



MIKE SLAUGHTER

DARE TO DREAM

CREATING A
GOD-SIZED
MISSION STATEMENT
FOR YOUR LIFE

PASTOR PROGRAM GUIDE

Dare to Dream

Creating a God-sized Mission Statement for Your Life

Pastor Program Guide

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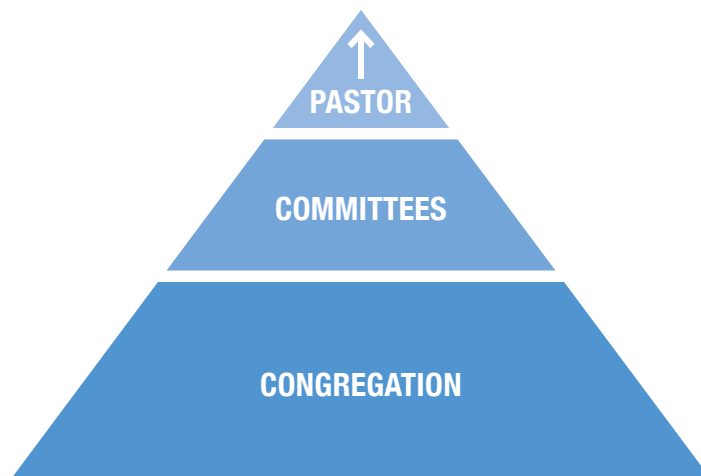
INTRODUCTION

From Mike Slaughter
Pastor, Ginghamburg Church

My journey at Ginghamburg Church started more than thirty-five years ago when I crossed its doorstep for the first time at age twenty-seven. Ginghamburg was classified then as a rural church, located three miles south of the village of Tipp City, Ohio, and sixteen miles north of Dayton, a small city with an approximate population of 140,000.

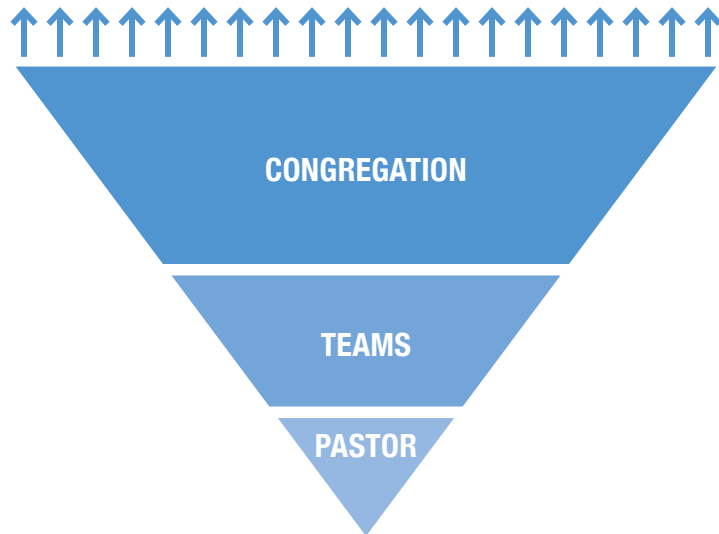
When I received the call from my United Methodist district superintendent letting me know that the bishop planned to appoint me to Ginghamburg, I was serving as a youth pastor in a moderately affluent “country club” church in Cincinnati. The church had a good-sized budget, and I as its youth pastor had even bigger dreams. God had been working in and through the youth ministry that I led to grow a diverse, deeply disciplined group of students who were ready to change the world for Jesus. Needless to say, I was ill-prepared for an appointment to a small, rural, family-controlled church that was perfectly content to remain just that. I realized from the beginning that the biggest key to change would be transforming the congregation’s mindset from a consumer mentality to one that was missional.

Perhaps you are the pastor to a church like this—one that resembles what I call the conventional church model, as depicted by the triangle below. Ginghamburg in 1979 certainly did.



In this conventional church model, the real power and authority is typically held by the middle layer—the committees. At Ginghamburg, a church of ninety attendees when I arrived that shrank to fewer than sixty in my first six months, about twenty people staffed those committees, with the primary function of controlling and approving the ministry that I as the pastor was then supposed to go out and do. Clearly, one man or woman being the hands and feet of Jesus under the strict jurisdiction of a committee is not going to be effective. The pastor eventually becomes the cork in the bottle, limiting ministry and mission to the narrowest of confines. Given how pervasive the conventional church model is, it’s no wonder we hear so much about pastor burnout. Over time, the pastor basically becomes the caregiver to a stagnant and declining congregation, and the mission of discipleship is never fulfilled. In a few years, the pastor moves on to another conventional church, and both the previous church and the new church continue in the downward spiral of stagnation that eventually leads to death.

