

THE BIG IDEA: Where God is taking you explains who God is making you.

The Take-Off

This morning we're hitting the halfway point of our 4 week series called "The Big Oh!"

The goal of the series is to understand that often the plan of God for our lives is more shocking than safe, and honestly, for many of us that grew up in church, that simple statement is probably all the shock we can handle!

The first shocking statement from God was that he wants us to give him our worst. We saw that God is the best at repurposing the trash of our lives into treasure for his kingdom.

Last week Eugene kind of flipped things around and shared a second shocking statement from God - because God has given us his best, he actually wants us to give him our best. Our best efforts, our best worship, our best time and offerings.

And now, we turn to what I think may be the most shocking statement Jesus ever made, and if we really understand this third statement, then our faith is going to have a lot in common with these guys:

[PICS OF RISKY MOVES]

Now, if you're like most people, the idea of jumping off a cliff isn't something that really gets you pumped up, and so you may be more like the kid that stands on the edge of the pool FOREVER as the parent waits with arms out to catch you.

So, if that's you, what we're going to do is read the shocking command and then break it into 2 parts so we can fully digest what Jesus is saying. Then, we'll figure out how we should respond.

The statement is found in the very first book of the New Testament and is only the 3rd recorded saying of Jesus. In other words, he didn't wait around to start laying out the shocking and UNSAFE plan of God for peoples' lives.

In the 19th verse of the 4th chapter, in only his third interaction with people since being baptized, Jesus looks at two brothers and says something that rocked them and propelled them from a life of safe fishing to taking part in a shocking revolution.

"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

This morning, we'll take this shocking statement made by Jesus and simply break it in two so we can really digest what Jesus was saying:

1. Follow me

- a. At first, it seems simple, doesn't it? Just 2 words. But here's just some of what those 2 words imply:
 - Movement - Jesus said "come, follow me." This means getting up and moving.
 - Direction - We may not know where we're going, but we're going somewhere.
 - Trust - If we don't know where we're going, then we have to trust whoever we're following. Let me stop here and make this point: how much you trust Jesus determines how much you enjoy Jesus. Maybe this short video can help you understand that. [Boy on Sling shot]
 - Surrender - Following someone means they get to call the shots. Our leader needs to be our Lord.
- b. Suddenly, these 2 words are a whole lot more than just 3 syllables, aren't they?
- c. They change everything, and they cost everything.
- d. And the people who answer these 2 words with an "ALL IN" can find themselves in some pretty unexpected places. Here are just a few:
 - Abraham found himself walking up a mountain to sacrifice his only son (Genesis 22)
 - David found himself staring straight into the belly button of a giant (1 Samuel 17)
 - John the Baptist found himself in prison just before his head became the surprise gift at a king's birthday party (Matthew 14:1-12)
 - Jesus found himself in the desert locked in a battle with the devil after 40 days without food and water (Matthew 4:1-11, esp. verse 1 - "led by the Spirit")
 - Peter found himself stepping from the wooden boat deck into the spotlight on a watery stage (Matthew 14:22-33)
 - Jesus found himself in a garden staring down the barrel of a loaded cross (Matthew 26:36-46)
- e. The point here is that following Jesus can - and probably will - lead us to risky places and shocking, UNSAFE situations

- f. The question that many of us will find ourselves asking is “why?” Why does Jesus lead us to these kind of places?
- g. The answer is found in the second part of the most shocking thing Jesus ever said.

2. I will **make** you fishers of men

- a. If we’re honest, doing risky things is stupid unless there’s a point.
- b. For many, the adrenaline rush is the payoff, but Jesus leads us to risky places for a much better reason: he is making us into something new!
- c. Here are just some of the truths these words imply:
 - Fresh Starts - No matter what you’ve done to this point, everything is new starting NOW
 - Process - We are being made. He didn’t say “follow me and you are fishers of men” but that he would make us fishers of men.
 - The Greek here is very important, so I want to make sure we get it
 - The word for “make” in the phrase “I will make” is poieo
 - The word isn’t as important as the form of it that was used
 - Here, the verb is a future, active, indicative and here’s what each of those mean for us
 - i. Future points to the certain occurrence of an event that hasn’t happened yet. In other words, you’re not yet the person that you will be, but you will be!
 - ii. Active means that the subject does the action. It’s critical that Jesus said “I will make you fishers of men” and not “You will make yourselves fishers of men.” Jesus does it, and that certainty reminds me of the promise of 1 Thessalonians 5:24!
 - iii. Indicative is a simple statement of fact. If something really will occur, it’s written in the indicative mood. Jesus WILL do it.
 - Identity - He didn’t call them to fish. He called them to become fishers. There is a huge difference. Some of you don’t like to do Christian things, but you were never called to that. You were called to be a follower of Jesus, and if you are, your actions will naturally come from your identity.
 - Purpose - There is meaning to your life when you follow Jesus. Your purpose is to know Jesus and help others know him, too. Near God. Near man. Making disciplers.
- d. The obvious question then becomes, “How?” How does Jesus make us into fishers of men, how does he give us a new identity and purpose?
- e. He does it by leading us to places and situations that CANNOT be conquered except by JESUS in us!
- f. In his book, Taking Action, Reinhard Bonnke explains it like this... (read page 155-156, highlighted portion)
- g. Everyone wants to see the impossible but no one wants to be led to places of impossibility!
- h. We all hear the stories of great faith and breakthrough but we don’t want to live on the edge enough to be able to make those stories our stories.
- i. God does the impossible through us by putting us in situations that are impossible!
- j. That is how he makes us into new people, new creations.

The Landing

Let’s sum these 2 parts up like this: “Follow me” means we can’t stay WHERE we are, and “I will make you” means we can’t stay WHO we are.

So what exactly does this mean for us? How does it work out practically in our lives?

Let’s start to answer those questions by summing this up with the Big Idea: **Where God is taking you explains who God is making you.**

It means that when we say “yes” to following Jesus, we say “yes” to anywhere he takes us because we know he’s using those situations to make us into the people he wants us to be.

Are you surrounded by irritating people at work? In your class? Jesus is making you patient because there is an impossible situation that he can only use a patient person to work through.

Are you facing an impossible situation, something far bigger than what you can handle? Like David, Jesus is teaching you that no giant is bigger than your God, and he is preparing you for a battle that you may fight, but he will win.

God never puts us in hard places for no reason. He never wastes your pain. He always uses it to shape us and make us people who look like Jesus.

Where God is taking you explains who God is making you.