

TwoIgnite
Part Two – Dream Big
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At Mission Community Church

Last weekend we had an awesome start to TwoIgnite. It was fantastic, right? Ted Cunningham and Gary Smalley. If you missed last weekend, you really missed quite a start to this ministry. I would encourage you to go on our website and podcast it. As a matter of fact, you might want to just subscribe to the podcast so that you don't miss any messages in this TwoIgnite series. I'm just so excited what God has already been doing in this and what I am seeing already happening in the lives of couples; it has really, really been great.

But I have a bone to pick with you, Mission Community Church, because I was here last week and I heard how hard you were laughing at all those jokes about me. The funny man is gone, okay? It's just you and me now, okay? I'm going to totally kick your butt now.

Let me wrap up Ted's message in a sentence. You don't have to choose between a life and a wife or a husband. God wants you to enjoy life with your spouse; you can actually enjoy life with your spouse. That's where he was going last week and I want to continue on that message and talk about how we do that; kind of what is one of our big first steps if we are going to do that. So this message is called Dream Big. It's because as Ted and Gary and I were working on this and talking about it and praying about it and discussing and writing for the last year or so and really kind of pulling his together... Through our combined years of ministry, which between Ted, Gary, and I, we have about 70 years of ministry, of working with... Gary has about 60 of them so... but working with marriages and couples, we've seen this pattern over and over and over again.

It starts like this: a couple starts out and they have this huge dream for their marriage. Every couple starts out with this big dream for their marriage, having this great love and being united and just having it for a lifetime and enjoying life together and just being sexually pleased together forever and for a lifetime, this huge, huge dream. Then something sort of happens over time and kids and chaos and disappointment and nesting and settling and on and on. The dream just sort of gets smaller and smaller and smaller and smaller... Pretty soon, that whole sense of dreaming and adventure gets exchanged for routine and boredom and punching the clock.

The thing is this: most people will only let their dreams get so small. Then you'll start dreaming again, except this time you'll start dreaming alone. "I guess we are not going to

have this dream that I thought we were going to have together, so I'm going to have my own dream. It's no longer us dreaming together about what our marriage could be, but now it's me just dreaming about what could be for me and you are dreaming about what could be for you." All the sudden he is dreaming about something and someone else and she's dreaming about something and someone else.

These two separate dreams begin to pull them further and further and further apart until they eventually look at each other and go we don't have anything left here because the dream is dead. With TwoIgnite, what we want to do, in part, is stop that drifting apart and get couples to begin to dream big again. The answer is not to stop dreaming. The answer is actually dream way bigger than you are dreaming, but dream together, as husband and wife, what your marriage really could be like. You're going to hear this phrase: "Dream big, but don't dream alone." We want couples to begin to dream big together again.

Let's pray and we are going to get into the word.

Father,

We thank you that there is always hope in you. God, I thank you that you are able to do abundantly more than we can ever dream or imagine. Father, I know there are people sitting here right now that are thinking this is impossible for them. Lord, I pray that there would be great hope given by your word today; that people would embrace a new truth and begin to believe a new dream for their marriage and not just a dream that they have conjured up, but your dream. God, I pray that you would do this among the people here today.

We pray in Jesus' name and all in agreement said...

Amen

Okay, you are going to want a Bible for this so if you forgot one or the person next to you just took yours, (I hope that didn't happen) just put your hand up and somebody is going to get you a Bible. When you get that Bible, would open it to two different places. In the New Testament, turn to Matthew 19. Then put a mark in your Bible in the Old Testament at Proverbs 5. If you land in Matthew 19 and leave that mark in Proverbs 5, you are going to be all set.

So Matthew 19... and I just want to tell you about how God has a huge, huge plan for your marriage. God is actually the one that started this whole thing. In Genesis 1 and 2, God makes all of creation and he looks at man and says it's not good for man to be alone. So he makes this woman and then the man looks at her and goes, "Wow! That's really good."

