I like about Typhoon Lagoon is it has a massive lazy river that goes around.

If you don't know what a lazy river is, it's a thing you get in. It's got current. It takes you where you need to go. You get to be lazy and it takes you somewhere. Here's the thing. When it comes to being qualified by the finished work of Jesus Christ, sometimes we think the finished work finishes all the work.

And I don't have the reference for you here, but Paul even says, "We have completed that which was lacking in the affliction of Christ."

> **COLOSSIANS 1:24** ESV
>
> 24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church,

He says that to a church. There's still work to be done even though the work is done. And here's the thing about the lazy river. That lazy river takes you anywhere you want to go in the park. It takes you to every ride.

It takes you to every concession stand. We're going to get one here just to get y'all where y'all need to go. Amen. Bring you floaties next week. And so it's the lazy river. It takes you, but here's the thing.

You still gotta get in. The lazy river does all the heavy lifting. It'll take the pressure off your feet. It'll take the pressure off your joints. It does all that. It will get you where you need to go.

You still got to get in it. There's some things that you got to get in if you want to live a big life. And so this morning we're talking about building a big life. Now, big life — I'm going to give you the components and then we'll come back and preach this. Okay. So I want to give you the components to a big life.

This is going to be helpful. If you'll follow this, you'll live a big life. Amen. You ready? Okay, here we go. Let me make sure I got my video.

So it starts here. This is the start of the process. It starts with a dream. You know how I know that? Because at Disney World on the Carousel of Progress, they say [worship]. Amen.

That's part of the song they sing. Okay. The Floridians would be eating this up right now. Y'all got to help me out a little bit. So it starts with a dream. It starts with a dream.

Living a big life starts with a dream. And then from there, you have to develop a vision. You have to develop a vision. And then after you develop a vision, this is very important. You have to execute. So, execution.

And then once you've executed, you have to be consistent. So, consistency. That is the process of developing a big life. You dream, you develop a vision, you start to execute, and you stay consistent. Now I'm going to walk you through all of this this morning. I think it's going to help you a ton.

Now you're probably wondering, why are you talking about this? Because you've already figured out that I'm a little Bible-lite this morning. If you come here regularly, look at your neighbor that doesn't look like they come all the time and go, "He normally preaches the Bible pretty straight through." Just assure them. And even y'all seem a little nervous this morning, like, what's he about to do? But the reason I want to say this to y'all — I want to teach you this this morning.

I was here a few weeks ago and we were setting up for something at the church. And I walked out of a room — it was actually that production room — and I walked in here, and out of my mouth it just came out. I just said it. I saw the room the way it is. How many of y'all like this? Isn't this good? We just finished it because we got that one light over there in, finally. Amen. So $200 has been holding us back from being done, but it's here.

Got out of China, got to us. Amen. And so I walked out and I looked at the room and out of my mouth — I wasn't thinking about it, I wasn't prompted, I just said it — I go, we are a big little church. We are a big little church. And I felt as soon as I said it like it was a prophetic phrase. I didn't feel like it came from me, I felt like it came through me, that we're a big little church.

We aren't of the stature. There was a time 25 years ago when there were a thousand people in this church and there were two services. And when that pastor retired, 1,400 people came out to celebrate what he had done. He had built this building. There was a time when this was a very large church, but you don't have to be a large church to be a big church. You don't have to be a large person, thank God, to be a big person. Amen.

I'm trying to not be a large person, amen. We'll work on that after we get back, hallelujah. And we're not a large church right now, but let me tell you what we aren't. And let me tell you what we're not going to be. And let me tell you what I'll stand up against anytime it starts to creep in. We're not a small church either.

We're not a small church. We're a big little church. We're bigger than what the evidence shows right now. More is happening in this church than what the evidence shows right now. Though I shouldn't say that, because the attendance has startled me two weeks in a row now. Come on, somebody. Amen.

And so things are happening, but we're bigger than we seem. We're bigger than we may feel. We're not a small church. We're a big church. We're a big little church, which is better than being a large, small church. Because I've been in some large churches that were actually small.

You can go in some churches that run 2,000, 3,000, but they're small. They're small. They're small churches. And we're not — let me just say this. We're not big because we're growing a lot of attendance. That's not what our aim is.

I'll take it though, amen. I'd like to be looking at church chairs tomorrow, hallelujah. But we are not a big church because we're trying to have a big attendance. We're a big church because we're growing big people. We're growing big people. That's what we're talking about, building a big life.

Listen to this. Big is not a stature. Big is a spirit. Big is a spirit. You can have a big spirit. So you can come into environments and go, we can't, we're not there yet.

No, no. Or you can come in and you can start to see potential, possibilities. Big isn't a stature. It's a spirit. See, big people think big. They talk big.

They act big. Big people give big. Big people love big. But small people, they think small. They live small. They give small.

They act small. They do small. Everything's small. Small people rest on their laurels and they ignore their potential. Small people will look towards the past and they'll say, "Well, you know, I used to do this, and 20 years ago this happened, and when I was in high school..." You know what I think about small people?

Have any of y'all ever seen Napoleon Dynamite? You can confess your sin. It's all right. Go ahead. You've seen. I think about Uncle Rico.

You know, Uncle Rico's sitting on that porch and he throws a steak at Napoleon Dynamite to prove that he can still throw a football. If you didn't know that, the physics of a steak and a football, very similar apparently. Amen. And he starts to talk to his nephew and he says, if coach would have just put me in in the final game, we'd have gone to state. I'd have gone to college. I'd have played pro ball and I'd be sitting in a hot tub with my soulmate right now.

And y'all said, "Pastor, I can't believe you said..." I'm gonna sit in the hot tub with my soulmate this week. Amen. You hear that? Just make sure you know what's on the agenda. Hallelujah. Small people always talking about what they used to do and how good they used to be and how much they used to get done and what used to happen.

But small people stay there. Big people look forward. They look towards their potential. Churches do the same thing. And if we're not careful, our church can do that very easily. There are some of you who are sitting in this room who remember when you walked in and the environment was electric.

And I'm not talking about 15 minutes ago, because I know it was electric this morning too. Hallelujah. But I'm talking about 25 years ago when you used to come and you couldn't find a parking place, and it wasn't because of the soccer people. Amen. And it's because the church was so full, and you used to show up and it used to be something's going on, and you can look back and you can go, well, we used to do this and we used to have that. And when this person was here and when that person did this, and when this children's pastor and this youth pastor and this music pastor, and when we had all these people, and hey, you know, coincidentally when we had, you know, a budget that was massive and we could afford all of those things.

Oh, it was like this. And you can look back and you can go, hey, back there is — man, that's the good old days. Or you can look forward and you can say we're heading forward. And by the way, it does not just happen in churches that are our size. I've been in churches of a thousand. I've been in churches of 2,000 where they were doing the exact same thing.

