JM Jason Mayfield

SERMON OUTLINE FOR PASTORS

BUILDING A BIG LIFE

Dream, Vision, Execution, Consistency

> Everything that qualifies you for a big life was provided at the cross, but you still have to get in. A big life starts with a dream, is refined into a vision, is brought about by execution, and comes to look like the dream through consistency.

MAIN TEXT
John 10:10

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SERIES
Stand-alone message

BY
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AT A GLANCE

THE MESSAGE

1. Frame: A big life flows from the finished work of Jesus Christ. You are qualified, but you still have to get in.
2. It starts with a dream. The ideal model of your life with no regard for the requirements. Vivid or visceral. Wide and a little wild. Dreams require no feasibility.
3. You refine the dream into a plan with vision. Vision is the windshield, not the destination. It updates as you go. Churches routinely confuse vision with mission.
4. The vision is brought about by execution. Effort does not equal execution. You have to do the thing the thing requires.
5. Execution mirrors the dream by consistency. Not only the right thing, but enough of it, for long enough.



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READ THE ARTICLE

jasonmayfield.com/messages/building-a-big-life

PREACHING NOTES

Before You Preach

This is a stand-alone message for a seasonal transition (it was preached on the first Sunday of summer). Say up front that it is lighter on exposition than usual: it is preached "out of my spirit, informed by the Word," and it is practical. Keep it anchored in grace. The big life flows from the finished work of Jesus, and the four steps are how we partake in what He has already provided.

The framework is simple enough to put on one screen and build as you go:

Dream, Vision, Execution, Consistency

Expect the "that sounds like works" objection near the end and answer it with Paul: grace is what empowered him to labor. The message also introduces a phrase for the church's identity, "a big little church." Give it room.

Introduction

Seasonal changes bring opportunities. We are people of rhythms. When school starts, a whole city responds: traffic changes, schedules change, stores change. New Year's, fall, the holidays and the start of summer are natural moments to make changes in your life.

Today: **building a big life.**

A big life flows from the finished work of Jesus Christ.

> JOHN 10:10 ESV
>
> [10] The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

The thief is certainly the devil, but there are a lot of thieves in your life, many things that want to rob you. Jesus came so that you might have life to the full.

Everything that qualifies you for a big life was provided at the cross. **You are not good enough to have a big life, but because you belong to Jesus Christ, in Him you are qualified for one.**

But you still have to get in. You have to partake in the process. Paul even wrote, "in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church" (Colossians 1:24). The work is finished, and there is still work to be done.

Illustration: the lazy river. Typhoon Lagoon, the water park at Walt Disney World, has a massive lazy river. It has current. It takes you anywhere you want to go in the park, to every ride and every concession stand. It does all the heavy lifting and takes the pressure off your feet and joints. But you still have to get in.

Here are the components of a big life, the process you have to get into:

- It starts with a **dream**.
- You refine the dream into a plan with **vision**.
- The vision is brought about by **execution**.
- Execution mirrors the dream by **consistency**.

WE'RE A BIG LITTLE CHURCH

While walking into the newly finished worship room one day, a phrase came out unprompted: "We are a big little church." It felt like it came through, not from, the preacher.

- There was a time, about 25 years earlier, when the church was very large. You do not have to be a large church to be a big church, and you do not have to be a large person to be a big person.
- We are not a small church. We are a big little church, which is better than being a large, small church. Some churches that run 2,000 or 3,000 are small.
- We are not big because we are chasing attendance. **We are big because we are growing big people.**

Big isn't a stature. It's a spirit.

- **Big people** think big, talk big, act big, give big and love big.
- **Small people** think small, live small, act small, give small and do small.

Small people rest on their laurels and ignore their potential. They are proud of what is behind them.

Illustration: Uncle Rico. In *Napoleon Dynamite*, Uncle Rico sits on the porch convinced that if the coach had just put him in during the big game, his whole life would have turned out differently. Small people are always talking about what they used to do.

Churches do this too. "We used to…" Remember when the parking lot was full, when there was a children's pastor and a youth pastor and a music pastor, and a budget to match? You can look back and call it the good old days, or you can look forward. This happens in churches of every size. A church can become a hall of fame with a trophy case gathering dust. We are looking forward.

Big people say, "I can do anything." Small people say, "Nothing's been done for me."

