

Launch! LIVING ON A PRAYER

Jan 16, 2022 // Rock of Grace // Kinsman Campus

A big THANKS to LUBA!

Serve Team Member Highlight

I'm celebrating Luba E. today. Luba serves our little ones downstairs and does an amazing job making it fun and interactive teaching them God's Word. Let's THANK LUBA (get that gift bag on stage Jordan)

Vision Week Melted into a week about Stepping into the call of God on your life and the idea of **significance** / making an impact for Jesus before your time on earth is gone.

INTRODUCTION

HOOK / STORY

Let's recap a bit from last week. We said that Jesus was like kinda like the OT prophets. It was "Plan A or bust."

There are moments in life when we need to burn the ships to our past. We do so by making a defining decision that will eliminate the possibility of going back to the old life we left behind. You burn the ships named Past Failure and Past Success.

We often don't step into God's PLAN A because we keep PLAN B as an option.

We said a "Double minded man can expect to receive nothing from the Lord" which is why you can't hold on to your sin habits and expect God to move powerfully in your life or even have a peace of mind. The peace that God wants to fill your mind - the peace that makes you smile during the day - that peace comes from being *single-minded* - single-minded in purpose. What purpose? To honor God with your life.

When the Holy Spirit makes us new from the inside out, we begin to have adventures with God.

When Jesus breathed on his disciples in John 23 received a person of the Holy Spirit the best friend. They felt the nearness of God, the presence of God like never before and this is with Jesus standing right in front of them because this is the spirit of Jesus. This is what happens to us when we get saved when we become born again and give our lives to Jesus his spirit comes into our heart and makes our body his temple.

Philippians 3 tells us that we are constantly learning and growing and becoming more like Jesus. We're not perfect but we're being perfected - that's what the Holy Spirit does - if we allow it.

13 Brothers, I do not consider myself perfect. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

The first step into your future with God is always the longest and the hardest & the most important! It takes faith - trusting GOD and HIS ability to work! And you can't just take a step forward into the future. You also have to eliminate the possibility of moving backward into the past. Launch and don't look back!

That's how you go after God-sized goals that come to you in prayer.

That's how you break addictions.

That's how you reconcile relationships.

You leave the past in the past by burning the ships - remove the temptation to sin - remove the temptation to compromise - remove yourself from the friends who bring you down. Burn the ships and take ownership of your new life in God - take ownership of the new land that God is giving you. That new promised land may have some giants in it, but that's ok. Take steps of faith and enter in - launch and don't look back and you'll see GOD come through in amazing ways!

Faith always involves action. Always. Living on a prayer is leaving what you know; it's saying "YES" to God's voice, to believe and GO!

There is a specific assignment and role you're to play in God's STORY! That talent and gift is what you USE to take you into your promise. God supernaturally blesses our practical effort. In fact, I have a hunch there are a few talents with in you, SOME are sitting dormant and it's time to awaken them!

YOU are NEEDED in the KINGDOM of GOD! To say YES to God's new future for you, you often have to say NO to the past and to what you know / are comfortable with.

Before God can use us for His glory to build His Kingdom, we must first BELIEVE and IMAGINE with God, surrendering our old way of thinking to *His* way of thinking.

God wants to go to Him and pray and then listen to what *He* has to say about your future. Before you launch into what God has for you, you must first pray and listen. Before you launch, listen. Ask God WHAT is on YOUR heart.

Abraham

Just think. **God says to Abraham "Look at the stars! I will make your children as numerous as them!" (pic / video loop of amazing stars)**

I'm going to make your children as numerous as them. Now. Get up, fold up your tent and start walking." "Where God?" "I'll show you. Just walk." He could've thought "Sarah, I imagine, we'll loose all our livestock in that move. I imagine, I'll never recoup all that I've built over the years.... It won't work." Instead, he lived by faith and imagined what God had promised. The rest is history.