Then God says, ***For this reason now man will leave mother and father and will be united to his wife and the two will become one flesh.*** In that passage, Genesis 2:24, God is not talking about Adam and Eve's marriage, because Adam and Eve don't have a mother or father to leave. Nobody gave Eve away, right? He's talking about the pattern for marriages to come. As he is talking about his plan for marriage, he is actually looking ahead at the pattern of marriage. He is talking about your marriage; he's talking about my marriage. God, from the very beginning of instituting marriage, actually has a plan for it. He has a huge dream for marriage.

Jesus restates that dream. I want to pick it up here at Matthew 19: 5. Jesus is restating

God's huge dream for marriage. ***For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united*** (underline united) ***to his wife, and the two will become one flesh so they are no longer two***, (underline they are no longer two) ***but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.*** So point one of God's plan is that the husband and wife would have this radical uniting together at the core of your being, your heart, your mind, your soul. God would actually bring you together in a way that you will never be united with any other person on the planet. God has united two as one at the core of your being.

He doesn't describe the parent/child relationship that way; he just describes the husband/wife relationship that way. You see, we are not supposed to have children-centered, kid-centered marriages. God didn't design it that way. We are not supposed to just have dreams for our kids; we are supposed to have dreams for our marriage. The kids grow up and they leave and then it's just you and your spouse. You two have been united together for a lifetime, so you better have some dreams for your marriage that go well beyond the childbearing years.

We love our kids. My youngest daughter is here today, Naomi. She is living in California now. She just recently got married and she is visiting here. It's fantastic to have you here and you know that we love you, right? At her wedding... well she eloped, but then after that, we had a celebration. She did...hmm. That's another sermon, for another time, right? But then we had a celebration later on when we found out that you were married. We had like this other wedding thing at our house. Then they left and it was beautiful. My wife and I were like, "Oh, it's so wonderful seeing you married; good-bye." We were waving, they drive off and we close the door and we are like, "Yes!" We love our kids, we really do, but now every room is a bedroom, right. So our son asked if he could move back for a couple of months and we are like, "alright, whatever." Thirty more days and he's gone. I know, I know.

We have big dreams for our marriage because we've always had these big dreams for our marriage. That's what God wants. He wants you to have big dreams for your marriage because he's united you two together as one and he wants you to have that one flesh kind of love for a lifetime.

Back in Chapter 19, let's look at verse 6. ***So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.*** What God has designed is that you would have this great, fantastic, one flesh kind of love for a lifetime. Not many people experience that. Now I want to show you this. This is from the US Census Bureau statistics. I just need ten of you to stand up. I promise I won't make you do anything silly. Let's imagine these ten people represent ten couples. Let's imagine they all just got married yesterday. You can't have your arm around here because you are two different couples. We have ten unique couples, okay? Because we are not that kind of church.

Two of these couples will never make it to their five year anniversary. Two couples won't even make it five years. Then before the ten year anniversary, just even the first decade, two more are gone. Four out of ten couples, 42% won't make it to their ten year

anniversary. Fifteen years in, another one of you sit down. Twenty-five years in, another one sit down. My wife and I are going to be celebrating our 25th anniversary on September 22nd. We're just at halftime, right? We have 25 more to go, right, babe? We're thinking this is great, we're just at halftime.

But more than half of our friends, their marriages are already done. They didn't even make it to halftime. They never even made it to the locker room; they're done. Not many people experience God's design, right? It's just a handful.

The thing is this: God's design is not that you would just stick it out and be miserable, but God actually wants you to have this one flesh love for a lifetime. He has united you together so you can have this fantastic love for a lifetime. I absolutely love spending time with my wife. When I get free time, I spend it with my wife because there is a connectedness between her and me that God built into our relationship that I simply can't have with any other person on planet earth.

We have some young bucks on our staff. I used to be the young buck. I don't know how it happened. I woke up and I was the old dude. I don't know. Anyway, the young bucks used to give me a hard time because they used to go out to lunch everyday. They would ask me to go to lunch with them. I would say "No I'm going to go home with my wife." There was this joke among the young guys on staff. They used to go, "Oh yea, Mark has a *lunch* with his wife." The thing is that I chose to spend that time with my wife, not because I don't like those guys; I like those guys a lot, but I'm not one with them. I choose to spend time with my wife, not because I have to, not because I'm in trouble if I don't (although I might be). I choose to spend that time with her because God has made us not two, but one and there is a connectedness with her that I simply can't have with anybody else.