My job at Ginghamburg, and your job at your church, is to transform from the conventional church model to one that more closely resembles the triangle depicted below, which I call the unlimited-exponential model. When the church structure matches this model, the pastor is not the doer of the ministry. He or she becomes the vision crier, the equipper, and the behind-kicker, working to build and equip the teams who will then work through the entire congregation to deploy ministry and mission throughout the community and world. In this model, the pastor adds kerosene to the burning bushes of those around him or her and then watches them burn.



As Ginghamburg fully moved into and embraced the unlimited-exponential church model, the servants of Ginghamburg Church were empowered to impact hundreds of thousands of lives through a vast variety of ministries and mission initiatives that were dreamed, staffed, and deployed by the priesthood of all believers—not just the pastor. This is what the *Dare to Dream* program is all about: helping your people identify their unique, God-given purposes and develop life mission statements—tools that will energize and deploy them into their communities and around the world for Christ's mission.

This guide will explain the tool kit at your disposal as you and your church **Dare to Dream.**



CHAPTER 1

Defining Your Goals

As I travel and speak to church leaders, I often point out that in my first year at Ginghamburg I had only three primary goals. I have always been a firm believer in the KISS principle—Keep It Simple, Saints. Fewer than three goals may mean I am not dreaming enough. But more often, pastors make the mistake of trying to accomplish too many goals within a year.

The first goal when I arrived at Ginghamburg was to preach about what the church was supposed to be. My first message series was centered on the book of Acts, the perfect biblical text for portraying the nature and character of the church's mission. I reminded listeners that it was named the book of "acts," versus book of "beliefs," for a reason. Acts also illustrated how ministry in the dynamic early days of the church was supernaturally accomplished through the diversity of the gifts found in the Holy Spirit. The early church movers and shakers were not professionally credentialed priests or pastors but ordinary laypersons gifted by the Spirit to accomplish extraordinary works. We read in the opening verses of Acts 8 that the apostles—the ministry professionals, so to speak—stayed in Jerusalem while other believers—the laity with day jobs to support their families—scattered everywhere, spreading and "preaching the good news along the way" (Acts 8:4).

My second goal for that first year at Ginghamburg was to identify and disciple the right people who would help lead the mission forward. I knew that it was not going to be the "godmothers and godfathers," the resisters to change who staffed long-standing committees, intent on controlling everything they thought the pastor was supposed to be doing. As I preached, I scanned faces looking for those who eagerly opened their Bibles and whose hearts appeared to be strangely warmed as they listened. I could sense who was actually connecting with the word and the mission before us. My wife, Carolyn, and I then privately approached these potential "Joshuas and Deborahs" who would fuel and lead a missional movement, inviting them to our home for a "Dare to Dream" group that we were putting together.

This first Dare to Dream group read *The Cost of Discipleship* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer and began to examine their spiritual gifts, studying passages such as Ephesians 4:11-13: "He gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. His purpose was to equip God's people for the work of serving and building up the body of Christ until we all reach the unity of faith and knowledge of God's Son." These new leaders not only identified their gifts but also named their areas of passion, God's specific call upon their lives to the mission. Mary soon started our clothing ministry. Frank felt led to begin the food pantry. Another chose to coordinate a new hospitality ministry that would follow up with guests. Care ministry and after-school tutoring programs all had their genesis out of this *Dare to Dream* group.

My third goal for the first year was to replace the committees with team members from the new group who were ready to do whatever it took to grow a missional movement. As a United Methodist church, our *Book of Discipline* specified that representatives on key committees had to take a break from those positions after three years of service. I made sure that that aspect of the *Discipline* was enforced for the first time in years, removing committee members who in some cases had



CHAPTER 1

Defining Your Goals



served for decades and replacing them with the *Dare to Dream* disciples whom Carolyn and I had been mentoring. We simplified our organizational structure, moving from the conventional model to the unlimited-exponential model, eliminating committees designed to control and instead building teams that would dream, develop, and deploy. These steps were based on our belief that people are in pursuit of meaning in their lives, not more meetings. A simpler structure put feet on the ground, not behinds in chairs.

If your church's governance does not require three-year term limits, I would recommend you take that concept to your board as an order of business. Limited tenures provide an excellent opportunity for pouring new wine into new wineskins.