God then told him "look at the sand. I'm going to make your grandchildren and offspring as numerous as the sand!" He lived in a desert people!

God was giving him a VISION BOARD!

This is the POWER of writing down the vision and making it clear and placing it before you.

A vision that isn't written down often isn't accomplished.

Habbaukuk 2:2...

“Write the vision and make it plain so that he who hears it can run with it...”

God knew that every day Abraham would be seeing sand and that sand was a picture of the promise. God knew that every evening and night, Abraham would look up and see the stars, reminding him of the promise God put on His heart.

God made the promise of his future a picture he could see and understand. He can do the same thing for you!

Launch out into the deep - into the unknown - with God’s instructions / word / prophetic word to you.

ABRAHAM Home/Farm = Security, Comfort of the Known, \$ Stability

The Spirit’s instructions are often tailored just for you because your calling is as unique as your DNA. Living on a prayer is leaving what you know; it’s saying “YES” to God’s voice, to believe and GO!

Abraham laid down his home, security, preconceived idea of what is possible (birth)

Gideon laid down his victim-mentality (his pity party) after an encounter

Peter laid down his nets (income, security, known/normal)

Jesus laid down his throne, rightful place in heaven, known/normal to say “yes”

God says to Peter...

“Look at those fish! I will make you a fisher of men!”

When Jesus called Peter he was out fishing ..

Jesus saw his potential. Jesus saw him in his future. Jesus saw Peter and knew what he was capable of. He saw the raw faith, the brutal honesty, the candidness with which he would preach. Jesus saw Peter out there fishing and yet in the spirit, He saw Peter 3 years later, preaching on the day of Pentecost and 3,000 people getting saved.

Jesus always sees us for who we can be and what we will do for His glory; He doesn’t see us for who we are now and where we are now. We limit ourselves. God doesn’t.

God’s power to work in your life is limitless!

Evangelist DL Moody said “Only heaven knows what God can do with a man totally surrendered to Him.”

At the call to join Jesus in Ministry, Peter totally surrendered and man did He catch a lot of fish!

Jesus wasn’t alarmed at Peter’s past mistakes - the times he likely blurted out things he then regretted, the times he avoided paying taxes because he hated the Romans, any sin and bad behavior of Peter didn’t stop Jesus from calling Peter into ministry. That should teach us something.

**God's grace is so much more rich than you and I can ever know.
Don't let your past mistakes stop you from your future victories.
Faithfulness is about doing the next right thing (you don't need to know
10 steps ahead)**

Jesus knows Peter's internal battles of course and speaks to His frustration. Jesus knows that Peter's inner dialogue isn't great, but He also know he wants his life to count - to not be wasted.

A few things stand out to me about this short scripture.

We often focus on the "fisher of men" part and rightly so. But often we miss the part where Jesus says "I will make you..."

Jesus was not only excited about the people Peter would impact, but the person he would become.

In saying "I will make you" Here, Jesus speaks of the process of sanctification He would take Peter through. Jesus knew it would take some time and some effort to get Peter from where he was to where He wanted him to be. He was willing to take that journey with Peter. And He's willing to take that journey with you.

The anointing and presence of God likely came over Pete in a powerful way compelling him to follow, yes - to lay down his nets and leave his old life behind, yes! But we can't ignore that Pete's fishing nets represented his entire way of life. He certainly had to think for a moment, if I lay down my nets and follow Jesus, I may not be able to provide for my family.

We have a choice to say "I will make" or surrender to God's voice which says "I will make you"

When Peter said "Yes" to Jesus, he said "No" to the security of a fishing trade that had put food on the table for years. **When Peter said "Yes" to Jesus, he said "No" to the familiar.**

HIS NETS = Safety, Comfort, Income, The Known, Normal

**Living on a prayer is leaving what you know; it's saying
"YES" to God's voice, to believe and GO!**

It's true for Abraham & for Peter and for you and me.

When we simply say YES to the voice of God, we receive the miracles and gifts He is trying to give us!