Some of the most successful people you will meet are almost naive about it: it never occurs to them that they cannot do something. Small people come up with every reason not to and focus on what has not been handed to them. It is **ignorance versus entitlement**: some people are not "smart enough" to know they are not capable, and some people are so entitled that no matter how capable they are, they will not move unless somebody sets them up.

1. It Starts with a Dream

To some, especially men, "dream" sounds lofty and a little woo-woo. "I don't need a dream. I'm just going to go to work." But a dream is not a bizarre thing.

A dream is simply the ideal model of your life, without regard for the requirements.

- Your dream is either **vivid** (you see it) or **visceral** (you feel it). There is a dream down in every person.
- It can be wide and a little wild. It does not have to be defined.
- **Dreams require no feasibility.** If fishing every day brings you great joy, let that be your dream.

Joseph had a dream: "Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright" (Genesis 37:7).

> **GENESIS 37:5-7 ESV**
>
> [5] Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more. [6] He said to them, "Hear this dream that I have dreamed: [7] Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf."

The fulfillment had nothing to do with sheaves. Joseph ended up second only to Pharaoh, in charge of all Egypt. The dream did not define the details; it modeled where he was heading.

Dreams need to be unbound, because some dreams are meant to go beyond you.

> **1 CHRONICLES 22:7 ESV**
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> [7] David said to Solomon, "My son, I had it in my heart to build a house to the name of the LORD my God.

David had the dream, but the Lord told him he was not the one to build. He handed it to his son. Your dream may be meant to work generationally.

There are no parameters on the dream. Want to be a millionaire? There is nothing wrong with that. (You might need a bigger dream; a million is not what it used to be.) Have the dream, live in the dream, develop the dream.

2. You Refine the Dream into a Plan with Vision

A word for free: people often find breakthrough in the very thing they think is silly. If you turn your nose up at dreaming or vision, or at lifting your hands in worship, that may be the very thing that crosses you over.

People often confuse vision with other things. In churches, we confuse it with **mission**. Ask a pastor his vision and he will say, "That we'd love the Lord." That is not a vision; that is a mission. A vision is not the thing. It is how you get to the thing.

Illustration: the windshield. Vision is the windshield. Driving to Disney World, you are not really driving to Disney World. You are driving to Mobile, then Pensacola, then Tallahassee, then Lake City, then onto I-4. Every time you arrive somewhere, your vision updates.

Vision is what I can see that needs to be accomplished next in pursuit of the dream.

Vision > Dream becomes **Vision > Vision > Vision > Vision > Dream.**

Some people write a vision that is really the dream, so big there is no way to get there. Vision is the next step.

Example: the church's vision. Use your own church as the example. When this was preached, Pastor Jason explained that the church's stated vision was not the ultimate dream but the next step, and walked through how each part of it was being built: first, four weeks on the finished work of Jesus to keep the cross central; then, after about six months, a season of preaching on the Holy Spirit and the power of God, with a commitment to become a praying church; and finally, building a church culture where anyone is welcome and where the church is clear about where it stands.

If you want to be a doctor: good grades in high school, a bachelor's degree, medical school, residency. You do not sit in on surgery while you are working on tenth-grade grammar. The vision updates as you go, and it carries you toward the dream.

> **JOEL 2:28** ESV
>
> 28 "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.

There is a reason old men dream dreams and young men see visions: old men may not have the time left to put a plan to what they want to see. Young men still have time to put a framework around the dream. The good news is that you get to decide whether you are a young one or an old one.

Vision has to be something you can see. You should have to reach for it, but it cannot be out in the realm of the unreasonable. That is why Dave Ramsey's plan starts with saving $1,000. Saving $1,000 is a lot easier than paying off a $110,000 student loan.

3. The Vision Is Brought About by Execution

At some point you have to take actual action. You have to escape the mind, the paper and the hypothetical, and actually do what the vision calls for. Remember the lazy river: you have to get in.

> **1 CORINTHIANS 3:6** ESV
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> 6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.

God gave the growth. It was supernatural. But Paul still had to show up in Corinth and preach.

Execution > Vision > Dream

Effort does not equal execution. All of humanity is bad about this, and the church is especially bad about it: we think God ought to give the bare minimum the maximum blessing. (Remember the church special sung off the cassette case: "I don't know the words real good, but I believe this is going to bless y'all.")

You have to do the thing the thing requires.

You are not going to become debt free, buy a car or become a millionaire by rounding up spare change in a savings app.

