

Imagine Greater - Part Two
“Ask Whatever You Want”
Pastor Dale Campfield - March 6th, 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!

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.”*

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...

John 14:12

12 I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things (works) than these, because I am going to the Father.

Question: What did Jesus do?

For some people, they look at the life of Jesus and say who cares? In fact, if you look at his life in the natural, he really did live a pretty boring, ordinary life. For example...

- He was born in an obscure village the child of a peasant woman.
- He grew up in another obscure village where he worked in a carpenter shop until he was thirty.
- Jesus never traveled more than 200 miles from where He was born.
- Jesus only healed a couple of dozen people.
- The total number of people who claimed to be His disciples forty days after His death on the cross was 120.
- He never wrote a book.
- He never held an office.
- He never went to college.
- He never visited a big city.
- His friends ran away and one of them denied him.
- He was turned over to his enemies and went through the mockery of a trial.
- He was nailed to a cross between two thieves.
- While dying, his executioners gambled for his clothing, the only property he had on earth.
- When he was dead, He was laid in a borrowed grave, through the pity of a friend.

Doesn't really sound like He accomplished very much. He did none of the things usually associated with greatness. He had no credentials but himself.

HOWEVER... Nineteen centuries have come and gone, and today Jesus is the central figure of the human race. And the leader of mankind's progress, All the armies that have ever marched, All the navies that have ever sailed, All the parliaments that have ever sat, All the kings that ever reigned put together Have not affected the life of mankind on earth As powerfully as that one solitary life. On top of all of that, the number bestselling book of all time is His Word – the Bible!

Let's look at this scripture again... **John 14:12**

12 I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things (works) than these, because I am going to the Father.

Jesus BEGAN a work that we are supposed to bring to completion.
He BEGAN it in His earthly body, and He will CONTINUE it thru His spiritual body (us!)

Philippians 1:6

6 ... he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. (NIV)

You say how can this be? Jesus walked on water – Jesus raised the dead. Jesus did many miracles! How can we do greater works than Jesus?

V. 12 – “THE WORKS THAT I DO” What work did Jesus come to do?

Now... check this out. Out of all the works/things that Jesus did; what was His main purpose?

Lk. 19:10

“For the son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost.”

Jesus did many miracles – He is the great physician, He is the great teacher, He is the great supplier - But the greatest thing that Jesus came to do is save the lost!

Jesus is talking about reaching people to Jesus! Winning a soul is better than raising someone from the dead – If you did raise someone from the dead they would die again – but when you lead a person to Jesus, they will never die. “We can’t all be preachers but we can all be reachers!”

Jesus is not talking about quality – He is talking about quantity! Jesus would say my job was to save the lost – Now you can go and win more than I did!

After Jesus left; after Pentecost – The coming of the Holy Spirit

Acts 2:41 = 3,000 souls were saved!

Acts 4:4 = 5,000 souls were saved!

This was more souls that Jesus won in his whole life time!

IN ORDER FOR EASTGATE COMMUNITY CHURCH TO DO GREATER WORKS – WE MUST KNOW OUR PURPOSE! OUR PURPOSE IS TO WIN SOULS!

Let’s look at this scripture again... **John 14:12-14**

12 I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things (works) than these, because I am going to the Father.

How?

13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. 14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

If I am going to Imagine Greater I must only do two things. I must have faith in Christ and secondly I must ask in His name.

If I have faith in Christ I will do the things Jesus did. I will do even greater things and I will go the Father. If I ask in Christ’s name I will have Jesus do what I ask and I will see Jesus bring glory to the Father.

What does Jesus mean by having faith in him? What does Jesus mean by asking anything in my name? Having faith in Jesus is more than knowing certain historical facts about Jesus. It means to trust Him and steadfastly believe in Him. It is a trust and belief based on His resurrection and

Ascension into heaven. Those who have this faith in Him will do the things Jesus did. Faith in Christ is vital for the converting of people to Christ, the performing of miracles and the living out of the Christian life. (See Hebrews 11).

