

Impossible Dreams Repairing the Hole

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This morning concludes our series of messages entitled Impossible Dreams. While the series concludes, we are just beginning to follow our dreams of making a difference for the Kingdom of God in the world. Today you be given an opportunity to commit to a dream. I am excited to see what God is going to do through us to make a difference. The book, The Hole in Our Gospel, has had a profound affect upon many of you. It has exposed us to the reality of suffering in our world. It has challenged us to ask God what he expects of us. We have asked God to open our eyes to see the world as he sees it. We have asked God to break our heart with the things that break his heart. I hope you have been wrestling with those questions and today will take a step to make a difference.

Matthew 17:14-21

When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. ¹⁵"Lord, have mercy on my son," he said. "He has seizures and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. ¹⁶I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him."

¹⁷"O unbelieving and perverse generation," Jesus replied, "how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me." ¹⁸Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed from that moment.

¹⁹Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, "Why couldn't we drive it out?"

²⁰He replied, "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." ²¹ But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

Does your gospel have a hole in it? Our gospel has a hole in it if it only involves helping persons to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior. The good news or the gospel proclaimed by Jesus Christ does far more than that. Jesus came not just to save a few souls from hell. He came to restore the fullness of his kingdom. He came to challenge the forces of evil that oppress and destroy his children. Jesus came to change the world. He wants us to join with him in changing the world. The world is in desperate need of the whole gospel. A child starves to death every 5 seconds. Millions of children are being abused this very moment as sex slaves and prostitutes. Entire families will be wiped out today by malaria and

AIDS. Orphans are roaming the streets with no one to care for them. What are we going to do about it?

Some of you have told me this series of messages has made you uncomfortable. You do not like to hear about all the problems and suffering in the world. I'm glad you are uncomfortable. Because that means I am not alone. This series of messages has made me uncomfortable. It has opened my eyes to so much more that we could be doing to make a difference in the world. Where will this lead us? I don't know! What will it cost us? I don't know! Won't it be dangerous to get involved in some of the problems of our community and world? Yes. But it will be far more dangerous to our souls if we do not get involved.

God has blessed us tremendously in order that we might be a blessing. Unfortunately we are like selfish children who refuse to share those blessings with our brothers and sisters who are hurting. Does that mean that God will judge us and reject us? No. God loves even his selfish children. Rather than judging us, I think God weeps for us. He knows what we are missing in our lives. He knows that our selfishness cuts us off from the additional blessings he wants to pour into our lives. But we are clinging so tightly to what we have that we are not open to everything else God wants to give us. We choose to live lives of triviality when we could be living lives of significance. We choose to safely stay in the corral when we could be experiencing a life of adventure.

Looking at the massive problems in our world should make us uncomfortable. The flashing light in the sanctuary has made us uncomfortable. But I don't want us to be driven by guilt to do something. I want us to realize that God is inviting us to join with him in work of eternal significance. God is inviting us to let him use us to change the world. If we refuse to respond, it is our loss.

Most of us would like to do something. The hard part is knowing what God wants me to do. I hope you will read the last four chapters of [The Hole in Our Gospel](#) more than once. It provides great insight into how we can discern what God is calling us to do.

Each of us is a part of the body of Christ. Just as our physical bodies have many different parts with many different functions, so the body of Christ has many different parts with many different functions. God has created each of you with a unique combination of gifts and experiences to make a difference in the world. God wants to use you in the unique way he has formed you. We have the misconception that God can only use medical professionals, construction workers and teachers who speak multiple languages to do his work in the world. That is so far from the truth. He can and will use everyone who is willing.

Rich Stearns says that one way to discover your place is to look at the time, talents and treasure God has given you. Time is the most valuable thing you have. All of us are busy. How can we possibly take on one more thing? We are busy people, but are we busy about the things that matter to God? Think about the activities on your calendar this week. What will you be doing that will make a difference for the kingdom of God? Is there something you could eliminate that is just busyness and give two hours a week to making a difference in the world?

What talents has God given you? This does not just mean artistic or athletic abilities. Your life experiences, education, professional and work experiences are all things God wants to use.

What treasure has God given you? Some people think it is enough to give time or talent but not treasure. God wants us to give all three. This morning you will be given an opportunity to give specifically to outreach ministries. Will you give up one meal a week, fast and pray, then give that money to mission fund? Will you ask God to put an amount on your heart you are to give by faith? Then trust him to provide that amount. When unexpected

money comes be faithful to give it to him? He may give you an opportunity to do extra work to make the money. He may send you the proceeds from a life insurance policy long since forgotten. Who knows!! Every one of us needs to give some of our treasure to outreach ministries of our church. Remember your faith promise to our mission fund is over and above your current giving to the operating budget and the building fund.

How will you know what to do? You may feel a strong passion to do something. Linda Hall sent an email she feels a strong leading to provide mosquito nets. She will need a team to help her.

You may see or hear of a need and think someone needs to do something about that. Donna Walker noticed children who were going hungry in school. She decided to do something about it.

Video: Change for children Donna Walker

You may not get a clear word. Don't wait for months until you know absolutely for sure what God wants you to do!! Do something now. Try something you think you might be interested in. Try something that meets a need you care about. A couple of weeks ago I volunteered to help with our Family Promise ministry to homeless families with children. I sat at a dinner table with two moms and three little boys under age 4. I tried to connect with these wild critters. I was not having much success. Watching their boundless energy, just being little boys I came to the conclusion that this was not my gift! A few minutes later I heard a girl at the table behind me reading out loud. I tuned in and asked her if she would read to me. She was in the fourth grade and was an amazing reader. I praised her for reading ability and asked her to read some more stories. She convinced her mom to let her read me some scary stories. I responded with appropriate fear to each story. We had a great time. When she had to get ready for bed, she left reluctantly and hugged me three times. I thought, "You know maybe I could do this again."

Just try something. Our children are leading the way. Let's hear some of their experiences of reaching out.

VIDEO: CHILDRENS' OUTREACH TESTIMONIES

We want all age levels of our church to get involved in making a difference—children, youth, adults and senior adults. I want to thank all of you who stepped out to help with our Habitat for Humanity House. A special thanks goes to our volunteer coordinator, Jinx Read, and our work supervisor, Nick Parker. If you helped with the build will you please stand?

We are blessed this morning to have with us Lisa Camacho and her two children who are the recipients of our house. Lisa would like to come and express what this house means to her and her children.

PULPIT: LISA

Lisa had to qualify for this house. She will need to complete 500 volunteer hours with Habitat before she can occupy the home. She will make payments on the house which will in turn be used to build houses for others.

I've given you several examples throughout this series of ways persons in our church are making a difference. Now it is time for each of us to decide what we are going to do. You have a bulletin insert listing opportunities to make a difference. There are opportunities for individuals and families; opportunities to join with some of the groups in our church, opportunities to help in the global community. Please keep this insert for reference for the future. Then on the sign up sheet, indicate one thing you will do to make a difference before Thanksgiving.

Our Vertical Praise Team is going to come and lead in a time of meditation about our hands as God's hands. When they conclude, we will give you a few moments to fill out your card. What one thing will you do? What is God leading you to give?

We will link those of you who want to start new ministries with other persons who share your dream. We will have a dream board in the foyer each Sunday, where you can add dreams and connect with others who may share your dream. Dream big. Dream Impossible Dreams. All things are possible through God.

We will start with tiny mustard seeds and together by the power of Jesus Christ we will move mountains. What is God calling you to do right now?