Once you have modeled what the church is called to be, helped people through the *Dare to Dream* process of naming their life mission statements, and implemented a simplified team structure fueled by the priesthood of all believers, you are ready to set the next three missional goals for your church. What needs to happen next to unleash people for the mission, sending them out into their neighborhoods, cities, or the larger world as the hands, feet, and voice of Jesus?

Is there a specific place of calling in the world where your church needs to concentrate its efforts? Our urban Fort McKinley Campus pastor identified the fifteen blocks behind the church's backyard as our target area for making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Our main Tipp City Campus in 2004 implemented the Sudan Project and since has invested nearly \$7 million into sustainable humanitarian projects. Perhaps your church is filled with educators, and your goal might be to develop a partnership with a local public school, become a host site for GED programs, or implement job training. Your city or community might have an influx of immigrants, and your call may be to provide them with a spiritual home where they are welcomed and loved. The people you have discipled and their areas of passion, as well as your own, are all part of this discernment.

The *Dare to Dream* program is not a one-time initiative. As new disciples are made within the life of the church, they also need to develop their life mission statements. The last time we preached a *Dare to Dream* series at Ginghamburg, new life purposes were identified. For example, one team of people within the church identified the elimination of human trafficking as a call upon their lives. They are now connecting with other groups in the Dayton area that are focused on that common cause, and the Leadership Board will consider adding funding toward that effort as part of this year's Christmas Miracle Offering.

You and your church will experience the miracle that God has planned for you when you listen to what Jesus is speaking into your lives and then act upon it. Use this *Dare to Dream* program to help people identify their gifts, find their burning bushes, write their life mission statements, and start living out the mission of Jesus. And, keep on dreaming . . .



CHAPTER 2

Inviting the Congregation to Dream

In the introduction, Mike Slaughter describes the pastor as the “vision crier” who works to build and equip the teams who then work through the entire congregation to deploy ministry and mission throughout the community and world. He says, “In this model, the pastor adds kerosene to the burning bushes of those around him or her and then watches them burn.”

To invite the whole church family into a deep exploration of their God-sized mission statement, you will need to start the thought process before the study and the sermon series begin and keep the reflection and conversation going through each week.

Depending on the way your congregation communicates, you might use:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- A mailed or e-mailed newsletter
- Posters
- Announcements in small groups or Sunday school classes
- The church sign
- Letters or postcards

There are resources to help in your communication plan including:

[*The Dare to Dream Preview Book*](#): This 4" x 6" minibook introduces the major themes found in *Dare to Dream*. The book can serve as an invitation to the sermon series and can provide basic information for people who attend worship but may not be involved in any small group or Sunday school class.


AbingdonPress.com/DaretoDream: The Abingdon Press site has a page dedicated to *Dare to Dream*. Here, you will find a promotional video and a set of art images that can be used in a number of ways including posts on Facebook. You'll also find a high-resolution copy of the book cover for your own posters or postcards.

Phrases for Posts and Tweets: In each worship outline, there are suggestions for quotes or excerpts to use for social media or for the newsletter. These are collected in a list at the end of this section.



CHAPTER 2

Inviting the Congregation to Dream



Starting a Schedule

Whether your schedule is simple or complex, having a plan will help cover the details and get more people involved. Think about four basic phases of schedule:

1. **Planning Time:** Working with a team to read the book, pray, and set goals together.
2. **Communication Time:** Creating interest and involvement throughout the congregation.
3. **Sermon and Study Time:** The six weeks of worship, sermon, study, and conversation.
4. **Follow-Up and Follow-Through:** Plan from the beginning some ways you will encourage the energy and excitement of the series for individuals, groups, and the whole church family. Will you have a celebration event after the series where members share their mission statements? How will the church help and encourage people over the next six months?

Here is a mock schedule to get your team started:

WHEN	WHAT
Six weeks before the series begins	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read <i>Dare to Dream</i> with your leadership team.• Identify what you hope to accomplish and how you will respond to the energy and ideas in the church family at the end of the series.
Five weeks before . . .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a simple communication plan for the series. What are your best communication tools?• Involve your communication team or the person who works with newsletters and e-mails.
Four weeks before . . .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Announce the <i>Dare to Dream</i> series.• Work with small group leaders and Sunday school classes to plan their involvement. Will those who meet during the week study the content before the Sunday of preaching or the week following?• Meet with the children and youth leaders to review the resources especially for these age groups. How will they be involved? Are there special opportunities in worship to include younger people?
Three weeks before . . .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you are using the preview book, share copies with the congregation now.• Invite the whole congregation to the series via e-mail or postcard. Create a shareable invitation for members to use to invite friends.
Two weeks before . . .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Begin to post quotes and excerpts in your newsletter and on social media.• Challenge the congregation to begin thinking about their mission statement.
One week before . . .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce the series from the pulpit. Make sure that all groups have their books and materials. Pray together for the upcoming experience.



