

“Imagine Greater” Part One

Pastor Dale Campfield - February 27th, 2011

Intro:

Matt 28:19 “Go and make disciples of all nations...”

ECC Process of Discipleship: Making an IMPACT...To Love...To Grow...To Serve

We have 3 priorities – To love...which is expressed in our Sunday morning celebration and connection groups. To grow...which is expressed in our Path to Discipleship. To serve...which is expressed in our daily lives in the places we live, work and play; as well as through the local church. The vision of E.C.C. is to gather together weekly for corporate worship, loving God and each other; then to come together in small Connection Groups for discipleship and fellowship, and are regularly involved in reaching out to others with the love, acceptance, and forgiveness of Jesus Christ through community outreach. To Love...To Grow...To Serve!

Illus: Expecting a Box with a Web Cam in it.

Tell people at the beginning, “I’ve been praying and asking God for a new web cam; so that I can skype my daughter Cazi in Alaska. I’m truly believing God that He will provide it.” “Pastor Joel, please let me know if I get a package that is supposed to be delivered. I told them I’d be here, so hopefully it will be.” “The item I’m believing for is about *this* big. So, hopefully it will get here.” “It’s supposed to be a RED box; that’s what I’m believing for.”

Joel brings in different size boxes that I reject; not small enough, when I mention each of the four points below. Don’t want to have to deal with all the extra baggage. Etc.

As a church, we now have a little over 3 years behind us. 3 years worth of blood, sweat and tears behind us. We have 3 years worth of IMPACT that we’ve made in the community and around the world. I see the past years as a launching pad, launching you into our future, a future where there is GREATER things yet to do! Greater ways to IMPACT our community! Greater ways to walk in the anointing that is upon our church! It’s time to release the gifts given to us by God and IMAGINE GREATER! Greater than ever before! Greater than we have the past 3 years!

I would anticipate that the majority of the congregation represented that morning already have a relationship with Christ. The issue is not if you are going to heaven or not, you are going. The true issue is how great of an IMPACT can you make in your world now for the Kingdom of God. Since we know who the Great I AM is, now we can Imagine Greater! For GREATER is He that is in us than he that is in this world! It’s time to IMAGINE GREATER ways to Impact the World through loving, growing and serving. Love God and each other, Growing to together in small groups and serving the community, state, nation and around the world!

It’s time to IMAGINE GREATER! Beyond What We Can Ask or Imagine...

Key Verse: Ephesians 3:20 *“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.”*

I’ve been meditating on this verse for almost a month now, and since then until today, I am in awe by the vast riches we have in Christ Jesus. Riches that are immeasurable, incalculable, inestimable, unlimited, and infinite! That’s what we have in Christ. We’ve learned these things through the past I AM sermon series.

Able (Dunamai) means to have power by virtue of inherent ability and resources

This refers to God’s ability to do literally “above all things”. The present tense emphasizes God is continually able!

IMMEASURABLY (huperekperissou from huper= above+ek = intensifies

Meaning, adding idea of exhaustlessness

IMMEASURABLY (huperekperissou from huper = above + ek = intensifies meaning, adding idea of exhaustlessness + perissos = exceeding some number or measure, over and above, more than necessary) means surpassing, superabundantly, surpassingly, beyond measure, exceedingly, quite beyond all measure, overwhelming, over and above, more than enough.

It describes an extraordinary degree, involving a considerable excess over what would be expected.

This is the picture of what God can and wants to do for us, but more often than not, WE LIMIT GOD by setting our own limitations.

The term “more than we ask or imagine” means that God can surpass what we ask of Him.

Ask (aiteo) means to ask for something to be given with a sense of urgency and even to the point of demanding. Aiteo reflects a request of one’s will means to ask for, with a claim on receipt of an answer.

Our highest aspirations are not beyond God’s power to grant.

