

“Think Big!”

Series: “Live Big” (3 of 3)

Open: List the top three things you think about in any given week.

Explore: Read Mark 2:1-12.

Mark was written after severe persecution broke out against the newly established church. This book would encourage suffering believers to remember that Jesus is all powerful over all things. This is one of the most powerful descriptions of Jesus in the Bible. In the first 9 chapters Mark details 22 specific miracles.

1. Where was Jesus when the events of the story unfolded (vs. 1-3)? What dilemma did the paralytic man and his friends face when they arrived?
2. How did the four friends choose to handle the situation (vs. 4-5)? What impresses you most about these men: **a)** their faith, **b)** their ingenuity, **c)** their concern for their friend, or **d)** their determination?
3. What did the religious teachers think about what was going on in the house (vs. 6-9)? What question did Jesus ask these men?
4. Why did Jesus choose not only to forgive the man brought to him, but to heal him physically as well (vs. 10-12)?

Reflect: Review the LG and discuss the questions below.

1. When it comes to “Big Thinking”, which “enemy” mentioned in the lesson do you think tends to deflate most people’s thought process?
2. In what way should “Big Thinking” affect our prayer life? Is there something (idea / plan / request) you have wanted to talk with God about recently, but have been putting it off?
3. I’ve heard it said, “Vision without implementation is hallucination”. Do you agree or disagree with that statement? How can Nehemiah be an example to us when it comes to following through with a “Big” idea?
4. Once a big idea gets going it needs constant attention and continued effort or it will lose momentum. What are some ways to keep going when motivation starts to fade? How does a CARE Group fit into this equation?
5. Of the three points listed from the lesson, what do you need to remember this week as you move toward “Big” thinking?

Live:

As a group: Divide into sub-groups (women / men) for this section. Spend a few minutes thinking about your life (spiritual life / family / friends / work). Choose one area in which you believe your thinking is too small. How can the group pray for you?

On your own: If you have let discouragement / fear / time / risk / complacency get in the way of your ability to think big, ask God to change your mind.

Listening Guide Notes

Enemies of “Big Thinking”

Fear
Good ol’ Days

Leaders
Complacency

3 keys to “Big Thinking”

1. Pray.

^[4] “When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. ^[5] Then I said: ‘O LORD, God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and obey his commands, ^[6] let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father’s house, have committed against you.’”

-Nehemiah 1:4-6 (NIV)

“‘O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man.’ I was cupbearer to the king”. **-Nehemiah 1:11 (NIV)**

2. Prepare.

^[1] “In the month of Nisan in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had not been sad in his presence before; ^[2] so the king asked me, ‘Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart.’ I was very much afraid, ^[3] but I said to the king, ‘May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my fathers are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?’” **-Nehemiah 2:1-3 (NIV)**

^[4] “The king said to me, ‘What is it you want?’ Then I prayed to the God of heaven, ^[5] and I answered the king, ‘If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my fathers are buried so that I can rebuild it.’ ^[6] Then the king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked me, ‘How long will your journey take, and when will you get back?’ It pleased the king to send me; so I set a time. ^[7] I also said to him, ‘If it pleases the king, may I have letters to the governors of Trans-Euphrates, so that they will provide me safe-conduct until I arrive in Judah?’ ^[8] And may I have a letter to Asaph, keeper of the king’s forest, so he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel by the temple and for the city wall and for the residence I will occupy?’ And because the gracious hand of my God was upon me, the king granted my requests.” **-Nehemiah 2:4-8 (NIV)**

3. Pursue.

^[15] “So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days.

^[16] When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God.” **-Nehemiah 6:15-16 (NIV)**