

FOLLOWING GOD 02

BIG THINGS

We are talking about FOLLOWING GOD. Last week I said, “IT ALL STARTS WITH A DREAM.”

Cultivate a heart that God would bless.

Take time with the dream.

Be patient with the dream.

Pursue the dream.

MAKE SURE YOUR DREAM IS ABOUT _____ THINGS.

I LOVE WHAT BLACKABY SAID, “GOD GIVES _____ - _____ DREAMS.”

DON'T GIVE YOUR LIFE TO _____ THINGS. GIVE YOUR LIFE TO _____ THINGS.

Nehemiah 1.

“What’s a good young Jewish boy doing in the palace of a Persian king?”

In 587BC Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah, destroyed the city, and carried away the best and brightest to Babylon.

About 50 years later (537BC) a Persian king named Cyrus defeated the Babylonians.

A guy named Zerubbabel took around 42,000 Jews back to Jerusalem and rebuilt the destroyed temple.

But not every Jew went home.

Fast-forward 80 or so years from the time of Zerubbabel (445 BC). Nehemiah is still in Persia and his job was “Cupbearer to the King.”

NEHEMIAH WAS AN _____ MAN WITH AN
_____ JOB DOING IMPORTANT THINGS.

THEN SOMETHING _____ CAME UP.

Nehemiah 1:1–3 (NLT)

- 1 *These are the memoirs of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah. In late autumn, in the month of Kislev, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes' reign, I was at the fortress of Susa.*
- 2 *Hanani, one of my brothers, came to visit me with some other men who had just arrived from Judah. I asked them about the Jews who had returned there from captivity and about how things were going in Jerusalem.*
- 3 *They said to me, "Things are not going well for those who returned to the province of Judah. They are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem has been torn down, and the gates have been destroyed by fire."*

This news crushed Nehemiah.

Nehemiah 1:4 (NLT)

When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven.

Nehemiah is about to realize that the important stuff he was doing was NOT the Big Stuff God had for him.

Nehemiah 1:5–11 (NLT)

Then I said, "O LORD, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps his covenant of unfailing love with those who love him and obey his commands,

6 listen to my prayer! Look down and see me praying night and day for your people Israel. I confess that we have sinned against you. Yes, even my own family and I have sinned!

7 We have sinned terribly by not obeying the commands, decrees, and regulations that you gave us through your servant Moses.

8 "Please remember what you told your servant Moses: 'If you are unfaithful to me, I will scatter you among the nations.

9 But if you return to me and obey my commands and live by them, then even if you are exiled to the ends of the earth, I will bring you back to the place I have chosen for my name to be honored.'

10 "The people you rescued by your great power and strong hand are your servants.

11 O Lord, please hear my prayer! Listen to the prayers of those of us who delight in honoring you. Please grant me success today by making the king favorable to me. Put it into his heart to be kind to me." In those days I was the king's cup-bearer.

HIS HEART WAS STUCK ON BIGGER THINGS.

Nehemiah 13:6 (NLT)

6 I was not in Jerusalem at that time, for I had returned to King Artaxerxes of Babylon in the thirty-second year of his reign, though I later asked his permission to return.

HE LEFT SOMETHING _____ TO DO SOMETHING _____.

I. BIG THINGS CHALLENGE YOUR _____

Matthew 4:18–20 (NLT)

18 One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers—Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew—throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living.

19 Jesus called out to them, “Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!”

20 And they left their nets at once and followed him.

SOME OF YOU ARE CALLED TO CHANGE VOCATIONS. GOD IS CALLING YOU TO SERVE HIM FULL TIME.

BUT THE BIG STUFF DOESN'T ALWAYS DEMAND A _____ CHANGE, BUT IT DOES DEMAND AN _____ CHANGE.

Luke 10:33–34 (NLT)

33“Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him.

34Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him.

THE SAMARITAN DIDN'T CHANGE HIS VOCATION. HE CHANGED HIS AGENDA.

BIG THINGS AREN'T _____ TO YOUR PURPOSE. THEY
ARE YOUR PURPOSE.

II. BIG THINGS CONFRONT YOUR _____

You have to be careful not to let the necessary things to take president over the weightier things.

IS WHAT I'M DOING AS _____ AS WHAT GOD WANTS ME
TO DO?

III. BIG THINGS CHANGE YOUR _____

BIG THINGS CHANGE YOU. YOU WILL FIND YOU HAVE LITTLE PATIENCE
FOR PETTINESS.

From a man fighting for his country in Ukraine.

**"THIS IS AN HISTORIC TIME FOR MY COUNTRY. BEFORE THIS WE WERE A
COLLECTION OF UKRAINIAN PEOPLE - THIS HAS MADE US A
NATION."**

From a Christian mother in a Ukrainian Subway hiding from bombs,

**"NOBODY TALKS ABOUT DENOMINATIONS ANYMORE. WE ARE JUST
TOGETHER."**

*"I really trust the Lord that he has everything under control. If he wants me or
my family to go home, there's nothing I can do. The presence of Jesus in the
boat with you does not keep you from the storm, but it keeps the boat from
sinking."*

BIG THINGS CHANGE YOU. THEY CHANGE YOUR _____. YOU LOOK
BACK AT ALL THE LITTLE THINGS YOU WORRIED SO MUCH ABOUT AND YOU SAY, "WHAT
REALLY MATTERS?"

THIS MATTERS. THIS IS BIG. THE REST OF IT... NOT WORTH THE WORRY.

FATHER, FREE US FROM THE _____ OF SMALL THINGS.