We're not looking forward anymore. We just look back. It's a hall of fame. We're just talking about everything that used to go on. We've got a trophy case that's gathering dust because it hasn't been opened in a long time. Churches can do this too.

So we don't talk about what we used to do. We're looking forward. Amen. Big people say I can do anything. Look at your neighbor and say, "I can do anything." I can do anything.

Small people tend to say nothing's been done for me. Nothing has been done for — "I can do anything" versus "nothing has been done for me." You know, we've spent a lot of time in business and around business people. Can I tell you something I've noticed about some of the most successful people I've met? And I'm not talking about $300,000 a year, $800,000 a year. I'm talking some of the people we know who are, you know, decamillionaire, billionaire people.

Like, we've been around some folks who've done some stuff. One thing I've noticed is a lot of them — and I mean this with respect, and if you're thinking about giving a large donation, I'm not talking about you. Visit saralandchurch.com slash give. Amen. But what I've noticed, a lot of these people, they're kind of stupid interpersonally. They're kind of dumb.

And I realized this, that some of them were so dumb they never had the reality hit them that they could not do something. They would look at opportunity and it would never occur to them, I shouldn't do that. They just thought, well hey, why not? I can do that. Because big people say, I can do anything. Where small people come up with every reason they shouldn't do something, and they'll focus on what hasn't been handed to them.

In fact, it's ignorance versus entitlement. Some people just aren't smart enough to know they're not capable. And some people are so entitled that no matter how capable they are, they're not going to do it unless somebody has set them up. That's a good place to say amen in the house. So I want to talk about building a big life. Let me get into preaching some helpful stuff here.

So it starts with a dream. It starts with a dream. Now let me just go ahead and say this, especially to all the men in this church. I know that when we talk about dreaming, it sounds a little woo-woo and a little nonsense. I get that. Sometimes it can sound lofty, like, how do I have a dream?

For the women, I think that's probably it. How do I have a dream? How do I dream? How do I do it? For men it goes, a dream? I'm just going to go to work.

I don't need a dream. I'm just going to go work. I'm just going to do what I have to do. But I need you to hear me. A dream is not some bizarre thing. A dream is — and I could probably find a better word for it this morning.

That's the one I'm using, hallelujah. But a dream is simply the ideal model of your life without regard for any of the requirements. So when you look at your life and you say, this is what I want to do, and you don't start to shut it down because X, Y, and Z doesn't play out or doesn't make sense. A dream is supposed to be like that. A dream is supposed to be anything. It's wide open.

It should be a little wide and a little wild. It shouldn't be limited. And your dream is either going to be vivid, so you'll either see it, or it's visceral. It's something that you feel. It's one or the other. See, some of you men, you've thought to yourself, gosh, if I could just fish every day, that's a dream.

But it's not an impossible dream. If fishing every day is what brings you great joy, that's your dream. Let it be your dream. I dream about eating spaghetti for every meal and not gaining weight. I'm working with the scientists now, hallelujah. But dreams don't have to necessarily even be defined.

They can be wide. They can be wild. Dreams don't require any feasibility. Joseph had a dream. I think this is Genesis 37.

> **GENESIS 37:5-7** ESV
>
> 5 Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more. 6 He said to them,
> "Hear this dream that I have dreamed: 7 Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf
> arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf."

Joseph had a dream, and he shared it with his brothers.

And this is what he said: I had a dream. This is Joseph's dream. Joseph had a dream. He said, "I had a dream that my sheaf rose above all of your sheafs." Okay? Now, that's with an F in Alabama, sheafs.

Everywhere else, it's sheaves. But so he said, I had a dream my sheaf rose above your sheaf. Okay, well, the realization of the dream was that Joseph ended up being in a high governmental capacity where he was the person in charge of all of Egypt. That's how the dream resulted. The result of the dream ain't got nothing to do with sheaves. It ain't got nothing to do with that.

And yet the dream modeled where he was heading. I have a dream that my sheaf is rising, and his sheaf rose. Amen. But it had nothing to do with sheaves. Your dream doesn't have to be defined. It can be a little broad.

It can be a little wild. Dreams need to be unbound. Because sometimes dreams are meant to go beyond you.

> **1 CHRONICLES 22:7** ESV
>
> 7 David said to Solomon, "My son, I had it in my heart to build a house to the name of the Lord my God.

When David is turning the kingdom over to Solomon in 1 Chronicles chapter 22, he says this. It says, "David said to Solomon, 'My son, I had it in my heart to build a house to the name of the Lord my God.'" David had a dream to do that, but he got a word from the Lord that that was not an activity that he was to do.

And he handed it to his son. Don't limit your dream, because your dream might be something that's supposed to work generationally in your life and go beyond you. I'm telling you, it starts with a dream. Living a big life starts with a dream. And there's no parameters on this dream. Nothing's off the table.

Nothing's off the table. Well, I want to be a millionaire. Well, the first thing I'd say is you need a bigger dream, because it ain't what it used to be. Amen. But I want to be a millionaire. There's nothing wrong with that.

That's a dream. Let the dream, have the dream, live in the dream, develop a dream, get a dream. So it starts with a dream. Then you refine the dream into a plan with vision. It's the second part of this process. You refine the dream into a plan with vision.

Now, I want to talk to you about vision for just a second. It's another word that you can discount. By the way, let me toss a little something in here for free. Typically in your life — this is not unusual — for someone to find breakthrough in the thing they think is silly. Some of y'all have been coming here for six months and you're going, no matter how many times he asks, I'm never going to lift my hands. There's a moment when you do this that could be crossing you over into something that you need from the Lord.

That could be a supernatural. And so a lot of times, breakthrough can be that thing that we go, I don't know about that. I don't know about that. I don't know. I'm not sure about that. So when I talk about a dream or I talk about a vision, you go, huh?

Okay. Well, hey, we know what you need today. If you turn your nose up to it, that might be the thing that causes breakthrough in your life. So vision is one of those things that we treat just like a dream, but we do tend to confuse vision for what it really is. And in churches, I'll say we confuse vision for mission a lot of times. So if you ask a pastor, you say, well, what's your vision for the church?

Well, my vision for the church is that we'd love the Lord. That sounds spiritual. That's why y'all are waiting for the punchline, because it sounds like it's a vision. And because 98% of pastors, something like that is their vision. That's not a vision. That's a mission.

You might as well just put on the front of the church, we're just trying to do everything that's written in the Bible. That's what love God means. That's what it is. A vision is how do you accomplish that? It's not the thing. It's how you get to the thing.

In this case, vision's how you get to the dream. Vision's also how you get to a mission. Vision's how you get to an end result. Think of vision like this. So imagine you're driving in a car, okay? This is me in my car.