The second condition to doing what Christ did, Imagining Greater is to ask anything in His name. After first trusting Christ in everything we must go on to tell Christ anything. Asking in Christ's name is not some formula for success but is rather a reminder to ask along the lines of who Jesus is and what he does. Jesus is not saying he will answer every prayer. Jesus will answer the prayer that brings glory to the Father. Throughout the New Testament we see that the Father is glorified when we bear fruit (John 15:8); complete the work we are given to do (John 17:5); walk in holiness (1 Cor. 6:20); give thanks (Romans 1:21)

Question: Why are we not seeing this happen on a regular basis?

Answer: Because we are not truly asking "IN HIS NAME."

Why Not?

Many have faith in Christ but never go on to asking in His name. Therefore we never get to see Christ do for us all of the things he desires to do. I believe that are certain WALLS that keep us from truly asking in HIS NAME. These walls will prevent us from walking with greater imagination, greater impact in winning souls and discipling them for the Kingdom of God. What are these walls?

WALLS OF PREVENTION (Asking in His Name)

No. 1: WALLS OF PRIDE

Pride is one reason. We feel like failures if we don't do it ourselves. However in our text we see that asking is not failure but a sign of faith.

No. 2: WALLS OF SELFISHNESS

I want it my way! (Show the video of Frank Sinatra singing it) We want the answer our way; the way we think is best; the way it will look and fit into our timing, schedules and lifestyles. We're not willing to pray that it comes forth HIS way, because we really want it our way.

No. 3: WALLS OF FEAR

Another reason we do not ask is because of spiritual warfare, which can be scary. The enemy does not want us to ask because it will result in his defeat. Therefore the enemy will keep us busy doing other things. Subliminally, we don't truly ask in His name because of the battle that will ensue when we do and the fear that comes with that.

No. 4: WALLS OF DISBELIEF

One of the problems in the church is that we don't expect God to do it. We don't expect to see the power of God work in a service. We don't expect the glory of God to fall as we sing praises unto Him, and we have got to change our thinking. Changing our thinking, changing our expectations, changing our believing.

What would happen if we ran a 2 week add in every newspaper in Cincinnati, we ran adds on the radio, on tv, and announced in the pulpit that God was going to be here at RECEPTIONS 2 weeks from now, and that everyone who was sick would be healed, everyone who was bound would be free, everyone who ever doubted God's existence would know without a shadow of a doubt that God is real. What would our church service look like 2 weeks from now?

We wouldn't have enough chairs for the amount of people that would show up. We would have to turn people away because this church could not hold them.

Can I say here that God is real all of the time, God will heal all of the time, God wants to perform miracles all of time. Look how many is in here tonight. If people knew that God would show up, this church would be packed out. But what people don't realize is that at any given point and time God can do the unthinkable. At any point there could be a rushing mighty wind. At any point a church service could be transformed so much to where nobody preaches, nobody sings, because we are all laid out under the power of God.

But you see, there is no expectation. As well, we don't expect God to move at work; to move in our families; to move in our community; we simply don't expect it to happen; thus it becomes a wall a division.

No. 5: WALLS OF SATISFACTION

We don't always take this to heart, asking for souls in His name, because we really don't have a hunger to see souls saved; we're satisfied with the status quo. Yes, we want to see them come to the altar on a Sunday morning; we want them to respond to the preacher's sermon; but no way am I going to lead them to Christ at work! We're simply too satisfied with the lives we live and don't want to do anything else.

No. 6: WALLS OF REBELLION

We don't always ask in His name, because we are simply disobeying God – acts of rebellion. We're not willing to do what is asked of us. We disobey God. Let me give you another word for disobedience... SIN! We don't want to hear it, but it's sin when we don't ask in His name!

Conclusion:

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

Coming up...

IMAGINE GREATER Part Three: ___ TITLE??? ___