

Dream Big

What promise are you circling? What miracle are you believing God for? Whatever it is that you're circling during this series, you need to make sure it is bigger than you are. That's how

God gets the glory! He does things that are beyond our ability, and beyond our resources, so we can't take credit for it. Two things about

God that I know to be true are that God is bigger than big and God is closer than close. And those two realities shape our prayer life.

MARK BATTERSON

First Thoughts

Show me the size of your dream, and I'll show you the size of your God.

In Isaiah 55:8–9, God likens the difference between our thoughts and His thoughts to the expanse of space. “‘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.’”

Translation: your best thought on your best day is at least 15.5 billion light years short of how great and how good God really is! In theological terms, this is called the *transcendence* of God. God is bigger than big! But that’s a little intimidating if left by its lonesome. The good news is there is a theological counter-balance to that bigness, and it’s called the *immanence* of God. God is also closer than close.

In Psalm 36:5–6, David writes, “God’s love is meteoric, his loyalty astronomic, his purpose titanic, his verdicts oceanic. Yet in his largeness, nothing gets lost; not a man, not a mouse, slips through the cracks” (MSG).

God is great not just because nothing is too big. God is also great because nothing is too small.

Our big dreams honor God because they warrant His divine intervention, but don’t dismiss the importance of praying about “little things.” If those things weren’t important to God, He wouldn’t know the number of hairs on your head (see Luke 12:7).

Praying is a form of dreaming, and dreaming is a form of

praying. The more you pray, the bigger your dream will become. And the bigger your dream becomes, the more you have to pray! It's big dreams that keep you on your knees in raw dependence on God.

God-sized dreams are just that—beyond your resources and beyond your ability to make them possible. But these kinds of dreams give God the opportunity to show up and show off His power. Nothing will keep you in a posture of prayer like a big dream.

So . . . what is your God-sized dream?

Getting Started

Before watching session 2, as a group read, pray, and meditate (RPM) on Joshua 6:1–5:

¹ Now the gates of Jericho were securely barred because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in.

² Then the LORD said to Joshua, “See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. ³ March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. ⁴ Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams’ horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. ⁵ When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have the whole army give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the army will go up, everyone straight in.”

Take a minute to pray and meditate on this passage; then write down your personal reflections. What was one thing that stood out to you from the Scripture?

Now take a few moments to review any reflections you recorded from the readings (days 1–7) you completed in Draw the Circle during the week. What are some of the insights you wrote down that you would like to share with the group?

Watch the Video

Play the video for session 2. As you watch, use the following outline to record any thoughts or concepts that stand out to you.

Our earliest memories leave an imprint on our soul.

God is able to do more than we can ask or imagine.

Start talking to your problems about God.

The difference between gratitude and faith

God's will, God's way, God's time

God is great because nothing is too small.

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Group Discussion

Take a few minutes with your group members to discuss what you just watched and explore these concepts in Scripture.

1. What is your earliest memory as a child? Do you feel like it has had a significant impact on who you are? Explain.

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2. Read **Ephesians 3:20–21**. What does Paul say in these verses about how you are to pray? When is a time when God answered your prayer in a greater way than you imagined?

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3. What is the bravest prayer that you could pray right now? Why?

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4. Prayer involves talking to God about your problems. But what does it mean to talk to *your problems* about God? How would that shift your focus in prayer?

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5. Read **Revelation 12:11**. In the video, note how this verse says we overcome by “the word of our testimony.” What is a two-minute testimony you could share with the group about a prayer God has answered or a prayer you are praying right now?

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6. Read **Luke 12:6–7** and **Psalms 139:4**. What do these verses tell you about God’s presence in your day-to-day life? What is something “small” in your life that you need to take to God?

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Personal Reflection

Conclude today's session by reflecting on these questions on your own.

1. In Luke 18:1–8, Jesus tells the story of a persistent widow. She takes desperate measures in her search for justice, and God honors her “crazy faith.” What does persistence in prayer look like in your life? Provide an example or two.

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2. Think about how desperate you are for the blessing, the breakthrough, or the miracle. How are you like or unlike the persistent widow? Are you desperate enough to pray through the night? How many times are you willing to circle the promise? How long will you knock on the door of opportunity? Until your knuckles are raw? Until you knock the door down? On a scale of 1–10, rate how desperate you are for God right now.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
NOT DESPERATE					VERY DESPERATE				

3. The way you steward God's miracles is by believing in Him for even bigger and better miracles. What miracles has God already done in your life? What are the bigger and better miracles you still need to believe Him for?

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4. Think about that person in your life who tries your patience—that person who gets on your nerves and requires extra grace. Have you tried circling them in prayer? Will you commit to pray for them this week to see if it changes your heart toward them (and maybe even your circumstances)?