Imagine you're driving in a car. Vision is the windshield, okay? That's what vision is. Vision tells you where you go next to get where you want to be. We're going to Disney World next week. Come on, somebody, I'm excited.

I'm not driving to Disney World. I'm driving to Mobile. And I'm driving to Pensacola. And I'm driving to Tallahassee. And I'm driving to Lake City, Florida. And then I gotta get on I-4.

But every time I get somewhere, my vision is updated. See, we think of it this way. We think vision makes the dream come about, which is true in the macro sense. But actually, vision updates. So it's actually vision, vision, vision, the dream — or the mission, if we need a church word here for it. So vision updates as you go towards your dream.

Vision is about seeing the next steps that need to be done to get you where you want to go. Some of you have a vision for your life, and it's actually the dream. Some of you do have a vision, and you've written it down, and you've said, this is what I'm going to do. But the vision is so big that there's no way to get there, because you've confused your vision with a dream. Do you know why the mission statement of our church is, we're building a Jesus-centered, Spirit-filled church for all people? Because that is not my vision.

That's actually not what the Lord has even mandated me to do. It's because that is the thing we've got to do right now. We've got to build a Jesus-centered, Spirit-filled church for all people. That's the next step. That's the thing we're accomplishing now. That is vision.

That is where we're heading. How are we doing that? Well, we're doing it a couple of ways. One way is we're really focusing on that Jesus-centered part, and we're making sure that the cross is central to the preaching here in the church. We're not going to preach a bunch of weirdo theology stuff and talk about how shofars bring breakthrough in your life. Shofars won't do anything for you, honey.

The cross will, though. Hallelujah. We're being very intentional with being Jesus-centered. First thing I preached here was four weeks on the finished work of Jesus Christ. I made sure that was in the foundational work. That's what we're doing.

Then we're Spirit-filled. We took about six months, and I basically said, we're going to be a church where the people say amen once in a while. Hallelujah. I said, we're not going to do that right now. We're not doing all that stuff. We're going to hold on.

We're going to wait. Why? Because we'll make sure we're Jesus-centered. Then we came into the beginning of this year, and we preached, what was it, eight, nine weeks on being Spirit-filled, and we talked about the power of God. What are we doing? We're activating the power of God in this church.

How are we doing it? Well, we're doing it through the Word. We're doing it through participating in here. We're talking about praying. When we go into next year, I'm going to tell you right now, this is going to be a praying church. It's two words: praying church.

Amen. We're making sure some of those things are happening. We're a Spirit-filled church. We're a church where people shout when they receive the Word of God. Hallelujah. Half of the church is Spirit-filled.

We're Spirit-filling right now. Amen. We're building a church for all people. We're building a church for all people. I'm tired of all you white people. You can't clap.

You can't dance. You're ruining my services. I'm too funky for y'all. Barry, I'm too good. I'm too good of a music guy for that. You know what I mean?

We're building a culture now. We're singing songs that lend a little less pale, amen, and it's a little less Wonder Bread. If you clap on the one and the three, an usher will take you out of the room. Amen. We're doing some of those things, but we're also being intentional about it. I'm going to come in here and I'm going to talk about it this summer.

We're really going to document where we're at, because we want to be clear on where we're at culturally in this church, where we're at on issues in life. I let anybody walk in here who doesn't put a child in danger. That's the only place I draw the line. Go ahead and give the Lord a hand clap right there. I'll let anybody. I'll preach to a drag queen on the front row.

I got to, because sometimes you don't know. Amen. This is a church for anybody, but we want to be clear on where we stand on every issue. Here's what I never want. I never want people to be here and then find out six months later that we are foundationally against whatever they do. We won't talk about that stuff.

By the way, the first message in that series is dealing with our own stuff. I'm going to help you diagnose your stuff. Amen. Hallelujah. Everybody got upset. Man, we're not going to talk to you about it anymore.

Amen. Vision is seeing the next steps that get you toward the dream. This is making the plan. This is breaking the dream down from where you are, and how do you get there. If you wanted to be a doctor, it's good grades in high school, bachelor's, master's, doctorate, residency. You got to go through.

You have a pathway, and the vision is updating. You're not working on — you're not trying to go stand in on an operation while you're working on 10th grade grammar. Amen. You're updating as you go, but it gets you towards the dream. Dreams require vision to come to fruition.

If you've ever wondered, Joel 2, verse 28, I've got it on the screen.

> **JOEL 2:28** ESV
>
> 28 "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.

I think it says, "Your old men shall dream dreams and your young men shall see visions." That sounds real spiritual, but there's a reason for it. There's a reason that old men dream dreams and young men have visions. It's because old men do not have the time left to put a plan to the thing they want to see happen. Old men dream a dream where young men have visions.

Young men still have time to take the dream and put a framework to it and accomplish it. Here's the good news. You get to decide whether you're a young one or an old one. Come on, somebody. I'll tell you what, Barry actually is a real good example of this, because Barry's going to start playing drums soon. We've got a date.

Barry actually does exercises that allow him to make sure that the muscles used to play drums stay in good condition. His workout routine is built around playing drums. Amen. That's a real good — you're a good example. I'm going to let you — everybody just shake his hand and high five him today on the way out. Amen.

Buy him a roast beef sandwich or something. I don't know. Find a food that's good for drums. Someone Google that while we're doing it. Come on, man. Filet mignon.

It's a protein. I need the protein. Amen. Vision has to be something you can see. Let me just say this. Your vision cannot be something that is completely out in the impossible.

It can't be in the realm of the unreasonable. It has to be something that maybe you reach for, but you can't go — this is why Dave Ramsey starts his debt payoff process with saving $1,000. Because saving $1,000 is a lot easier than paying off a $110,000 student loan to be a ballet major. Amen. Those are the expensive ones.

You know what I mean? The less you can use it, the more expensive it's going to be. Hallelujah. I apologize to all the ballet majors this morning. It's a church for all people. Amen.

Number three, the vision is brought about by execution, execution, execution, execution. This is really important, because at some point, you got to take actual action. At some point, you have to escape the mind, the paper, the hypothetical, and you actually have to do the stuff that's determined by the vision. You can have a vision and never do anything. Like I said earlier, with the lazy river, you have to get in. You have to do something.

You have to get in there.

> **1 CORINTHIANS 3:6** ESV
>
> 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.

1 Corinthians chapter 3, when Paul is talking about the great ministry of the church, he says this. He says, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth." I had to do something. He had to do something.

It was God who made it happen. It was God who brought it about. It was supernatural provision, but at some point I had to show up to the Corinthian church and preach. I had to do the thing that produces the results. You can update the formula with this. Execution accomplishes the vision, accomplishes the dream.