VIDEO: Paris_SayYesToGod 3.5 minutes

Peter had a choice ... I can stay here and live the status quo, boring life I've been living and be "ok" His reality was to be a fisherman just like every other fisherman. Or, he could follow Jesus! He could live adventure!

I can live an adventure! You can live adventurously trusting Jesus every step of the way! You can see miracles. You can see the dead raised! You and I can be apart of something eternal! Something amazing!

Isn't it remarkable that Jesus chose Peter? A loud mouth!

Have you ever read the story of Peter tagging along with Jesus up a mountain to pray? It's hilarious. If you look at Matthew 17

Now we know this is actually a beautiful moment when Jesus is signaled as the true Messiah being the law (Moses) and the prophets (Elijah) are meeting with Jesus as if to confer with one another. So Peter takes this incredible moment and immediately opens his big mouth with ... "Oh! Let me make a tent! I'm good a tents! I'll build each of you a tent. Moses, one for you! Elijah, one for you! Jesus, one for..." Jesus is like "PETE! Hush child! I don't need your little tent bro!"

Jesus is being signaled as the one to fulfill the law entirely. Jesus is being signaled as the Word of God Himself. He wouldn't be only delivering the Word like Elijah and prophets of old, but He is the Word of God made flesh and all Pete can say is "Ya'll want a tent?"

Peter cracks me up! I wonder if Jesus just looks at me sometimes and shakes His head like "No man, I don't need you to ..." I just want you. I just want your heart. I just want your presence right now. That's all I need from you. Be in the moment. Don't build. Don't work. Just be in the moment and see Me for who I am. WOW.

Jesus chose Peter despite his quirks and faults and Jesus chooses you & me! Your life in God depends on how you respond to Jesus' voice. Living on a prayer is leaving what you know; it's saying "YES" to God's voice, to believe and GO!

So Jesus taught Peter so much as he and the other disciples followed Him from Capernum to Jerusalem, throughout Judea & Samaria - to places they "shouldn't go" to people they "shouldn't talk to" From the temple courts where the elites would teach to the streets where they'd find prostitutes and thieves, JESUS brought them along. Peter learned so much and grew in His faith - learning to pray and trust God.

As you may know, Jesus appeared to His disciples numerous times after dying on the cross for our sins and then rising from the dead. He visited them and encouraged them. A beautiful moment is when Jesus made it clear that He still wanted Peter on His team - after all his blunders - all his mistakes - Jesus still wanted him on his ministry team.

JN 21 Jesus reaffirms Peter's call to ministry - to go in to all the world & preach.

JN 21:1-15 "After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. ² Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together.

³ Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We will go with you.” They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. ⁴ Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵ Jesus said to them, “Children, do you have any fish?” They answered him, “No.” ⁶ He said to them, “Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.”

So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. ⁷ That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. ⁸ The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.

⁹ When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. ¹⁰ Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.” ¹¹ So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. ¹² Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” Now none of the disciples dared ask him, “Who are you?” They knew it was the Lord.

¹³ Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. ¹⁴ This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead. ¹⁵ When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.” Jn 21:1–15

It didn't make sense for Simon Peter to leave his fishing business behind to follow Jesus. But something inside of him leaped at the sound of Jesus' voice! **When you see your calling, and when you find JESUS in it, your spirit will leap, even if your mind can't comprehend how. Jesus still wanted Peter on His team and Jesus still wants you!**

Jesus knew that Peter was filled with regret and shame for denying Him three times so Jesus made it clear to call him 3 times - 3 times he said “Feed my sheep”
When our faithfulness runs out, Jesus' faithfulness is complete.

There are specific things that Heaven wants YOU to accomplish on earth. Miracles that YOU will see! They only come though in faithfulness. They only come to life when you surrender and obey the voice of Jesus! Peter obeyed the voice of Jesus, casting his net on the other side and miracles followed! More importantly, Peter heard the voice of His friend - His BEST friend, JESUS! There were specific assignments on Peter's life and Jesus wasn't gonna let Peter give up on himself and miss out on that God-adventures!

