

SHATTER THE LIMITS

6

**Catalysts
to Think
Bigger**

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Introduction

God always seems to expand our thinking before He uses us.

We all have old traditions and routines that threaten to stop us from doing what God has for us.

When I think about it, one major way Holy Spirit works with me is by challenging me to think bigger. In fact, **God always seems to expand our thinking before He uses us.**

When Moses complained and said, “I’ve never been good with words... I stutter and stammer,” and “Oh, Master, please! Send somebody else,” God told Moses that He would put the necessary words in his mouth (Exodus 4:10–13, MSG). He also equipped Moses with the ability to perform signs and wonders that would cause everyone to believe. Not only that, but He promised that the Israelites would plunder the Egyptians of their wealth when they left! God needed Moses to think big.

What about Joshua? God kept telling him over and over to be strong and take courage (Deuteronomy 31). God encouraged Joshua to change his thinking because Joshua’s thinking was limiting his life.

And then there was Gideon. When the angel called him a “mighty man of valor” (Judges 6:12, NKJV), Gideon basically said, “Who? Me? I am the lowest man in my family and my family is the lowest in the land” (my paraphrase of verse 15). But God saw Gideon as a mighty man of valour and He needed Gideon to start seeing himself that way as well.

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.

Ephesians 3:20 (NLT)

God is trying to expand your thinking too, so you can become the unstoppable powerhouse you were created to be.

In what areas of your life do you need to think bigger?

Go Further Than You've Ever Gone

Imagine what would happen in your life if you started thinking differently!

I've said it before but I'll say it again—if you want to go places you've never gone, you have to do things you've never done. And to do things you've never done, you'll need to **think things you've never thought**.

All throughout the Bible we find examples of people who needed to learn to think differently before they could be used by God. Esther is a great example. One new thought started a chain of events that changed the fate of the Jewish people.

"Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Esther 4:14 (NKJV)

Esther was a Jewish girl who had become one of the king's concubines in Persia. After gaining favour with the king, she became his queen. One day, when the fate of the Jewish people hung in the balance, someone gave her a new thought—maybe she didn't inherit her incredible looks just so she could live comfortably as queen. Maybe she was created for such a time as this—to save her nation.

Abraham had to think differently too. God said, "I'll give you a son," when Abraham was 100 and his wife Sarah was 90 years old (Genesis 17:17). Abraham laughed out loud at the thought of it, but then he started to expand his thinking. And as he began to believe, he did something about it! Abraham became motivated and, as I imagine it, he probably started chasing Sarah around the tent! **This new thought caused him to take new actions.**

When you start to think differently, it's not long before you begin to do something about it. Your actions move you toward new places you've never been.

Imagine what would happen in *your* life if you started thinking differently!

Take Chances and Dream Big!

God wants us to live lives filled with joy, purpose and significance!

The world is full of small thinkers.

My Australian friends call this tendency the “tall poppy syndrome,” which is slang for the tendency to criticize highly successful people and cut them down to size. Others call it the “crab bucket mentality.” As one crab tries to crawl up the side of the bucket, the others claw him right back down.

These small thinkers will tell you to be realistic. If you have a dream, they’ll poke holes in it or they’ll say, “Oh, I tried that and it doesn’t work.” They’ll try to discourage you because if you excel, they feel bad about themselves.

If you’re succeeding in business, **small thinkers will think you’ve compromised.** If you’re financially thriving, they’ll think you cut corners to get where you are—instead of realizing the truth that you relied on God and His wisdom to get where you are. If your church is growing, they’ll assume that it must not be teaching the truth.

The reality is that small thinkers haven’t yet wrapped their heads around how big God thinks. **God wants us to live lives filled with joy, purpose and significance!**

You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.

Psalm 139:16 (NLT)

Psalm 139 talks about how every page of your life is a page in God’s book, and God does not write boring books. You may have dull days, especially when you’re hesitating to live to the fullest, **but a dull, safe, morally-correct-but-not-doing-anything-for-anyone life wasn’t God’s design.**

Jesus said that He came so that you and I could get a life (my paraphrase of John 10:10). Isn’t that exciting?

Use wisdom, but always remember to take calculated risks, think differently and dream big!

Stop Living in Your Own Limitations

You'll need to change your perception of normal if you want things to improve.

We often make excuses for why we can't change or why things aren't happening for us. But, to a great degree, **we live within the limitations we've set for ourselves.**

We all have what I call an “internal thermostat”—a set point that represents what is normal to us. As an example, you have a level of closeness that you feel is normal in each of your relationships. If things start to feel distant, you'll work to bring that close feeling back to normal, likely without even thinking about it—just as a heating system kicks in when the temperature drops below the thermostat setting.

This system works well if your normal is set at a good place, but if poor communication or conflict is normal in your relationships, you'll need to **change your perception of normal** if you want things to improve.

Another way of saying this is you need to put on your new self—who the Word says you are in Christ. As you realize who you are and what you're entitled to, it's as if you're reaching over to the thermostat of your mind to turn it to the right setting. **This right setting causes you to begin to consistently create that new normal.**

Throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.

Ephesians 4:22-24 (NLT)

You can change your normal setting so you can **stop living in the limitations you've set for yourself.** Whether you want a better marriage, better finances or to get in better shape, your life will change as you adjust your normal!