Execution accomplishes the vision, accomplishes the dream. You have to get executing on the things that get you where you want to be. I want to say this, because there's a little tough love right here. Y'all have stopped being a church and now I'm in a business conference here. Let me just tell you like it is for a moment. Effort does not equal execution.

I think all of humanity is bad about this, but the church is especially bad about this. We think just because we do the bare minimum, God ought to give it the maximum blessing and the maximum anointing. That's why we used to have people get up and sing specials in church, and they'd come up there and they'd say, "Well now, I don't know the words real good, so I'm going to read the tape case this morning, but I believe this is just going to bless y'all." Because we're going to laugh at you. It's going to be funny. That's why. It's about to be hilarious.

If you ain't ever laughed during a church special, you are not a real human being, okay? I've laid down on pews trying to hide in some of these things. My God. Lord, I'm thinking about one of them right now too. I'm about to get tickled. Amen.

But effort doesn't equal execution. Listen, write this down. This is so good. I want you to write this down. You got to do the thing the thing requires. You got to do the thing the thing requires.

I'm just going to tell you right now, you aren't going to go debt free. You aren't going to be a millionaire. You aren't going to buy a car by putting away a couple of nickels every day. They used to have this app. I liked it. I used it.

It was called Acorns. What it would do is you'd spend a little bit of money and then whatever the change was up to the next dollar amount, you'd put that in a bank account for you and it would save it up. I'm just telling you, you ain't going to be a millionaire on the Acorns. That's not going to happen. That's not going to work. You're going to have to do the thing the thing requires.

Ashleigh works with a lot of saleswomen. She trains and she coaches. She leads people. She'll have ladies that will get involved with her and she'll say, well, what do you want to do every month? She'll say, well, I want to make $2,000 a

month. I just need $2,000 a month.

I need extra income. And all of the income in these ladies' life, it comes from sales. It comes from sales. You want money? It's sales. It amazes me how often we got a lady who's not making any money because she's putting binders together.

She's just constantly organizing and putting and reorganizing and doing paperwork. I'm just telling you right now, there ain't no money in the binders. You got to do the thing the thing requires. And then you can get resentful, because at the end of the day, you feel like you've done something because you spent seven hours on your little binder, but there ain't no money in the binder. So you got to do the thing the thing requires. You have to put in the execution, but effort does not equal execution. You got to do the thing the thing requires.

Hallelujah. And if this doesn't produce, then that has to change. You got to do the thing the thing requires. Number four, number four, execution mirrors the dream by consistency. Execution mirrors the dream by consistency. If you want the vision and execution to eventually look like the dream or look like the mission, that comes about through consistency.

Comes about through consistency. Not only do you have to do the thing the thing requires, but you got to do enough of the thing the thing requires. I'm always amazed by people who can come to a conclusion on an activity in a timeframe that is obviously premature. It is obviously too early. You'll have people who dieted for a week, but they stopped because they didn't see a change. Dieted for a week, but the scale didn't move.

You'll have people who exercised for a month, but they quit because they didn't feel any different. Or you'll have people who get into sales, or maybe somebody who's raising money to go on a missions trip. Or in my world, you have an evangelist or a missionary who's fundraising, and they call one person and the person doesn't say yes. And they go, well, this doesn't work. This isn't going to go anywhere. Because you got to call 200.

I'll tell you what we run into. We have people all the time tell us about what they're planning on doing. And, you know, I'm going to try to — we had somebody the other day, and I hope it's not somebody in here, and if it is, I won't say your name because I don't remember who it was. Somebody was talking about starting something, and they said, you know, I'm going to try to make about 10 contacts over the next month. You need to make 10 contacts tomorrow.

You got to do it. You got to go, you got to get in there and make it happen. And once you know what to execute on, just be prepared. You got to do a lot of what that is for a long time. You want to build a big life? I need you to hear me.

It's going to take more action and it's going to cost more money than you think it does. Well, pastor, that's not encouraging. I thought we would just pray for it and we'd get it. Listen, if you don't know how to work and the Lord blessed you in a fantastic way, you would destroy your life. I was just reading about King Asa, who was a king of Israel or a king of Judah, one of the two.

> **2 CHRONICLES 14:11-12** ESV
>
> 11 And Asa cried to the Lord his God, "O Lord, there is none like you to help, between the mighty and the weak. Help us, O Lord our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this multitude. O Lord, you are our God; let not man prevail against you." 12 So the Lord defeated the Ethiopians before Asa and before Judah, and the Ethiopians fled.

2 CHRONICLES 16:1-12 ESV

1 In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and built Ramah, that
he might permit no one to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. 2 Then Asa took silver and gold from the
treasures of the house of the Lord and the king's house and sent them to Ben-hadad king of Syria, who lived in
Damascus, saying, 3 "There is a covenant between me and you, as there was between my father and your
father. Behold, I am sending to you silver and gold. Go, break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, that he
may withdraw from me." 4 And Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against
the cities of Israel, and they conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim, and all the store cities of Naphtali. 5 And when
Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah and let his work cease. 6 Then King Asa took all Judah, and they
carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been building, and with them he built
Geba and Mizpah. 7 At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, "Because you
relied on the king of Syria, and did not rely on the Lord your God, the army of the king of Syria has escaped you.
8 Were not the Ethiopians and the Libyans a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because
you relied on the Lord, he gave them into your hand. 9 For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the
whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. You have done foolishly in
this, for from now on you will have wars." 10 Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in the stocks in
prison, for he was in a rage with him because of this. And Asa inflicted cruelties upon some of the people at the
same time. 11 The acts of Asa, from first to last, are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. 12 In the
thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was diseased in his feet, and his disease became severe. Yet even in his disease
he did not seek the Lord, but sought help from physicians.

And he had sought the Lord for breakthrough in a military campaign, and the Lord gave it to him.

And then things started to go good. And when things started to go good, he stopped calling on the name of the Lord and he just started trusting his resource. He'd send a letter to another king, or he'd look to his military and they'd count how many, and he'd get sick and they'd try all this different stuff, and he'd never turn to the Lord, and the Lord judged him for it. That's you, man. If you prayed for that lottery ticket to work and it worked, there's some stuff you don't need God for if you've got money. You don't believe it.

How many of y'all pray for water to sprout up at your house? You don't, because you got a sink. But there's people in Africa right now who are praying, God, give us rain, give us water. And they'll see water sprout up out the ground in Africa sometimes, these churches. Why? Because they don't have the resource for it.

So they trust the Lord. So the resource will pull you away from that sometimes if you aren't careful. You got to be careful. By the way, you can be prosperous out the wazoo and get up and go to the secret place every morning. In fact, that's my prayer. My prayer is just, God, I want all of it.

I'm going to stay here in prayer, but I want to feel weighed down by your glory and my checkbook. Amen. I want it all. You can have both. You can have both. Amen.