God wants you to enjoy that kind of one flesh love for a lifetime. He wants you to enjoy life with your spouse. This is really what Ted was getting to last week in Ecclesiastes 9: 9 where it says this: ***Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun...*** Even though you are kind of in this grinder, God still wants you to enjoy life. To the best of your ability, find joy in your spouse.

Even just going through these brief scriptures, Matthew 19:5-6, Ecclesiastes 9:9... In even just these few verses, we can see that if we just kind of open these up, we'll see God has this huge, huge dream for marriage, where you two would have this one flesh love and you would have it for a lifetime and you would enjoy life together. That, in and of itself, is a pretty big dream for marriage. Would you agree with that? But here's the thing and this is the part of it that gets even better. God's dream for marriage gets even bigger. I know you are going to react to this, but this is right out of scripture and I'll show this to you. God wants you to be hot for each other for a lifetime. He does!

I want you to see this again in scripture. You saw a little bit of this last week. Go ahead

and turn to Proverbs 5: 18. ***May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer-- may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love.*** Always and ever... may her breasts satisfy you... If I remember Ted Cunningham's translation of the Hebrew of this passage, I think it went something like this: bowm chicky bowm bowm, right. Wasn't that what he did? I think that was it. The thing is... you know what? I was laughing, but I was thinking that's actually pretty accurate.

I'm going to unpack this a little bit more and you are going to see some of the meaning behind some of these Hebrew words here because there is a lot actually lost in translation in this passage from Hebrew to English. Some of the verbs here that we read like *satisfied*... it's like okay that sounds good, but then when you actually understand the Hebrew word, you're like oh he meant something very different.

This word here for *satisfied*... look at Chapter 5, Verse 19 - ***may her breasts satisfy you.*** Do you know what the Hebrew word for *satisfied* actually means there? It means be drunk, intoxicated. Be drunk with your wife's breasts. Then, that word for *captivated* is actually a much more passionate word. It actually means *ravished*. Translated in other places in the Bible it's *ravished*. If I were to translate this passage in Mark Connelly translation, it would look like this: may her breasts make you drunk always and may you ever be ravished by her love. Oh my gosh, this is really good and I totally love this woman forever.

Some of ladies may be sitting there going, I'm glad he's having a good time, but what about me? What's in it for me here? But it goes both ways. It's not that God just wants the men to really have fun in the marriage and the woman to just put up with it, right? No, he wants her to be fully satisfied and to just absolutely love their love life together. She should be loving making love with her husband.

I just love in the Song of Solomon scripture where God just paints this huge, beautiful picture in this entire book of the Bible of this intimate relationship between a husband and a wife and it's full of all this fantastic imagery of what it can be like. We are going to dig into it more in the TwoDrink section a few months from now, but I'm just going to give you a foretaste of this.

In Song of Solomon 1:2, she, the woman, describes their love relationship like this: ***Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth***—I don't what other kind there is, but it sounds really good, doesn't it? Kiss me with the kisses of your mouth. Then she says this about her husband: ***for your love is more delightful than wine.*** She like, "My man, he knows how to do it." It's really hard for me and it really feels weird for me to say that, but just go there with me, okay? She saying, "My man is delightful."

Listen to how she, not he, how she describes their marriage bed. Chapter 1:16 – ***How handsome you are my lover***... I'm even stammering, trying to get it out. ***How handsome you are, my lover! Oh, how charming! And our bed is verdant.*** The word there in the NIV is verdant, but the word there means green, like lush, like a forest, like alive, like

passionate and she's like, "My man, he just rocks my world!" She's describing their marriage bed. It's just alive and vibrant and that's God's picture for marriage. God wants the marriage bed to be hot. He wants you two to be hot for each other for a lifetime. That's his picture.