Peter went back to fishing even though Jesus had basically told him that he was called into full-time ministry to launch and not go back, but Peter was so discouraged he was filled with regret that he had betrayed his Lord denying him in front of everyone in Jesus body was still on the ground as far as he can so he went back to fishing after only two days. But!

Jesus came to them in the midst of their discouragement - let that sink in. Your life issues don't discount you from experiencing the power of God.

By the way, this is me just wondering here- this isn't biblical text ok so here me out - I wonder if Peter and the guys were just thinking about themselves - their income needs - their budget. What if they would've been thinking like Jesus taught them to think? What if they would've been thinking about the needs of others - blessing others. What if they were like "Lord, I believe we're going to catch so much fish that you'll give us an abundance to feed 4 extra families in addition to ours!" Again I don't KNOW what was going through their minds that night. But I have a feeling it's the kind of discouraging voice of the enemy that causes us to have a pity party and think only about ourselves.

P poor me

I I only have

T this isn't going to work

Y whiiiiiiiiine

LOL

Did you ever notice when you send out invites to your Pity Party, not too many people RSVP. Lol

In thinking of only themselves, they caught nothing. At the sound of Jesus voice, they received WAY more fish than they personally needed for their income.

I believe Peter caught way more than he needed because Jesus was teaching him a lesson.

Rely on yourself and you'll get what you need (maybe) and yet lack joy.

Rely on the Lord, work/serve/live/fish/design/build/invest/launch FOR THE LORD

And you'll have more than you need

SO THAT you can bless others.

"A double minded man can expect to receive nothing from the Lord..."

Peter had to be faithful and obedient to the Lords' voice - the Lord's command to cast his net on the other side.

In the Kingdom of God, success is faithful obedience to God's voice. Living on a prayer is leaving what you know; it's saying "YES" to God's voice, to believe and GO!

Think about how Peter grew older after following Jesus. Think about how God's Spirit worked in Peter to continue to form the person of Jesus Christ - the character of God -

the humility and graciousness and gentleness of Jesus. Think about Peter writing these words that we cherish in our Bibles...

“Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and savior, Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 3:18

As you read that scripture you can almost see the smile in Peter’s eyes as he’s writing it knowing that His friend and Savior, Jesus, had forgiven him so many times. The more he grew in the knowledge of Jesus, the more grace He understood Jesus to have. You and I will notice the same for our own lives. We’d be wise to also pray “Lord, help *me* to grow in the *grace* and *knowledge* of You!”

To know Jesus is to love Him. The more you know Him, the more you love Him.

Let’s forget “what is behind and straining toward what is ahead” Let’s “press on” to know Jesus and let Him use our ordinary life for His extraordinary glory!

God has a knack for using ordinary things for extraordinary purposes for His glory. You and I are ordinary. Our possessions or talents may seem ordinary, but God can do the miraculous with them!

Jesus told Peter “go out into the deep... trust me on this.

OUR FAITH & OBEDIENCE + GODS POWER = MIRACLES

Make the little moments BIG. Make small moments ETERNAL.

***story - me praying with Dawn on Keap Coaching Zoom Call. Believing Jesus to heal her eye and swelling optic nerve. Christianity is not something you can compartmentalize to Sunday mornings. Its’ an all or nothing - JESUS at the CENTER - thing. When He writes His law of love upon your heart, everything changes. Every problem becomes an opportunity for prayer - for inviting God and His power into the situation.**

[Tell Gideon’s Story Here >](#)

In John 17, we read about God’s love being in Jesus and that promise given to us/ His followers - I will be IN you and you will be IN me and you will do even greater things (might be JN 14) ...

It’s obvious that God’s love for humanity permeated Jesus’ entire being. That love for humanity is then passed on to US when we let Him do a deep work within in. Like Gideon, you are one encounter with God away from an entirely different life.