Grant Cardone wrote a great book. It's a business book. The guy's not even saved. He's a Scientologist. It's not a Scientology book, but he's a business guy. He's a real estate investor.

I tell every pastor who asked me to say, what should I read? I give them a handful of books, and one of them's always Grant Cardone's book called 10X. It's called 10X. My opinion of most pastors is they don't do enough to get where they want to be. Most pastors complain about the results they get, but if you go and you look at their calendar, you'll figure out why they've got the results they've got. That's most people, by the way, but I'm a preacher, so I'm around them all the time.

Amen. So if I was a real estate agent, that's who I'd be talking about. Laura, I bet you know some real estate agents that just don't know why they can't sell a house. They ain't done nothing in six months. All they do is go to t-ball games and they can't even carry business cards with them. Some of this stuff's easy, folks.

Now I'm just teaching. I'm on a roll now. Praise the Lord. And so I get a little concerned, because when I see young preachers, I know they've been watching folks who don't do anything, and they sit around and they get nothing done and they play 10 hours of golf every day, swing by the office and check on the secretary, make sure everything's good; or they sit around and talk non-stop all day, or they obviously have been on Facebook for seven hours. I'm in the groups. I just hung a photo in my office because I was feeling discouraged last week, because I felt like I wasn't doing enough.

Because when the LED screen got crazy on me, I was like, God, I just can't get it fixed by Sunday. And then I logged on to an Assemblies of God lead pastors group, and in the group it said this. A guy had posted this, a pastor in the Assemblies of God. He said, "I don't know how to play music after church. I looked on YouTube, but it played ads." That was it.

That's all the effort he did. He looked at one YouTube video, it played ads, and so he didn't go any further. And I hung it on my wall, and right above it, I wrote, when you feel like you're not doing enough, remember, this guy can't be bothered to watch a YouTube video. We got a world-class worship experience in this big little church. Amen. Ain't that something?

Hallelujah. So I always tell young preachers — I'm not going to tell you young pastors, because I know that's the example that they see most of the time — young ministers who want to go out, I tell them to read the book 10X by Grant Cardone. In Grant Cardone's book 10X, he talks about four levels of action. Four levels of action. I'm going to give you these four levels of action real quick.

I'm going to wrap up here in a minute. I start every message saying, I feel like preaching. Y'all knew I was feeling it this morning. Amen. So, four levels of action. First level of action is you do nothing.

That's the first level of action, you do nothing. Second level of action is this, you retreat. When the going gets tough, the tough get going. They don't quit. The thing you want in your life is going to require something from you. Are you quitting too soon?

Are you walking away too soon? Are you giving up too soon? So, four levels of action: do nothing, retreat. The third level is normal levels of action. Normal levels of action, that's normal. That's just what anybody would do.

That's any normal person with two brain cells, that's what they would do. There's a fourth level of action. Massive action. That right there, my friends, that is what dreams are made of. That is how — this is how you do it. This is how you build a big life.

You don't have to have a big life. You can have a moderate sized life and be real happy with it and be fine. But if you want a big life, if you want to make a big difference, if you want to make a big impact, if you want to change a lot of

people's lives, if you want to see generations of your family transition, if you want to see — I'm talking about the dream. I'm not talking about just any old thing. I'm talking about if you want to see the dream come, it takes massive action. You have children who are not saved.

It doesn't take normal levels of prayer. It takes massive levels of prayer. It certainly doesn't take retreat. It certainly doesn't take turning from the church and going, well, if my kids aren't saved, I guess I'll just support whatever lifestyle they have. No, you need massive action. You've got to go into massive times of prayer.

You want to see that business succeed. It's not going to succeed when you give up all the time. It's not going to succeed when you do normal levels of action. If you want what everybody else has got, that's fine. Everybody else don't have a big life, but we're a big little church that's building big people. And so since I've got big people in here who are being built, you got to know what it takes to build a big life.

And it takes massive action. It takes massive action. And you say, well, pastor, that sounds a lot like works. I thought you were a grace preacher. I am. But it was by the grace of God that Paul had the ability to work and labor at the level that he did to bring about the results that he got that have affected 2,000 years of the church.

We're not talking about doing nothing and retreating. We're talking about massive action. Massive action. And so when we talk about consistency in our execution — because this is what a lot of people do. They'll execute and then all of a sudden they'll go, well, that didn't work, and they'll walk away from it. I called two people, called 10 people, I'm done.

No, no. They tell you in sales, go for no. The no is success. Yes has happened here and there. No is success. If you took 28 no's today, you're made of some strong stuff, baby. Come on.

So this is what it really looks like, because it's not just execution. It's execution by consistency. So you execute, you execute, you execute, you execute, and then that level of the vision comes about. That level of vision gets conquered. And then you execute and you execute and you execute. And then that level of the vision comes about.

And then, because you've been doing it a while and your fortitude, and you're getting stronger and you're getting better and you're getting slicker, you execute and you execute. And then the next thing you know, the vision for that level's come about. And then the next thing you know is you get into this and you can execute. And then all of a sudden the vision comes about quicker. It doesn't take as much to get the next thing accomplished. And then the next thing you know, after all of that, you get to the dream.

Precious girl that me and Ashleigh know, she's in sales as well. I was thinking — you brought up, I was asking about someone yesterday and you thought I was talking about Carrie. And you got me thinking about Carrie from South Dakota. And she said this one time, made a big impact on me. She talked about business and sales. And she said this, she said, when you build a business or you're in sales, or you're going to be an entrepreneur, or you want to be a high level professional, you want to build a big life.

You want to do this — could even be, if you want to have a homestead, if you want to have a large church or a missions organization that touches millions of people, or you want to feed a lot of kids, you want to do a lot of stuff for people. If you want to do that, this is what it looks like. You got to work, work, work, work, work, work, work, get paid. And then you work, work, work, work, get paid. And then you work, work, work, get paid. And then you work, work, get paid.

And eventually you work and you get paid, get paid, get paid, get paid, get paid, get paid, get paid. Because when you do it over a long time and you have a lot of consistency in your execution, the dream will come about. You'll step into a

big life. You'll step into something. And I know some of you here this morning — I just feel like preaching at you a little bit, because you're looking at me like, preacher, you've talked a lot about money.

Give me 18 areas of your life that money don't touch and we'll have a conversation. So I love my family and it ain't got nothing to do with money. I love my family and they keep asking me for money. Amen. Hallelujah. So I'm telling you, these are just processes of a big life.

I want to encourage you with this before I quit this morning. Can't preach a message like this without thinking about Habakkuk chapter 2.

> **HABAKKUK 2:2-3** ESV
>
> 2 And the Lord answered me: "Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. 3 For still
> the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely
> come; it will not delay.

