

**THE BIG IDEA:** Don't just believe for something; believe towards something.

### The Take-Off

This morning we put the finishing touches on 2 things: 2014 and our holiday "Like a Child" series.

I've heard so many comments from people about this series - how encouraging, refreshing and challenging it has been I agree.

The reason we all resonate with it is because we all remember what it was like to be a child - the hope and joy and innocence that we all carried with us when we were young - and talking about it has stirred some of that back up Jesus knew this when he spoke the words in Matthew 18:3 that we've based this entire series on: "unless you change and become like a child, you won't enter the kingdom of heaven."

Those are strong words, and so we've had to ask, "What does it mean to become like a child?"

In the first week, we asked, "How can we love like a child?" The answer is UNCONDITIONALLY.

In week 2, we wondered, "How do we live like a child?" The answer is FEARLESSLY.

In the third week, we asked, "How would I give like a child?" The answer was GENEROUSLY.

Last week, on the last Sunday before Christmas, we wondered, "How do I receive like a child?" We talked about a lot, but if we had to boil it down to a word, I'd say children receive ENTHUSIASTICALLY.

And now, this morning, as we say goodbye to an old year and yellow to a new one, I want to close this series by asking one, final question: "How can we believe like a child?"

Before we get into another word or even the Big Idea, let me show you a clip that shows how kids believe. Maybe you've heard of the Kid President, and if so, then you know you're in for a treat, but if not, here he. He's funny, adorable, and cute.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Kid President of the United States of America.

[VIDEO - 20 things you should say to make the world a better place]

Now, what I want us to see right away is that a child - like the Kid President - doesn't even consider that this won't work. Children believe WHOLEHEARTEDLY, and that's critical for us to understand.

We may not believe that people in the world would actually say these 20 things, but we can agree that HE believes that the world would be a better place if we all did.

Why? Because children aren't born doubting. They're born trusting.

But something cynical happens to us as we grow, doesn't it? We don't even really notice it, but instead of trusting like a child, we start trying to adjust to reality and think like an adult.

So this morning, I want to make a statement that will lead to some comparisons which will result in a challenge.

Ready? Let's start with the statement...

### **1. Biblical belief is more about trusting than adjusting**

- a. I thought this might be the Big Idea, but the more I thought about it, the more it didn't seem clear enough.
- b. Instead, it's a statement that will lead us to some comparisons. But first, a few disclaimers.
- c. When I say "adjusting" I mean the adult act of needing everything to make sense BEFORE we believe
- d. So often we may want to believe something but because we can't figure it out, we won't.
- e. We can't "adjust" our thinking to accept the possibility of what seems impossible, so we just don't believe.
- f. Kids never struggle with that. They just believe, and as we'll see, it's because they trust more naturally.
- g. This is also NOT a statement implying that followers of Jesus shouldn't think or study.
- h. Clearly, the Bible speaks to the need for believers to be thinkers, too.
  - 2 Timothy 2:15 - STUDY to show yourself approved
  - Matthew 22:37 - Jesus said the greatest commandment including loving God with ALL OUR MIND
- i. So, don't listen to these comparisons and think that I'm down on growing in our knowledge, because I'm not
- j. But as we'll see, the Bible places what we know above what we know every time, and that's critical as we move through this next section.

### **2. Let's make a few comparisons, okay?**

- a. This is the part of the message where I'm going to say a bunch of things that sound like they could be The Big Idea, but they aren't. Or, if you like these better than The Big Idea, you can pick the one you like the most!
- b. And don't worry, all of these are designed to lead you to The Big Idea which will be backed up by Scripture.
- c. But first, the comparisons between TRUSTING and ADJUSTING:

- TRUSTING is about the heart. ADJUSTING is about the mind.
  - TRUSTING sees a promises and asks, “When?” ADJUSTING sees a promise and asks, “How?”
  - When we TRUST, we can go all in even when it isn’t all clear. When we ADJUST, we’ll stay in place waiting for everything to fall into place.
  - TRUSTING believes God. ADJUSTING believes in God.
  - TRUSTING doesn’t ask if something is doable before believing it can be done.
  - TRUSTING is relational. ADJUSTING is rational, because
  - TRUSTING is about a person. ADJUSTING is about principles.
  - TRUSTING is about relationships. ADJUSTING is about results.
  - TRUSTING is more about forward progress than future success.
- d. Really think about that last statement in light of a strange verse found in Hebrews 11:13.
  - e. There were men and women whom the Bible says believed God more than most people who have walked this planet, but the Bible states clearly that “All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised...”
  - f. In our results-based culture, if you hope for something and don’t receive it, you’re a failure.
  - g. But biblical belief isn’t about the end result as much as it’s about friendship with God.
  - h. So let’s start landing this series and this year with our Big Idea, which is a challenge I’m throwing out to us all...

**3. In 2015, don’t just believe for something; believe towards something.**

- a. In Hebrews, we see a bunch of people who believed God would deliver what he had promised.
- b. Their belief was seen in their actions - they lived and died moving toward what they were believing for
- c. Forget resolutions for next year - a goal or 2 that you may or may not meet
- d. Believe toward something.
- e. Put some action to your belief, and believe like a child - wholeheartedly - in the God who is trustworthy.
- f. Here are a few verses to remind us of WHO we’re trusting more than WHAT we’re trusting for:
  - Psalm 9:10 - those who know your name trust in you, for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:24 - the One who called you is faithful, and he will do it
- g. Don’t just believe for a closer relationship with Christ, believe towards it in prayer, worship, the word
- h. Don’t just believe for friends, believe towards them by taking a step in community, in service, in the first call
- i. Like a child, go all in on what you believe even if it isn’t all clear because you trust the promiser.

The Landing

[VIDEO - Endless Possibilities]

Here’s how I’d like to end the series - and the year.

I’d like for you to take your note sheet and turn it over and write down something that you’re going to believe toward in 2015.

As an example, I’ve spent lots of my life believing that I’d be a writer. But this past year, I decided to put some action to that belief and so I did my best to write a blog post once a week. I ended up writing 37,531 words - equivalent to about a 150 page book. I am believing TOWARD being a writer.

What about you? What can you believe towards in 2015?

Write it down, then put your hand on it, and let’s commit ourselves in prayer to believing towards it.