Illustration: there ain't no money in the binders. Ashleigh coaches women in sales. A woman will say she wants to make $2,000 a month, and all of her income comes from sales. Yet it is amazing how often someone is making no money because she is organizing and reorganizing her binders. She spends seven hours on paperwork and feels like she did something. But there ain't no money in the binders.

If this does not produce that, then we need to change what we are doing.

OPTIONAL: NOVELTY AND VIABILITY

This line is in the original notes but was not preached on May 31, 2026. Use it if time allows.

Novices focus on novelty. Experts focus on viability.

4. Execution Mirrors the Dream by Consistency

Not only do you have to do the thing the thing requires, you have to do **enough** of the thing the thing requires.

People come to conclusions about whether something works far too early:

- They dieted for a week, and the scale didn't move.
- They exercised for a month, and they didn't feel different.
- They called one person to support a mission trip, and the person said no. You have to call 200.

Someone planning a new venture said, "I'm going to try to make about ten contacts over the next month." You need to make ten contacts tomorrow.

Once you know what to execute on, you have to do a lot of it for a long time. **If you want to build a big life, it will take more action and cost more money than you think it does.**

"Pastor, I thought we would just pray for it." If you do not know how to work and the Lord blessed you in a fantastic way, it could destroy your life.

King Asa. When an army came against Judah, Asa cried out, "Help us, O LORD our God, for we rely on you" (2 Chronicles 14:11), and the Lord gave the victory. Later, when things went well, he trusted his resources instead: he sent silver and gold to another king for help, and when he grew sick, "even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but sought help from physicians" (2 Chronicles 16:12). Resources can pull you away from dependence on God. You do not pray for water if you have a sink.

But you can be prosperous and still go to the secret place every morning. You can have both.

Four levels of action. Grant Cardone's business book *The 10X Rule* describes four levels of action:

- **Do nothing.**
- **Retreat.** When it gets tough, do you quit too soon?
- **Normal levels of action.** What anybody would do.
- **Massive action.** That is what dreams are made of.

You don't have to have a big life. A moderate life can be a happy life. But if you want to make a big difference, change a lot of people's lives, or see generations of your family transformed, it takes massive action. If you have children who are not saved, it does not take normal levels of prayer. It takes massive levels of prayer.

"That sounds like works. I thought you were a grace preacher." It was by the grace of God that Paul could labor at the level he did and see results that have affected 2,000 years of the church.

In sales they say, **go for no.** The no is success. If you took 28 noes today, you are made of strong stuff.

So consistency looks like this:

Execution, execution, execution, execution, vision. Execution, execution, execution, vision. Execution, execution, vision. Execution, vision. Dream.

Illustration: work, get paid. A friend in sales described building a business like this: work, work, work, work, work, get paid. Work, work, work, get paid. Work, work, get paid. And eventually: work, get paid, get paid, get paid, get paid. Over time, with consistency in your execution, the vision comes about faster and the dream arrives.

This is not only about money. Name the areas of your life that money doesn't touch: these processes apply there too.

Conclusion

> **HABAKKUK 2:2-3 ESV**
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> 2 And the Lord answered me: "Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. 3 For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.

The whole framework is in this passage. Write the vision and make it plain, so those who read it can run. Running is execution and consistency. And if it seems slow, do not get discouraged. It will surely come.

There is no shortcut. You cannot put out an ad and have 28,000 people show up tomorrow. How often have you quit, retreated or settled for normal action because the dream wasn't as easy as you hoped? Whether you have a normal-size life or a big life will be determined by the levels of action you are willing to take. Nobody gets promoted coming in late and leaving early.

Massive action in prayer. If you have a child far from the Lord, keep loving, keep praying, keep believing God. Your adult child already knows what is wrong in his life; telling him again accomplishes nothing. Get into the secret place. Pray honestly: "Lord, if You don't intervene, this is never going to change." And if you don't know what to pray, pray in the Spirit. A woman in the church once said, "I don't really know what to pray, so I just pray in the Spirit," and it has produced good results in her family.

Homework:

- If you don’t have a dream, go home and dream. Walk around your property or drive somewhere you’ve always wanted to live and ask, “If I could have it all, what would it look and feel like?”
- If you have the dream, write the vision down on paper.
- If you have a vision board that hasn’t changed anything in ten years, you need to execute.
- If you did the thing and it didn’t work, go back and do it a hundred more times.

Follow the process, and your life will start to resemble the dream. Dream, write a vision, execute, and stay consistent.



ABOUT

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