Habakkuk chapter 2, going back to vision, it says this, it says, "And the Lord answered me: Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its appointed time. It hastens to the end. It will not lie.

If it seems slow, wait for it. It will surely come. It will not delay." This framework is basically in there. This framework is essentially in this passage of Scripture. That there's something that needs to be accomplished.

So you write a vision and you make it plain. You write the vision so the people can run with it. They're running. That's execution and it's consistency. It's a continual process. And if it seems slow, don't get discouraged.

It'll come about. This is how you build a big life. This is how we're going to build a big church. I'd love to, you know, I'd love to put out an ad and just have 28,000 people start coming tomorrow. I'd love it. I could do the shortest church growth conference in the world.

We'd have big music and pumping. We'd have the best worship leaders leading the conference, and I'd get on stage and I'd look at everybody and I'd say, you want a big church? And all the preachers would be — they'd be screaming. And I'd go, run it out. Bow your heads. Everybody in this room knows that's not how it works.

That sounds silly. How often have you quit, or you've run away, or you've done normal levels of action, or you've exited because the dream isn't as easy as you hoped it would be. I want it to come through a lottery ticket. I want it to come through just showing up and people being here. I'd love it to be easy. I'd love it to be easy.

I'd love it to be easy, but nothing comes that way. It comes through effort. It comes through work. And whether you're going to have a normal size life or a big life is going to be determined by the levels of action you're willing to take. Massive action. Massive action. Nobody promotes in their job coming in late and leaving early.

Do I think you ought to do work you don't get paid for? Yes. Yeah, I do. Because that's what the people who've actually gotten the life they want did. That's what it takes. Do I think you ought to love the person who's showing no signs of change or turnaround?

Yes, because that's how you get the result. If you've got a child far from the Lord, you keep loving, you keep praying, you keep looking to heaven, you keep believing God to do it, and you get in the secret place. Here's a word for somebody. Some of y'all think you're going to get your adult kids to change by bringing it to their attention. Your drug addict son

knows his life is screwed up, and he knows the woman he's seeing ain't no good for him, and he knows when he hangs around them people it turns out bad. And he knows he needs to do better at his job.

And he knows he needs to clean up after himself. He knows all this stuff. He knows he needs to stop smoking, he knows he needs to stop drinking, and he knows he needs to lose weight. And you telling him this stuff all the time is accomplishing nothing. Get into the secret place. Pray every day.

And I'm not talking about no "now I lay me down to sleep." When's the last time you got in the secret place over a lost loved one and you said, Lord, my sister is so freaking dysfunctional. See, this is how you get prayers that actually work. You get in there: God, my sister is so freaking dysfunctional. If you don't intervene in her life, this is never going to change. So, Holy Spirit, for the next 10 minutes, because I don't know what to do for her, because if I did, I'd have already done it, I'm going to pray in tongues and I'm going to ask you to partner with me that that would touch my sister.

Sheetah bah-rah-see-tee-ah-lah — and then let 10 minutes pass just praying in the Holy Ghost. You want to know how — this is a word for somebody — you want to know how you get a legacy of your family serving the Lord? Miss Gina came up to me one night when we were having a prayer meeting here at the church. She said, "I don't really know what to pray, so I just pray in the Spirit." Well, that's gotten her pretty good results in her family. So maybe you take a lesson from Miss Gina and you pray in the Spirit a little bit.

Amen. I feel like I'm done preaching. I'm glad y'all didn't clap or anything there. I'd have been really offended if y'all had got excited. I think I'm done.

Amen. Praise the Lord. This is your homework. I want you to go home, and if you don't have a dream, I want you to start thinking, just dream a little bit. Maybe you need to walk around your house or your property or drive to a place you've always wanted to live and look a little bit and say, you know, if I could have my cake and eat it too, this is what it'd look like, this is what it'd feel like, this is what my life would be like. And if you have the dream already and you know what it is, you need to get your vision written.

Get your vision written down on paper. And if you have a vision and you've been looking at vision boards on your wall for the last 10 years and nothing has changed, we know what the problem is. You need to execute. And if you did that thing and it didn't work, why don't you go back and try doing it a hundred more times and see what happens. Just over and over and over. Follow that process, and I'm telling you, your life will start to resemble that thing you've been dreaming about, in Jesus' name.

So go home, dream, write a vision, execute. Basically just do what I preached this morning. Amen. Hallelujah. Do y'all receive the word today? It's a fun little sermon I preached here.

If we had a worship leader that we're going to have in the next six months, I'd just look at him and start singing an old song, and that's how we'd end right now. Because we're a big little church, and when we're a little bit bigger, we'll have him and that's how we'll do it. But since I can't sing an old song, why don't you just lift your hands to heaven this morning and we'll let the computer play us into the presence of the Lord for a moment. Go ahead.

02

Preaching Notes

Before You Preach

This is a stand-alone message for a seasonal transition (it was preached on the first Sunday of summer). Say up front that it is lighter on exposition than usual: it is preached "out of my spirit, informed by the Word," and it is practical. Keep it anchored in grace. The big life flows from the finished work of Jesus, and the four steps are how we partake in what He has already provided.

The framework is simple enough to put on one screen and build as you go:

Dream, Vision, Execution, Consistency

Expect the "that sounds like works" objection near the end and answer it with Paul: grace is what empowered him to labor. The message also introduces a phrase for the church's identity, "a big little church." Give it room.

Introduction

Seasonal changes bring opportunities. We are people of rhythms. When school starts, a whole city responds: traffic changes, schedules change, stores change. New Year's, fall, the holidays and the start of summer are natural moments to make changes in your life.

Today: **building a big life.**

A big life flows from the finished work of Jesus Christ.

> JOHN 10:10 ESV
>
> 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

The thief is certainly the devil, but there are a lot of thieves in your life, many things that want to rob you. Jesus came so that you might have life to the full.

Everything that qualifies you for a big life was provided at the cross. **You are not good enough to have a big life, but because you belong to Jesus Christ, in Him you are qualified for one.**

But you still have to get in. You have to partake in the process. Paul even wrote, "in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church" (Colossians 1:24). The work is finished, and there is still work to be done.

Illustration: the lazy river. Typhoon Lagoon, the water park at Walt Disney World, has a massive lazy river. It has current. It takes you anywhere you want to go in the park, to every ride and every concession stand. It does all the

heavy lifting and takes the pressure off your feet and joints. But you still have to get in.

Here are the components of a big life, the process you have to get into:

- It starts with a **dream**.
- You refine the dream into a plan with **vision**.
- The vision is brought about by **execution**.
- Execution mirrors the dream by **consistency**.

WE'RE A BIG LITTLE CHURCH

While walking into the newly finished worship room one day, a phrase came out unprompted: "We are a big little church." It felt like it came through, not from, the preacher.