We don’t “do things for God” to impress him or impress others. We do them from a pure motive of glorifying God and blessing people. Abraham’s promise wasn’t

for HIM. It was to bless others. Gideon's calling to rise up and be their leader wasn't so he could look special - it was for the express purpose of rescuing God's people from the oppression coming from the Midianites. **The purpose and call on your life, yes will make your life meaningful and rich, but it isn't for you. It's for the blessing of others - that others would KNOW God and KNOW his power and love. That's what vision is - it's what God can do through you for others. But that vision won't come to reality until we leave our past and say "YES" to God!**

Some of you will get on MISSION this month! You'll get excited about what God's put in your heart. You'll take last weeks advice from Hab 2:2 and you'll write down the vision God gave you. You'll make it clear.

But along the way if you forget WHY you're doing it, Satan will tempt you to believe that it's for you. But notice a little pattern here in Genesis 11 and 12 and the contrast

BRICKS & STONES

In essence there are two ways of living: BRICKS or STONES

1. Creating our own story and trying to build our own name.
2. Finding ourselves in God's story and letting God name us. (It's for HIS glory)

Gen 11, it says "They said to each other"
Gen 12 "God said to Abram"

Gen 11 "Come let us make bricks and bake them."
Gen 12 "I will make you..."

Gen 11 "Come let us build ourselves a city..."
Gen 12 "I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you. I will protect you..."

Gen 11 says "Let's make a name for ourselves" (arrogance / self-serving)
Gen 12 says "I will make your name great." (Humility / receiving blessing and guidance/correction) *It's like Prov 28 "let others praise you"*

The story of Abraham is the story of all of us.

It's like I said two years ago in a sermon ... It's Babylon or Jesus. Either I'm living for ME or I'm living for GOD. But I can't do both. We can pretend we want to be like God and vye for control OR we can submit to our Creator who has revealed Himself in the person on Jesus Christ and let HIM write His story in our lives. It's almost as if God is giving us a choice; we can live with bricks or stone. Stones are God made. They serve as a picture of refuge and strength and longevity. Bricks are Man made In fact Pharaoh demanded "bricks without straw" this idea of a self-made man. It's very American but it's not very Christian.

Stone - made by God - represents the timelessness of God - His Steady steadfast love & truth. Stones represent Refuge and Stability - a faithful unchanging God.

Bricks represent Our will. Our ways. Our glory. Our wants, our needs, *our way*.

Mankind has been given this choice over and over and over by God. God says to us "LET ME do something amazing with your life. Entrust your life to Me. Let me take care of you" Father God says. And we then have a choice. Do we live for ourselves and insist our existence is our own - we are self-made and self-sustaining and in our pride, reject our Creator's offer? OR do we humbly submit to Him and His Lordship.

This is true of the inmate, trapped in an 8x8 jail cell. (Pause so they imagine) and it's true of the successful businessman who's climbing the corporate ladder. Both have a choice. Let God forgive them of their sin and give them vision to live for Him OR live only for themselves.

ABRAHM Home/Farm = Security, Comfort of the Known, \$ Stability
GIDEON Swords = My Strength, Power, Carnal Weapons, Ambition
PETER Nets = Security, Safety, Comfort of the Known, Income
JESUS Throne = My Safety & Comfort, Normalcy *Phil "He didn't consider Himself ..."

START MUSIC: Instrumental Worship Music Vol 4: Track 2 "Resting In Grace"

Jesus left HEAVEN to do the assignments on HIS life and fulfill HIS call from the Father - why? He was surrendered and submitted to the Father. He wanted ALL to be saved - me you and your neighbors, your coworkers

**God the Father put a VISION in the heart of JESUS
It was that vision of seeing YOU restored to the Father that gave him the JOY to endure the cross scripture says.
YOU are the joy that gave Jesus the strength to endure the cross.**

**JESUS died to restore YOU to the Father.
Jesus used a cross.
Gideon used a lantern and a sword.
Peter used his big mouth
Abraham used his family and his wealth in agriculture.
God can use ANYTHING you give Him to bring people into HIS story - into HIS family.**

**Let's LIVE on a PRAYER!
The promise of GOD for your life!**

Reject the idea of being SELF made and let God say to you today I WILL MAKE You ... I WILL cause you to rise up mighty warrior!