Let's just speak really honestly to the single people here. I'm going to speak mostly to single men right now. Single men, thinking about getting married, but putting it off because you're afraid your love life in marriage will be boring. The picture that you have probably starts out okay, but ten years in it's got to get pretty boring. And then you're just locked in for life and it's just stale and passionless. God has a way, way bigger dream for your bedroom. His desire is that you have a smokin' hot marriage forever. I can only take you as far as I've gone, but I can tell you this: after 25 years of marriage, I can testify to you that you do not have to settle for anything less than God's dream for your bedroom. Can I get an Amen from my wife on that one? My wife goes "Amen" and my daughter goes...

Maybe you're sitting here with your daughter or your son and thinking you really wish they weren't here. Listen, I'm glad they are here. Do you know why? It's because that son or that daughter is going to grow up and trust me they grow up faster than you think. They are going to get married and you want them to have God's picture for their marriage, not some cheap imitation. God has a huge, huge dream for their marriage and for your marriage.

We just look at it through scripture here and it says I want you to be united and have this one flesh love, this beautiful one flesh love, and I want you to have it for a lifetime. How great is that. And then I want you to just enjoy life with your spouse; drink it up. Be drunk with each other, be intoxicated, be ravished with you love for one another. That's a great dream for your marriage, right? And that was your dream, wasn't it? When you got married, wasn't that your dream. Nobody got into this thing with... No guy got down on his knees and proposed and said, "Babe, I promise, if you take this ring, I will do my best, I'll give an average effort to have a mediocre marriage." How hard up would she have to be to say yes to that? No bride is walking down the aisle, holding the flowers, thinking, Oh, I hope he's a couch potato and we have a status quo marriage." Nobody's thinking that, right? You both had a huge dream for your marriage. You had this huge dream of how it would be wonderful and you would love each other for a lifetime and you'd be passionate. You had God's dream for your marriage.

So my question is this: where did the dream go? What happened to the dream? When I talk to couples that have been married for seven years or more, most of the time, not always, but most of the time, it appears that the dream is dead, or at least, it's just in this really shrunk down form. Some have dreams, but they are actually dreams for their kids, but not really dreams for their marriage anymore.

Do you know what the average duration of a marriage is that will end in divorce. The average duration of that first marriage that will end in divorce; do you know how long that first marriage typically lasts? It's actually 7.8 years. Do you know the duration of the

average second marriage that will end in divorce? It's 7.3 years. The researchers call it the seven year itch. At that seven year mark, often times, at that point, the dream is just dead. Anybody here married six years? We'll pray for you, we will, sorry. Yea, we'll talk later. But they call it the seven year itch because something just happens. The dream, over time, just gets smaller and smaller and smaller. By seven years, they are like okay the dream is dead. They are dreaming separately and they're going their own separate directions and at some point, they just wake up, at about 7.8 years, and just go there's nothing left here anymore, the dream is dead.

I've done a lot of pre-marital counseling over the years. I would always want to make the wedding kind of personal so I would always meet with the couple several times. I would ask them very personal questions like "What do you two dream about for your marriage? What are you really excited about doing together?" I was thinking of that this week. I can't remember a single couple that didn't have a really quick, really good answer to that question. They ventured into this thing with this huge dream. They would have an answer "We can just wake up together every day; that's going to be fantastic. We can't wait to build a home and have a family and backpack through Europe and he's going to get his Masters and that's just the first three months. It's just going to be great."

They have this huge dream for their marriage. The thing is that they are dreaming together and they are dreaming big and it's exciting and it's pulling them together. The dreams are big enough for them to actually marry over it.

But then if you ask those same sets of questions... I do this frequently with people, people who have been married seven years or longer. I'll ask "What are you two dreaming about for your marriage? Tell me what are you two so excited about that's going to happen in your marriage this year or next year? What are you two working together and pursuing together and dreaming together? What is it?" I just get a lot of blank stares and no answers and lots of ums. Most people at that point, not all, but for most people at that point, they've just let their dreams shrink and shrink and shrink to the kids to where they are not even dreaming together anymore.