- There was a time, about 25 years earlier, when the church was very large. You do not have to be a large church to be a big church, and you do not have to be a large person to be a big person.
- We are not a small church. We are a big little church, which is better than being a large, small church. Some churches that run 2,000 or 3,000 are small.
- We are not big because we are chasing attendance. **We are big because we are growing big people.**

Big isn't a stature. It's a spirit.

- **Big people** think big, talk big, act big, give big and love big.
- **Small people** think small, live small, act small, give small and do small.

Small people rest on their laurels and ignore their potential. They are proud of what is behind them.

Illustration: Uncle Rico. In *Napoleon Dynamite*, Uncle Rico sits on the porch convinced that if the coach had just put him in during the big game, his whole life would have turned out differently. Small people are always talking about what they used to do.

Churches do this too. "We used to..." Remember when the parking lot was full, when there was a children's pastor and a youth pastor and a music pastor, and a budget to match? You can look back and call it the good old days, or you can look forward. This happens in churches of every size. A church can become a hall of fame with a trophy case gathering dust. We are looking forward.

Big people say, "I can do anything." Small people say, "Nothing's been done for me."

Some of the most successful people you will meet are almost naive about it: it never occurs to them that they cannot do something. Small people come up with every reason not to and focus on what has not been handed to them. It is **ignorance versus entitlement**: some people are not "smart enough" to know they are not capable, and some people are so entitled that no matter how capable they are, they will not move unless somebody sets them up.

1. It Starts with a Dream

To some, especially men, "dream" sounds lofty and a little woo-woo. "I don't need a dream. I'm just going to go to work." But a dream is not a bizarre thing.

A dream is simply the ideal model of your life, without regard for the requirements.

- Your dream is either **vivid** (you see it) or **visceral** (you feel it). There is a dream down in every person.
- It can be wide and a little wild. It does not have to be defined.
- **Dreams require no feasibility.** If fishing every day brings you great joy, let that be your dream.

Joseph had a dream: "Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright" (Genesis 37:7).

> GENESIS 37:5-7 ESV
>
> 5 Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more. 6 He said to
> them, "Hear this dream that I have dreamed: 7 Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold,
> my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my
> sheaf."

The fulfillment had nothing to do with sheaves. Joseph ended up second only to Pharaoh, in charge of all Egypt. The dream did not define the details; it modeled where he was heading.

Dreams need to be unbound, because some dreams are meant to go beyond you.

> 1 CHRONICLES 22:7 ESV
>
> 7 David said to Solomon, "My son, I had it in my heart to build a house to the name of the Lord my God.

David had the dream, but the Lord told him he was not the one to build. He handed it to his son. Your dream may be meant to work generationally.

There are no parameters on the dream. Want to be a millionaire? There is nothing wrong with that. (You might need a bigger dream; a million is not what it used to be.) Have the dream, live in the dream, develop the dream.

2. You Refine the Dream into a Plan with Vision

A word for free: people often find breakthrough in the very thing they think is silly. If you turn your nose up at dreaming or vision, or at lifting your hands in worship, that may be the very thing that crosses you over.

People often confuse vision with other things. In churches, we confuse it with **mission**. Ask a pastor his vision and he will say, "That we'd love the Lord." That is not a vision; that is a mission. A vision is not the thing. It is how you get to the thing.

Illustration: the windshield. Vision is the windshield. Driving to Disney World, you are not really driving to Disney World. You are driving to Mobile, then Pensacola, then Tallahassee, then Lake City, then onto I-4. Every time you arrive somewhere, your vision updates.

Vision is what I can see that needs to be accomplished next in pursuit of the dream.

Vision > **Dream** becomes **Vision** > **Vision** > **Vision** > **Vision** > **Dream.**

Some people write a vision that is really the dream, so big there is no way to get there. Vision is the next step.

Example: the church's vision. Use your own church as the example. When this was preached, Pastor Jason explained that the church's stated vision was not the ultimate dream but the next step, and walked through how each part of it was being built: first, four weeks on the finished work of Jesus to keep the cross central; then, after about six months, a season of preaching on the Holy Spirit and the power of God, with a commitment to become a praying church; and finally, building a church culture where anyone is welcome and where the church is clear about where it stands.

If you want to be a doctor: good grades in high school, a bachelor's degree, medical school, residency. You do not sit in on surgery while you are working on tenth-grade grammar. The vision updates as you go, and it carries you toward the dream.

> JOEL 2:28 ESV
>
> 28 "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.

There is a reason old men dream dreams and young men see visions: old men may not have the time left to put a plan to what they want to see. Young men still have time to put a framework around the dream. The good news is that you get to decide whether you are a young one or an old one.

Vision has to be something you can see. You should have to reach for it, but it cannot be out in the realm of the unreasonable. That is why Dave Ramsey's plan starts with saving $1,000. Saving $1,000 is a lot easier than paying off a $110,000 student loan.

3. The Vision Is Brought About by Execution

At some point you have to take actual action. You have to escape the mind, the paper and the hypothetical, and actually do what the vision calls for. Remember the lazy river: you have to get in.

> 1 CORINTHIANS 3:6 ESV
>
> 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.

God gave the growth. It was supernatural. But Paul still had to show up in Corinth and preach.

Execution > Vision > Dream

Effort does not equal execution. All of humanity is bad about this, and the church is especially bad about it: we think God ought to give the bare minimum the maximum blessing. (Remember the church special sung off the cassette case: "I don't know the words real good, but I believe this is going to bless y'all.")

You have to do the thing the thing requires.

You are not going to become debt free, buy a car or become a millionaire by rounding up spare change in a savings app.

Illustration: there ain't no money in the binders. Ashleigh coaches women in sales. A woman will say she wants to make $2,000 a month, and all of her income comes from sales. Yet it is amazing how often someone is making no money because she is organizing and reorganizing her binders. She spends seven hours on paperwork and feels like she did something. But there ain't no money in the binders.

If this does not produce that, then we need to change what we are doing.

OPTIONAL: NOVELTY AND VIABILITY

This line is in the original notes but was not preached on May 31, 2026. Use it if time allows.

Novices focus on novelty. Experts focus on viability.

4. Execution Mirrors the Dream by Consistency

Not only do you have to do the thing the thing requires, you have to do **enough** of the thing the thing requires.

People come to conclusions about whether something works far too early:

- They dieted for a week, and the scale didn't move.
- They exercised for a month, and they didn't feel different.
- They called one person to support a mission trip, and the person said no. You have to call 200.

Someone planning a new venture said, "I'm going to try to make about ten contacts over the next month." You need to make ten contacts tomorrow.

Once you know what to execute on, you have to do a lot of it for a long time. **If you want to build a big life, it will take more action and cost more money than you think it does.**

"Pastor, I thought we would just pray for it." If you do not know how to work and the Lord blessed you in a fantastic way, it could destroy your life.