Notice the word “ imagine” . Imagination is boundless. You can imagine whatever you want. You can imagine you are healthy, you can imagine you have a healthy marriage, you can imagine you have a fruitful business, you can imagine you are driving a BMW...etc- what I am trying to say is, everything is possible in our own imagination.

Think or imagine (noieo from noús = the mind) denotes clear perception, full understanding, and careful consideration.

It means to perceive with thought coming into consciousness as distinct from the perception of senses.

Imagination is very powerful; the new age movement stole this principle and calls it “visualization”

A preacher once lamented to the renowned preacher C H Spurgeon...
“Mr. Spurgeon, I am seeing very few people saved.”

To which Spurgeon replied with a question:
“Do you expect to see people saved every time you preach?”
The preacher answered, “Why, no”.
To which Spurgeon wisely quipped “That’s why you don’t!”

I read it somewhere, if you want a successful life, first thing you must do is to change the way you think. The bible is true when it says, “Be careful how you think, your life is shaped by your thoughts”

If you think it’s ok to be poor, please, change that mindset! Because that is your imagination, that is your belief.

Don’t let the devil use your imagination, God wants to use our imagination for His glory.

Last part of the verse... according to his power that is at work within us

ACCORDING TO THE POWER THAT WORKS WITHIN US:
According to (kata) means in proportion to ones largest! Not stingily.

Not just a portion but a proportion! If I am a billionaire and I give you ten dollars, I have given you a portion (very small portion at that) out of my riches

But if I give you ten million dollars, I have given to you according to or more proportionate to my true wealth.

...according to His riches in glory! (Phil 4:19)

Since we know who the Great I AM is, now we can Imagine Greater!

We live in a world of imagination. It takes imagination to dream up everything we have around us.

It took imagination to come up with the idea of cars. But I’ll bet that even Henry Ford didn’t imagine what the world would do with cars in the world today. It took imagination to come up with computers. But I’ll bet that even those people didn’t imagine how intricately linked our lives would become to them.

It took imagination to come up with cameras. But I’ll bet that even the Eastman Kodak folks couldn’t imagine the world of digital photography, Photoshop and everything else we can now do.

We're in a world where we're asked and expected to imagine all sorts of things. And that's good; because the source of our imagination is God. He made us and created us with an imagination and He expects us to use our imagination in ways that bring honor and glory to Him.

Now just like everything else, our imaginations can be used for corrupt and sinful purposes. But when we bring our imaginations under control and use them for God, something wonderful happens: we start believing that God is really the great I AM, Almighty, not just saying He is.

We start believing that God is true to His Word and that He's not a liar. We start believing that God is able to move and act in our best interests. If indeed He is the GREAT I AM, why would we not imagine greater!

The goal as we go through this series is that you will find yourself daring to believe God for something that you think is impossible. Or maybe you'll find yourself resurrecting a long-gone hope that God would intervene in a situation on the life of someone you love but had given up hope for. Or it could be that you simply need God to move in your life in a way that you never thought possible because you thought the situation was too big, even for God.

Whatever your situation, **IMAGINE GREATER!**

Look at what these guys did!

- Henry Ford invented the car. It way beyond his expectations.
- Alexander Graham Bell invited the telephone. It went way beyond his expectations; I've got a phone in my pocket as we speak!
- Facebook invented by Mark Zutterburg? Spelling? It went way beyond his expectations.
- YouTube - the online video sharing and viewing community - was invented in 2005 by Steve Chen, Chad Hurley and Jawed Karim. YouTube was named Time Magazines Invention of the year in 2006.
- Angry Birds invented by an 8 year old. It went way beyond his expectations.

PD: Here is what I'm imagining for Eastgate Community Church

- For a minimum of 800 souls who call themselves "A Follower of Christ".
- To raise the funds to build a Kingdom Impact Building: "Fine Arts and Worship Center"
- For 100% of those who call Eastgate their home to be a consistent tither.
- To provide for our adopted village in Jordan, Mugayer El Sarhan

10 goats	\$4,000
100 Food Parcels	\$5,000
10 Orphans (\$600 each a year)	\$6,000

Now; it's time for you to IMAGINE EVEN GREATER!