You're Entitled to an Overflowing Life

He's offering you a fire-hose type of overflow that never ends!

Jesus came to give us an overflowing kind of life.

Every area of our lives can be abundant. We can have wonderful marriages, health, happiness, financial freedom, energy and joy. Every area of our lives can be so full that it spills over.

When something overflows, the overflow is typically unusable. For example, if someone pours you a glass of water and they overfill it, that overflow is wasted. But the kind of overflow Jesus was talking about is different. **When your life overflows with God's blessings, it's never wasted.** The overflow spills onto everyone around you. It may be unusable by you because you have all you need, but it's a blessing to everyone else. That's what it's like to be in overflowing mode.

God wants you living in an overflow type of situation. He's not saying, "Be happy with the few drops you have left in your cup!" **He's offering you a fire-hose type of overflow that never ends!**

"The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)."

John 10:10 (AMP)

How much overflow can you have in joy, peace, prosperity, health, laughter or love? Who knows? Overflow is pretty hard to measure. It just keeps going and going, impacting everyone around you, and it's something you can continually grow in throughout your lifetime. None of us have arrived—we're all on the journey of walking out everything we're entitled to in Christ.

The main thing to remember is **that Jesus came to give you an overflowing life.** Decide that you will keep growing in your understanding of all that you have and all you are in Christ... and you'll live more and more in His overflow.

Speak Your Blessing

What you repeatedly say about yourself influences you.

Do you ever talk yourself out of being blessed? **What you repeatedly say about yourself influences you.** If you say, "I'm just not good with people," you'll stop expecting to develop rewarding relationships. If there's distance in your marriage and you're always saying, "We're just too different," you'll stop working at closeness.

Negative words such as, "I'm just not smart enough," or "I'll never get ahead," will cause you to talk yourself out of the blessings Jesus died to gain for you. Meanwhile, it's not your lack of ability or opportunity that is limiting you from experiencing what God has promised you. God didn't say it was your brain, your looks or anything else in you that would qualify you to be blessed. **God has commanded His blessings upon you.** They come from Him.

Now, if you're not experiencing God's best in an area of your life, don't feel condemned about it. We're all on a journey in this life. All I'm saying is that **we all need to expect to have God's blessings and promises in our lives to experience them.**

The Lord will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

Deuteronomy 28:8 (NKJV)

Resist the temptation to look for reasons why you don't yet have what God has promised you. It's not because of where you live, the language you speak or the colour of your skin. The problems you have and the people that surround you don't determine what you can have, and neither do past mistakes or wrongs you've suffered.

Everything is possible with God... so speak positively. Expect great things!

Refuse to Settle

Put the effort in and it will pay off.

Complacency is dangerous.

Merriam-Webster defines it as, “self-satisfaction especially when accompanied by unawareness of actual dangers or deficiencies.” Often people confuse complacency with peace, but the two are very different. Complacency involves apathy. It turns a blind eye to issues that need attention. On the other hand, you can be at peace while you are planning, solving problems and working at creating a better future.

God doesn't want us to be complacent. This is clear when you read Jesus' parable of the talents. In the story, the master put three men in charge of his money while he was away. The first two men doubled the master's money and were rewarded, but the last man hid what little he had been given. When the master returned, he called this complacent man wicked.

God isn't socialistic. He didn't reward complacency by taking money from the man who had doubled his portion to give to the others to make things fair. In fact, he took what little the complacent man had and gave it to the man who had the most.

“The master was full of praise. ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’”

Matthew 25:21 (NLT)

God honours our initiative. He expects you to make the best of where you are and what you've been given. But remember... **He empowers you to grow and get better!**

You are never alone! God blesses the work of your hands (Deuteronomy 2:7), gives you the power to make wealth (Deuteronomy 8:18), and promises to never leave you (Hebrews 13:5–6).

Put the effort in and it will pay off!

Conclusion

God wants us to enjoy what He's given us!

If God would give His Son's life just for you, why would anything else be a problem?

I'm sure you'd give up every single possession you owned and even your own freedom before you'd give up your child. Your Father God was willing to give His Son to repay your debts. **There is no good thing He would withhold from you!**

Sometimes people have the religious idea that God has a problem with Christians doing well. Some think that money is evil and if you have it, you automatically start becoming more selfish until you stop serving Jesus altogether.

If that were true, wouldn't the devil use it to his advantage? You'd find the devil orchestrating great wealth in Christians' lives just to get them off track, but that's not what we find in reality. All he does is steal, kill and destroy (John 10:10).

The Bible does hold warnings for people who are well off, but never tells people to stop being rich. For example, 1 Timothy 6:17-18 encourages us not to become haughty or put our trust in money. It challenges us to be generous and willing to share, but it also says that **God wants us to enjoy what He's given us!**

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Romans 8:31-32 (NKJV)

God gave us His Son; He doesn't have a problem giving us things.

He hasn't put a cap on the level you're allowed to reach. He wants you abundantly happy, abundantly healthy and abundantly prosperous in every area of life.

Let today be the day you start thinking bigger. Change may not come easy in some areas of your life, but through His grace, all things are possible!