Here's the danger. When you stop dreaming, when the dream is dead, when you are not dreaming together, the adventure is exchanged for routine, and boredom sets in, and it's just an absolute slow death. For most couples, they have no idea how they got to that point. Sure, for some, there is some traumatic point that they can point to. "When you did that thing, everything fell apart and it's never been the same." Yes, for some couples, that's the case, but for many... and I'm going to say for most it's actually been this slow, gradual thing like life and kids and disappointment and nesting and settling and the thing getting smaller and smaller and smaller. Then over time you're just like "I obviously can't even have this dream with this person I'm living with anymore, so I'm just going to start dreaming over here." And she's going over here to the neighbor down the road and all of the sudden you are just drifting further and further apart until the dream is just absolutely gone and there's nothing left.

Part of what we want to do with TwoIgnite is we want couples... we are going to breath

new life into couples so that we get you to actually turn from dreaming alone, and start dreaming together God's dream for your marriage. Start believing together God's dream for your marriage. Start dreaming big, but not dreaming alone. Dreaming together is an unbelievably powerful thing. I know this from personal experience in our marriage. Dreaming apart is a terribly destructive thing. If he's got a dream he is pursuing and she's got a dream she's pursuing, those two drift further apart, but when they begin to dream together as husband and wife, it does the reverse and it pulls you together in this powerful thing.

It's just been true in our marriage for 25 years. We have refused to let adventure be trumped by boredom and routine. We just refuse to do it. So wherever we have lived or whatever, we have said we are just going to have a blast here. So when we lived in Maryland, we wanted to get a big boat and put our kids on it and sail all around, but we couldn't afford it. So we went to the boat graveyard where rich people brought boats that they couldn't maintain. We saw one that was lying on its side. We called that guy and said we'll give you \$2,000.00 for this huge boat. It took us a couple of months to actually fix it all up. We were waxing it down and painting it and she redid all the seat covers. Then we would go sailing all around the Chesapeake and spend weekends on it. It was just a blast.

Wherever we went, we would do this. When we were in Iowa, we were like "Good Lord, what are we going to do here?" But we made the best of it. We made our own triathlons. We would bike for about five miles and then we would come back. We had the kayaks on the car and we would go kayaking for a couple of miles and then we would come back and go to the gym. We refused to not have an adventurous marriage. We refused to stop dreaming. We refused to let routine settle in.

Now one of the things that we do is take walks around our community at night and we just start talking about what we are dreaming about for our marriage. I have kind of put it to my wife like this: "What would you love to be true in our marriage this year if you could name five things that would just be awesome, that you would just love to pursue together." So we start walking and she's talking about these five things. Then she says "Why don't you give me your five?" Then I start dreaming of five things. Then we recognize that there are three things on your list that are also on my list. Let's start dreaming together about those things. Let's get really passionate about those things and go after those things together this year and wouldn't that be a blast. We never sit around and go well I don't have anything to talk about. No, it's "How are we doing on that dream?" "It's really good, let me fill you in." We are always doing this thing and it's just fantastic. It's not work.

It's not like "Work on you marriage!" And then somebody gives you a list of ten things that they think you ought to do. This is like you and your spouse going "Hey, let's start dreaming together. What would be great for us? And then let's start pursuing it and it's a blast and you couldn't stop me from doing this." Dreaming together and dreaming big for your marriage is an incredibly powerful, unifying force that builds a one flesh kind of love in your marriage. God wants us to dream big.

I know that when I say that, there are some of you sitting here going “That sounds really good, Pastor Mark, for you and your little pastor marriage and your little la la land kind of thing.” I get it, I wasn’t a pastor forever. But some of you think that’s going to be too difficult for you because you don’t have much left in the tank. “We’re just kind of spent. Even the idea of dreaming big for our marriage doesn’t even sound possible. Why even bother?”

I just want to remind you that we serve a God who rose from the dead and he can breathe new life into dead things. He is in the business of bringing dead things to life. If your thing is like “Listen, we just have so little left in the tank that I don’t think that we could do this; we’re just running on fumes at this point. We’ve just kind of rationed out enough fumes that we think we can make through the rest of our lives and just kind of hold on until we die or Jesus returns; dreaming big just sounds impossible.” If you are feeling that, I want to introduce you to Jesus. Let’s remember how Jesus operates.