So... How does one activate.. **Ephesians 3:20** *"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us."*

It takes a lot of different things; but this morning I want to share with you Four Steps...

4 STEPS TO ACTIVATE EPHESIANS 3:20

Step One: You've got to start THINKING like it's true.

Isaiah 55:8-9

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Quote: Walt Disney said, "If you can think it, you can do it!"

Step Two: You've got to start SPEAKING like it's true.

Matthew 15:18

"The things that come out of the mouth come from the heart."

We must start to speak these things in our lives as if they are true.

Quote: Eeoor, "It'll never work..." Don't be an Eeoor – be a Tigger!

Step Three: You've got to start ACTING like it's true.

Matthew 9:2

Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."

How do you SEE someone's faith? You see it because it is in action. Sure, you can have faith all day long and imagine greater all day long; but it takes action! With every promise in the Word there is a premise – action that must take place.

Quote: William Carey said, "Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God."

Step Four: You've got to start BELIEVING like it's true.

Ephesians 1:18-19

"I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength."

Quote: David Joseph Schwartz **said**, “Dreams are like the paints of a great artist. Your dreams are your paints, the world is your canvas. **Believing**, is the brush that converts your dreams into a masterpiece of reality.”

I love the text in Romans that speaks of “seeing those things that are not yet already, as though they were.” That’s what we need to do. You may not see it now; but you’ve got to believe it in your heart. Believe it in your spirit. See it as if it were already. It’s time to start acting like you’re a family that is healed, set free, set apart, financially stable, walking in the gifts given to you by God, restored, etc. etc. etc.

Eastgate Community Church: You’re Greatest Days are Yet Ahead of You!
– IMAGINE GREATER!

Now.... Let’s take a look at the four boxes that have been delivered to me during this message. As I stated at the beginning, I’m expecting a box with a WEB CAM in it so that I can skype with my daughter Cazi in Alaska with the greatest clarity ever. Well, four boxes came and none of them fit my expectations.

“Joel, go ahead and open up that last box just for fun.”

As you can now see, the web cam was in there – along with a whole lot more! The point I’m trying to make is, that the way God packages your desires being met, your dreams, your expectations may not be the way you think. You may think it’s not God because it doesn’t look like you want it to. You may think it’s not God because it’s different, uneasy, uncomfortable, etc. The fact is, God’s way of delivering your dreams may not be what you expect; but through it all – He’ll meet your dreams, beyond what you can imagine in such wonderful positive ways that will blow you away!

Luke 1:37

“For nothing is impossible with God.”

Is there someone you know who doesn’t live for Christ? God can do something in their heart – because nothing is impossible with God.

Is there something going on in your life that looks impossible? With God, you can face it – because nothing is impossible for God.

That’s not to say He’s going to make all your problems go away. He does do that sometimes. But usually He comes alongside us to help us get through those situations.

Ask Him. Ask Him for the impossible. Imagine Greater!

“Why not?” When you think on these things, do you think, “No way,” or do you think, “Why not?” Will you join me in believing God to be true to His Word and to use this Church and the people in it to do big thing in and through us?

Conclusion:

Knowing that He's a GREAT GOD and can do immeasurably more than we could ever ask or think; allow me to ask you?

I know that what I'm about to say isn't all necessarily grammatically correct, but here it goes anyway...

How big are your dreams?
How big is your God?
How big are your expectations?
How big is your faith?
How big is your patience?

IMAGINE GREATER

And as you do... you watch, you wait, you'll see!

EXTRA VERSES

"who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases," Psalms 103:3

"Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them."
Matthew 4:23-24

"And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."Philippians 4:19

"I will bless her with abundant provisions; her poor will I satisfy with food. " Psalm 132:15

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10

Conclusion:

And as you do.... You wait, you watch, you'll see!

Coming up...

IMAGINE GREATER Part Two: ____TITLE???