

Do More Than Think About It

John 15:12-17

I want to invite you to think about the dreams you have had for your life, visions of great adventures, satisfying experiences and enriching endeavors. These are the kinds of things you think about and hope will happen at some point in your life.

Now, let me invite you to focus on the dreams you have had...that have never come to pass. These are the ones that captured your attention and grabbed your heart to the point that you could taste them they were so real. But they just never happened. Have you got one of those in mind now?

Here's the question I want to ask you today - why didn't that dream become a reality for you?

Don't just **THINK** about it - **DO** it!

Ephesians 1:4-5 — *4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,*

John 15:12-17 — *12 "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command you. 15 No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. 16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. 17 These things I command you, so that you will love one another.*

1. Intentionally **SACRIFICE** for others

The single largest pool of untapped resource in this world is human good intentions that never translate into action.

2. Provide Helpful **GUIDANCE** to others

We're not just going to do more, we're going to do more of what matters most.

3. Share Honest **COMMUNICATION** with others.

When we're engaged with our community, when we are honest with others about our struggles, when we don't just talk about our successes but also our failures, that's when we'll begin to figure out how well we are really loving our community like never before.

4. Bolster SUCCESS in others

Ephesians 5:25-27 — *25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.*

How can we bolster that kind of success in others in our community? Part of the answer is to develop what's been called a cadence of accountability where there are regular and frequent meetings to keep us on track with how we are loving our community.?

Let's be that kind of people, a people who take the good intentions we have about loving others and let's turn those good intentions into real action, self-giving action that set people up for success now and into eternity.

Let's talk about doing more than thinking about it...

1. When you put the way you love others up against the way Jesus loves you, what do you learn (v.12)?
2. There have been times throughout history when some have made the ultimate sacrifice for others. How is the sacrifice of Jesus different from theirs (v.13)?
3. What were some of the things that Jesus had heard from His Father than He had made known to His friends (v.15)?
4. How does it make you feel to know that Jesus chose you (v.16)?
5. What would it look like for you to "bear fruit and that your fruit should abide" (v.16)?
6. How is it possible for you to obey the command of Jesus in this passage?
7. What is the most important thing you can focus on in your life?
8. What kinds of things are we busy doing through the church that really aren't helping us be effective in accomplishing the mission that Jesus has given us?
9. If we were to keep a scoreboard on how well we are doing to love like never before, what kinds of things would we track and how would we be doing?
10. What would a cadence of accountability look like in the church?