King Asa. When an army came against Judah, Asa cried out, "Help us, O LORD our God, for we rely on you" (2 Chronicles 14:11), and the Lord gave the victory. Later, when things went well, he trusted his resources instead: he sent silver and gold to another king for help, and when he grew sick, "even in his disease he did not seek the

LORD, but sought help from physicians" (2 Chronicles 16:12). Resources can pull you away from dependence on God. You do not pray for water if you have a sink.

But you can be prosperous and still go to the secret place every morning. You can have both.

Four levels of action. Grant Cardone's business book *The 10X Rule* describes four levels of action:

- **Do nothing.**
- **Retreat.** When it gets tough, do you quit too soon?
- **Normal levels of action.** What anybody would do.
- **Massive action.** That is what dreams are made of.

You don't have to have a big life. A moderate life can be a happy life. But if you want to make a big difference, change a lot of people's lives, or see generations of your family transformed, it takes massive action. If you have children who are not saved, it does not take normal levels of prayer. It takes massive levels of prayer.

"That sounds like works. I thought you were a grace preacher." It was by the grace of God that Paul could labor at the level he did and see results that have affected 2,000 years of the church.

In sales they say, **go for no.** The no is success. If you took 28 noes today, you are made of strong stuff.

So consistency looks like this:

Execution, execution, execution, execution, vision. Execution, execution, execution, vision. Execution, execution, vision. Execution, vision. Dream.

Illustration: work, get paid. A friend in sales described building a business like this: work, work, work, work, work, get paid. Work, work, work, get paid. Work, work, get paid. And eventually: work, get paid, get paid, get paid, get paid. Over time, with consistency in your execution, the vision comes about faster and the dream arrives.

This is not only about money. Name the areas of your life that money doesn't touch: these processes apply there too.

Conclusion

> HABAKKUK 2:2-3 ESV
>
> 2 And the Lord answered me: "Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. 3 For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.

The whole framework is in this passage. Write the vision and make it plain, so those who read it can run. Running is execution and consistency. And if it seems slow, do not get discouraged. It will surely come.

There is no shortcut. You cannot put out an ad and have 28,000 people show up tomorrow. How often have you quit, retreated or settled for normal action because the dream wasn't as easy as you hoped? Whether you have a normal-size life or a big life will be determined by the levels of action you are willing to take. Nobody gets promoted coming in late and leaving early.

Massive action in prayer. If you have a child far from the Lord, keep loving, keep praying, keep believing God. Your adult child already knows what is wrong in his life; telling him again accomplishes nothing. Get into the secret place. Pray honestly: "Lord, if You don't intervene, this is never going to change." And if you don't know what to pray, pray in the Spirit. A woman in the church once said, "I don't really know what to pray, so I just pray in the Spirit," and it has produced good results in her family.

Homework:

- If you don't have a dream, go home and dream. Walk around your property or drive somewhere you've always wanted to live and ask, "If I could have it all, what would it look and feel like?"
- If you have the dream, write the vision down on paper.
- If you have a vision board that hasn't changed anything in ten years, you need to execute.
- If you did the thing and it didn't work, go back and do it a hundred more times.

Follow the process, and your life will start to resemble the dream. Dream, write a vision, execute, and stay consistent.

03

Scripture List

Every passage read, cited or alluded to in the message, in the order it comes up.

Read

Read aloud in the message.

JOHN 10:10	10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.
GENESIS 37:5-7	5 Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more. 6 He said to them, "Hear this dream that I have dreamed: 7 Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf."
1 CHRONICLES 22:7	7 David said to Solomon, "My son, I had it in my heart to build a house to the name of the Lord my God.
JOEL 2:28	28 "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.
1 CORINTHIANS 3:6	6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.
HABAKKUK 2:2-3	2 And the Lord answered me: "Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. 3 For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.

Cited

Named or quoted along the way.

COLOSSIANS 1:24	24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church,

Alluded to

Drawn on without naming the reference.

2 CHRONICLES 14:11-12

11 And Asa cried to the Lord his God, "O Lord, there is none like you to help, between
the mighty and the weak. Help us, O Lord our God, for we rely on you, and in your
name we have come against this multitude. O Lord, you are our God; let not man
prevail against you." 12 So the Lord defeated the Ethiopians before Asa and before
Judah, and the Ethiopians fled.

2 CHRONICLES 16:1-12

1 In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel went up against
Judah and built Ramah, that he might permit no one to go out or come in to Asa king
of Judah. 2 Then Asa took silver and gold from the treasures of the house of the Lord
and the king's house and sent them to Ben-hadad king of Syria, who lived in
Damascus, saying, 3 "There is a covenant between me and you, as there was between
my father and your father. Behold, I am sending to you silver and gold. Go, break your
covenant with Baasha king of Israel, that he may withdraw from me." 4 And Ben-
hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities
of Israel, and they conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim, and all the store cities of
Naphtali. 5 And when Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah and let his work
cease. 6 Then King Asa took all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah
and its timber, with which Baasha had been building, and with them he built Geba
and Mizpah. 7 At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him,
"Because you relied on the king of Syria, and did not rely on the Lord your God, the
army of the king of Syria has escaped you. 8 Were not the Ethiopians and the Libyans
a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the
Lord, he gave them into your hand. 9 For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro
throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless
toward him. You have done foolishly in this, for from now on you will have wars."
10 Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in the stocks in prison, for he was in
a rage with him because of this. And Asa inflicted cruelties upon some of the people
at the same time. 11 The acts of Asa, from first to last, are written in the Book of the
Kings of Judah and Israel. 12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was diseased in
his feet, and his disease became severe. Yet even in his disease he did not seek the
Lord, but sought help from physicians.

Pastor Jason Mayfield

SENIOR PASTOR, CITYLIGHT CHURCH

Pastor Jason Mayfield is the Senior Pastor of Citylight Church in Saraland, Alabama, where he and his wife, Ashleigh, lead a church devoted to Building Lives on Jesus. His preaching is rooted in the Bible, full of hope, and grounded in one conviction: an incredible life is built on the finished work of Jesus Christ.

For more than 20 years, Pastor Jason has given his life to the local church. He has been credentialed with the Assemblies of God for 21 years and ordained for 14, and he has led revitalization in churches that went on to rank among the Top 100 Fastest-Growing Churches in America. He carries a deep conviction that the church can be both excellent and supernatural, and a passion for revival.

He is an author and the creator of Tear Up Your Bible and POWER 27, a daily rhythm of Bible reading, prayer and worship. His resources have helped more than 100,000 people go deeper in the Scriptures. Above every title, his greatest joy is seeing people meet Jesus, be filled with the Spirit, and grow into everything God has called them to be.

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