Would you please turn your Bible again to Matthew 14:13? It’s a story that you are all very familiar with, but I want to put a marriage application on that. ***When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick. As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food."***

Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."

"We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered.

"Bring them here to me," he said.

And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Jesus takes this tiny portion; five loaves of bread and two fish, and he feeds 5,000 people. The thing that we have to recognize is when our Lord has a dream, when our Lord is up to something, when our Lord wants to accomplish something, the little amount of resource that you have really isn’t the most important factor in the equation. He can take the fumes that you are running on and turn it into a full tank. He can take that little bit of hope that you are holding onto for your marriage and he can multiply it and make amazingly more than you ever dreamt possible.

When Jesus said to go and feed these people, the disciples thought he was asking them to do something that was impossible. Jesus says go and feed these 5,000; they don’t need to go away. We have enough here. Feed the 5,000. The disciples look at him like... “I don’t

know, maybe the sun got to him preaching all day on the mountainside.” “What you are asking us to do makes not sense, it’s not even possible so can we just call Chick-fil-A and place an order or something because this is ridiculous. Jesus, it’s not even close. Five loaves, two fish, 5,000 people... not even close.”

I love how Jesus responds. He doesn’t say, “Okay, just keep what you’ve got and sit back and watch what I do.” Jesus says this: “Bring it to me. Bring me those five loaves and two fish. Bring me what you’ve got. Bring me that tiny portion that you have, that you think nothing can be made of it, you bring it to me and when you bring it to me, you just do your job; just work what you have and you bring me that little bit and then you watch what I can do with it.” He multiplies it into something that seemed impossible.

There are people here today and you’re sitting here in this relationship and you’re just thinking “I don’t even think this is possible because we are spent. We have fumes left in the tank. We are just barely holding on. This whole dream big thing, I don’t think it’s for us.” I think Jesus would just say to you “Bring me what you’ve got. Bring me that little bit of hope that you still have. Bring me that little bit of love that you still have for your husband or your wife. Bring me those fumes that you have in the tank and watch what I can do with it. I can multiply it and I can make it something more beautiful than you ever imagined, but you have to work what you have.”

You can’t just go well, okay, God, you’re just going to have to fix this. No, he says bring it. You have to work what you have. Take that little bit of hope and start working it. Maybe for you, that’s going to mean... maybe, husband, you think “Okay this has been really bad but I want to turn this thing around so I’m going to plan a romantic dinner for my wife. We are going to sit down and I’m going to just tell her I know I haven’t been the husband that I should be to you and I know things are a wreck, but I want to start dreaming again of what could be in our marriage. And I have to tell you I have no idea how we are going to get there and I have no plan at all. I’m not even sure if it’s possible. I just know this: I serve the Lord who can little and multiply it and make much.” Dream big, because we have a savior who can take what’s little and turn it into something beautiful.

There are some of you that are going “Okay, okay, but you’re talking to the person that at least still has some fumes. We don’t even have fumes anymore; we’re just dead. The only reason we are still in this thing is because the kids are home. When the kids are gone, I already have plan B set. This thing is dead, so dream big for this marriage? How do you do that with a dead thing?”

As you are thinking that, let me just remind you of how our Jesus operates. See Jesus had this friend called Lazarus. His friend Lazarus died. Jesus was actually out of town when he died. Jesus got word that his friend Lazarus had died... they didn’t have email back then so it was kind of late by the time he got the word and then he actually took a little bit longer. By the time he got to the town where Lazarus was, it was four days after he died; four days of the body decomposing. They had actually already done the whole burial... the wrapping and putting him into the tomb and rolling the stone over.