Next Steps

In *Draw the Circle*, I note that there “comes a moment when you must quit speaking to God about the mountain in your life and start speaking to the mountain about your God.” That’s what I did on July 2, 2016, when God healed my asthma.

What is the bravest prayer you could pray right now?

By definition, God-sized dreams are beyond your ability, beyond your resources, and beyond your logic. If God doesn’t do it, it can’t be done. And it’s those God-sized dreams that honor God, because you can’t take credit for them.

What mountain do you need to speak to?

What promise do you need to stand on?

What truth do you need to declare?

In Zechariah 4:7, God tells the prophet, “What are you, mighty mountain? . . . You will become level ground.” But then God gives Zechariah an important reminder: “Don’t despise the day of small beginnings” (see verse 10). Big dreams usually start with small steps of faith, but those small steps of faith can turn into giant leaps. And if you do little things like they’re big things, God will do big things like they’re little things!

According to rabbinic tradition, when God told Noah to build the ark, the first thing he did was plant trees! After all, he knew he'd need lots of lumber. That's how things start in God's kingdom. You have to sow the seed. Generally speaking, dreams don't happen at the speed of light. They happen at the speed of a seed planted in the ground that has to take root before it can bear fruit.

What is the first step you can take toward your dream? Note it here.

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Draw^{the} Circle

DAILY REFLECTIONS

Session 2 Personal Study

This week, as part of your forty-day challenge, I encourage you to read days 8 to 14 in *Draw the Circle*—one reading each day—and use the questions in this section to reflect on what you’ve read. Be sure to note these reflections in this guide or your journal, as there will be a time at the beginning of next week’s session to share your thoughts with the group.

Day 8: One God-Idea

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KEY TAKEAWAY: One God-idea is worth more than a thousand good ideas.

1. Read **Job 12:7–8**. What are some methods God has used in your experience to illuminate His ideas and bring them to life?

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2. How would you describe the difference between *good* ideas and *God*-ideas?

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3. How big do you view God in your life? How would having a bigger view of Him and His power impact the way you pray?

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Day 9: Dream Factory

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KEY TAKEAWAY: Never underestimate the power of a single prayer.

1. Read **2 Corinthians 10:5**. What does it mean to “take captive” every thought and make it obedient to Christ? What does that look like in your life?

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2. What are some ways you are capturing *creative* thoughts and using them for God?

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3. What are some ways you are being obedient to make those God-dreams a reality?

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Day 10: Crazy Faith

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KEY TAKEAWAY: Bold prayers honor God and God honors bold prayers.

1. Read **Luke 5:17–26**. What kind of “crazy faith” did the friends of the paralyzed man reveal in this story? How did Jesus respond to their bold faith?

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2. What are some “desperate measures” you’ve taken to get an answer from God?

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3. When bold prayers become the norm in your life, so do the miraculous breakthroughs that follow. What are some bold prayers you need to pray today?

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Day 11: First-Class Noticer

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KEY TAKEAWAY: We don't see the world as it is; we see the world as we are.

1. Read **1 Corinthians 13:12**. What does it mean to be “watchful” in prayer?

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2. As you look back, how have you seen God give you “spiritual eyes” to notice the things that matter most to Him?

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3. What are some new things God has caused you to notice as you've started this forty-day challenge? How have you seen these things in a new light?

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Day 12: Sow a Seed

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KEY TAKEAWAY: If we do the little things like they are big things, then God will do the big things like they are little things.

1. Read **Luke 17:5–6**. A mustard seed was the smallest known garden seed in the culture of the day, while a mulberry tree could grow more than fifty feet in height. What is Jesus saying about the power of even a little bit of faith?

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2. What are some examples in your own life of how God answered in a big way when you prayed with even just a little bit of faith?

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3. How do you view prayer as “planting a seed” that might bear fruit during your lifetime?

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Day 13: One Day

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KEY TAKEAWAY: God can accomplish more in one day than you can accomplish in a lifetime.

1. Read **2 Peter 3:8–9**. What do these verses say about God's timing?

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2. When was a time you tried to “manufacture” a miracle instead of waiting on God and persevering in prayer? What was the result?

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3. How have you seen God stretch your faith so you can dream bigger dreams?

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Day 14: Speak to the Mountain

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KEY TAKEAWAY: Quit talking to God about your problem and start talking to your problem about God.

1. Read **Matthew 17:20**. What are “mountains” in your life that you need to have removed? What does this passage say about God’s ability to handle those problems?

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2. Think about your “pharaohs”—those people who get in the way of what God wants to do in your life (see Exodus 7:13). How do you tend to deal with them?

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3. What are some ways you can turn your anger against “impossible people” into prayer for them? How easy or difficult is this for you to do?

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