

THE BIG IDEA: Faith is taking the steps you can while trusting God with the steps you can't.

The Take-Off

This morning is a bit different, mainly because we've turned church into kind of a dinner theater type environment. What this means is that - if you're here with us for the first time - you need to know that we won't be doing this every week!

Today we are wrapping up not only our BIG THINGS December series, but also a fantastic year here at The Gathering, and sharing a meal together just seems like a great way to do that.

So be comfortable, eat and drink and I'll try to talk us through some important points as we look toward 2014.

1. Sometimes, big seems too big

- a. Over the past month, we've taken a look at how "Big things come in small packages"
- b. We've talked about ending big, dreaming big, giving big and receiving big.
- c. We've talked about the truly big things that have taken place through this house over the last year.
- d. But if we're honest, all this talk about BIG THINGS can begin to feel a little overwhelming.
- e. Moses faced this in a curious portion of Scripture
- f. In Exodus 3, God called Moses to something BIG - the setting free of His people from their slavery under Pharaoh
- g. For Moses, who was trying to hide out in a dead end job, suddenly his world got big
- h. For him, big was too big and so he asked 3 questions of God to try and keep his world small:
 - i. "Who am I?" (Exodus 3:11)
 - ii. "Who are you?" (Exodus 3:13)
 - iii. "What about them?" (Exodus 4:1)
- h. If we're honest, these are the same 3 questions we raise when God approaches us about doing BIG THINGS through us: "Am I good enough? Are You strong enough? What will they do?"
- i. Basically, we start spinning ourselves crazy wondering about all the stuff that we can't control and God asks us one, simple, back to reality question: "What's in your hand?" (Exodus 4:2)

2. That's when the big needs to be small

- a. Before we even read about the answer to that question, let's understand something that we've all seen done over and over again: making the big small.
- b. People buy big things everyday based on a small payment, right?
- c. Marketers got smart and realized no one was buying cars if they considered the total cost was \$35,000.
- d. But \$500/month for 4 years? Suddenly people said yes.
- e. What was the difference? They made the big small.
- f. That's exactly what God did here with Moses.
- g. Moses started getting overwhelmed by the big, and so God small-sized it for him by helping him focus on what he had, what he knew, what he could touch, what he had control of.
- h. "What's in your hand?"
- i. I'm not going to lie, God wants to do far bigger things through The Gathering than we've even thought of
- j. In fact, if we think of it, it's too small
- k. He wants to heal people, save people, send people
- l. He wants to use broken people and cynical people to point people to Jesus
- m. He wants to reach the unreached with our reach - and that seems unreachable
- n. And all of that feels about as attainable as the 20-inch biceps I wanted when I was in college
- o. But when I got a tape measure out and marked every quarter-inch, the big not only became small, but possible as well
- p. This morning, we want to help you make the big small, and so starting big means understanding where to start
- q. How does the big become small for us? In community.
- r. Your next step is to throw down what you have in your hand.
- s. Your time. Your control. Your safety in relationships with people just like you.
- t. And when you do, you'll find something amazing start to happen.

3. That's when a small step taken can lead to big implications

- a. Something happened to what Moses had when he let go of it
- b. It got transformed.
- c. Granted, it turned into a snake and I wouldn't call that particularly a good thing, but the bigger takeaway here is that it was transformed by God into something powerful and then given back in order to be used by man
- d. A small step taken can lead to big implications
- e. If Moses hadn't done what he could - throwing down the staff - God couldn't have done what only He could do
- f. And it don't stop with a snake, but with the eventual freeing of 2 million people from slavery, then leading them into a promised land, and ultimately with a people who birthed the Messiah
- g. Big Things come in Small Packages, and it often starts with one small step
- h. Let me give you today's Big Idea, and then I'll wrap this up with one story and some practical applications
- i. Our Big Idea says this: **Faith is taking the steps you can while trusting God with the steps you can't.**
- j. When we do that - take the steps we can - throw down what's in our hands - we create a situation for God to step in and do the things we can't
- k. That's when small steps taken lead to big implications

The Landing

Share the story of Steve feeling called to YWAM in Hawaii and how he got there - one amazing step at a time!

It all starts with the first step.

In fact, when it comes to God and the BIG THINGS He wants to do through us, it's fair to say that failure is the first step we didn't take.

2014 is going to see some amazing things take place in our church, in our city, in our world.

BIG THINGS!

But it starts with that first seemingly small step.

For some of you, that step is going to be intentionally engaging with the family here at The Gathering through CCB (the tool that we learned about in that video earlier).

It'll be a step out of isolation and into relation.

For some of you, that step is going to be involvement in a Community Group or an iOS Ministry Team or both.

It'll be a step out of consuming and into contributing.

For some of you, that step is going to be investment into the BIG THINGS that God is doing here at The Gathering.

It'll be a step out of spectating and into participating.

But whatever the step is, it's time to start BIG by stepping small.

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