Jesus shows up in the town four days later, walks over to the tomb and says, “Roll back the stone.” Martha, who is Lazarus’ sister, says, “No, no, Jesus, I don’t think you understand. He’s been dead for four days. He’s going to stink.” I like how the King James puts it. It says Martha says he stinketh. He’s that dead; he stinketh. Jesus says, “Yea, yea, yea, roll back the stone.” And with three words, “Lazarus come out” that dead man rose and walked out of that tomb. That’s our Jesus. Our Jesus is in the business of breathing life into dead people, of bringing dead things back to life.

Some of you are sitting here thinking your marriage is so dead it stinketh. How is it possible? Here’s how it’s possible: Jesus conquered the dead. He has a huge dream for your marriage. When God is up to something and he has a huge dream, just bring what you’ve got and he can bring life in and make dead things rise. So no matter what condition your marriage is in today, I want to encourage you to not give up and to begin to dream big again of what could be. You have a risen savior who has conquered the grave and he breaths new life into dead things and he can breathe new life into your marriage and make it something that you absolutely never even dreamt possible. That’s our Jesus.

With TwoIgnite, we are going to encourage you to start dreaming together as husband and wife and actually the first week of every month, we are going to take one of these 12 Igniters, 12 areas of marriage, and we are going to talk about it. We are going to invite you, as husband and wife, to begin to dream big in that area of your marriage. For the first one, Dr. Smalley is going to be here on August 29th and 30th and he’s going to be talking about TwoPlay. Spill play and joy back into your marriage. We are going to invite you, as husband and wife, to begin to dream big. What would it look like if you started working on this in your marriage? What would it look like for you to start playing together again? Not just the kids playing, but you two playing and enjoying each other again.

Then in October... I’m totally psyched about this one. They had us slotted for number seven so I moved it up to number two. TwoSweat is about physical condition. It’s about actually taking care of your body. The Bible says a lot about being beautiful for your spouse and trying your best to look beautiful and what that would look like for you and your spouse to try to begin to just be attractive to one another again and try to get healthy again. In October, as a congregation, we are going to try to lose 2,500 pounds. We can do this. Just start dreaming big.

Then we are going to start dreaming big with talking about TwoDrink and your sex life and what would it look like as husband and wife for you two to have this love where you just ravish one another for a lifetime, just being intoxicated with one another. Can you dream of what that would be like for your marriage? Then your finances and then fighting without chaos and just being able to dream... Month by month we are going to be looking at these things and encouraging you to dream big again.

I think for tonight, the thing that I would encourage you to do is this dream. Dream big that it is actually possible. Just kind of step back, as husband and wife, and wherever you are at in your relationship... I know that some of you think you are a ten and don’t have anything

to work on in your marriage. But maybe you are an eight or nine and you think it's great. But there is even more out there. I 'm going to begin to dream that God can make this thing better. Or maybe you are at a five and your like, "To be honest with you, I don't know which way my marriage is going to go and honestly, I could be one of those statistics." Just begin to dream big that God can begin to heal your marriage and move you towards this healthy, vibrant, green, lush marriage.

Some of you are at a three, two, one and you are just really losing hope. Just begin to dream that God can take the little that's left and make something beautiful out of your marriage, not just marriages in general, but in your marriage. I'm going to just invite you to dream big. Beginning tonight, just dream big for your marriage.

Would you guys just pray with me? I'm going to give you some time to actually begin to dream big for your marriage even before you leave this room. Would you just pray with me?

Father,

We thank you, Lord, that there is hope in all things, at all times, because we have a risen savior in Jesus. God, for people who are looking around at their marriage and just thinking there is so little left, God, I pray that you would help them to not just look at the little that's left, but look at the mighty savior that has a huge dream for their marriage and just realize in him brand new things are possible.

Lord, I pray that tonight there would be some great conversations going on in bedrooms all around the Gilbert area. Wouldn't it be great if...? What if God did...? Do you think maybe God could...? Husbands and wives dreaming big all over this place, Lord. Take those dreams, God, and multiply them and produce things that are beautiful.

Father, I just want to give time for husbands and wives to begin to dream even right now of what it could be like.

Thank you, God, that you have a huge dream for our marriages. You do. May we embrace your dream for marriage.

In Jesus name we pray...

Amen

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