**I WILL BLESS your children and keep you safe!
I WILL MAKE you fisher of men! I WILL MAKE YOU a VOICE to the nations to
spread the GOSPEL!
I WILL DO A NEW THING IN YOU TODAY!**

OPEN YOUR HEARTS and LET HIM WORK IN YOU RIGHT NOW!

ALTAR CALL HERE

**Our mission as a church is this: *We are leading people to follow Jesus together.*
That never changes. **But our vision, our preferred picture of the future - is that we
Transform Trumbull through worship services, life groups and planting churches.****

On your seats today, you find the 10 Cities Booklet

WE made this a few years ago then revised it this fall because if you remember our first one said "Cortland Then the other locations had ? Bc we truly didn't know "Howland? Warren? Champion?" So now this is just revised to include our 3 campuses but also our planting initiative.

OUR 10 CITIES VISION is our PLAN A. God confirmed His promise towards us numerous times so There is no PLAN B. We are so pumped about what GOD is doing and still GOING TO DO to transform this whole region for His glory.

Screens - Correspond with the Booklet

ASK (WHAT DO I WANT THEM TO DO?)

6 Things About Your Promise & Purpose

- **It will scare you (it'll require others bc it's so big; this builds humility and character)**
- **It solves a conflict in your heart. Your conflict is often related to your calling.**
- **It brings a blessing to others. "Ambition is when you... Vision is when you..."**
- **It may be a ministry here at Rock of Grace**
- **It may NOT be a ministry here at Rock of Grace *While I think everyone can serve at ROG somewhere, your main gifting & purpose may not be in church; may be in marketplace or school board or somewhere outside this building.**
- **It will likely (not always) be somewhat obvious to others bc it's your gifting**

We have 4 initiatives for #TransformTrumbull

If you visit TransformTrumbull.com you'll see our progress but I wanted to share some of our progress with you today!

We believe Christians should be the most loving people in society; therefore it's up to the church to solve the orphan crisis in America and up to US to solve it here in our county. We set a goal of giving #EveryChild a safe and loving home in Trumbull County - specifically - seeing 140 kids placed in foster care then reunited with mom and dad once they recover OR adopted by 2030. *We've discovered that loving and helping mom and dad is just as needed as helping the kids. We've seen 36 kids come into care and another 27 given respite in Rock of Grace families! WOW! God is on the move!

Our 2nd Initiative is concerning drug and alcohol addiction Reducing overdoses deaths from 307 to 250. We believe the Gospel changes us from the inside out and we've seen him restore many in our congregation from addiction to a life of joy and meaning!

Last year, we wanted to see 4 new Life Groups began and we did! As you can see, there are now 16 Life Groups for you to experience genuine friendship - where you can commit to community like the early church did. Let's follow Acts 2 and meet in homes and discuss Jesus and how His Kingdom changes our lives. We wanted to see 25 people give their hearts to Jesus and we saw 30!

In 2022, let's get even more bold!

DISCIPLESHIP:

Let's pray for 3 new Life Groups to begin (for a total of 20) - for discipleship and community to take place

EVANGELISM / SALVATIONS

Let's pray and believe for 50 people to give their hearts to Jesus! With 3 campuses now, I believe that's definitely possible! Don't forget WHY we plant churches.

1. To pattern our church like the early church - believers in ACTS were leaving comfort to plant churches and ...
2. Reach Lost People with the GOSPEL
3. Assignment that came to me through 2 different people then confirmed a 3rd time by our District Pastor John Wooton.