CHAPTER 2

Inviting the Congregation to Dream

Posts, Quotes, and Tweets for Newsletters and Social Media

Share these excerpts and quotes freely. You'll also see these in each week's worship outline. Also visit www.abingdonpress.com/DareToDream for art to share.

Leading Up to the *Dare to Dream* Series

- How many times have you said “Someday I’m going to . . .”? Make it today.
- Wake up to the God-dream inside you.
- You are part of God’s great plan for the world.
- How is God trying to get your attention?
- Your life mission is your legacy—it will live beyond your lifetime.

Week One: Dreaming the Dream

Thursday or Friday before the service:

- What do you want to be when you grow up?
- Life is not about chasing the money; it’s about chasing the mission. And when you chase the mission, God will go with you.
- If a purpose is from God, it will honor God, bless other people, and bring joy to you.

Starting Monday after the service:

- Think of the person you most admire. What is his or her greatest quality?
- How would your life be different if you lived into that quality?

Week Two: Discovering Your Birthright

Thursday or Friday before the service:

- Don’t let the scope of your dreams be limited by the ceiling of your life pictures!
- When you were created, God knew the plan for your life. God won’t back out of it. God won’t quit.

Starting Monday after the service:

- Where do you see the greatest need around you in your neighborhood, your community, or your world?
- How can you meet that need?
- What gifts do you bring to further that mission?
- If a dream is from God, it will honor God, bless other people, and bring you joy.

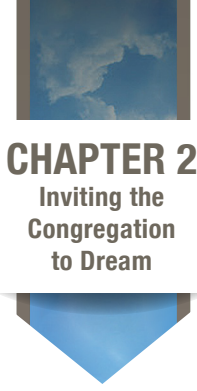
Week Three: Your Burning Bush

Thursday or Friday before the service:

- A true God-purpose will not burn you out or burn you up.
- God does not invest in our agenda; God calls us to invest in God’s plan.

Starting Monday after the service:

- What struggles in your life have you had to overcome? How have those struggles defined you?
- God can use all things to strengthen God’s Kingdom. How can you share the lessons learned from your struggles?
- How have those lessons helped you in the past, and how might God use them to shape your future?



CHAPTER 2

Inviting the
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Week Four: Lose Your Big Buts

Thursday or Friday before the service:

- No dream worth pursuing will come easily.
- If you are certain you are qualified, then your mission is not big enough.
- Miracles are often wrapped in opposition.

Starting Monday after the service:

- What excuses prohibit you from living God's dream for you?
- Excuses aren't always something we come up with on our own. Some come from others. From what self-limiting beliefs do you need to break free?
- Becoming clear about your life mission statement means chopping away at excuses to follow the purpose God has for you. Take some time and write a prayer asking God to remove your excuses. List your excuses in the prayer.

Week Five: What's in Your Hand?

Thursday or Friday before the service:

- A God-dream is an impossible dream because you can't do it; God does it through you.
- We are born for and wired for a God-purpose in the world.
- God's question to you is: "What is in your hand?" Everything you need has already been given to you.
- Thomas Edison: "Vision without implementation is hallucination."

Starting Monday after the service:

- What are the gifts of your head?
- What are the gifts of your hands?
- What are the passions of your heart?

Week Six: Perseverance

Thursday or Friday before the service:

- What will become of your God-dream when obstacles appear? Quit is not in the vocabulary.
- What separates those who do from those who don't?
- Robert Louis Stevenson: "Saints are sinners who kept on going."

Starting Monday after the service:

- This is not your mission; it's your part of God's mission.
- It's not just for this year or even five years; it's for your whole life.
- The mission should be challenging and may even seem impossible. That means you're on the right track.



CHAPTER 3

Planning Worship

Your weekly worship experience is where you launch the dream and encourage the church family through creating their own mission statement. Plan worship experiences that align with the week's theme from beginning to end. In Chapter 1, Mike named three clear and definite goals for his church, which you might consider using in your own *Dare to Dream* initiative. Maybe these are three goals for the next phase of your congregation's life together. Keep these goals in front of you as you plan and tailor your worship time and sermons to your stated goals, as well as the *Dare to Dream* content.

Themes and content for each of the six weeks are outlined on the following pages. At the end of the section, you'll find ideas for setting up your stage or pulpit area, provided by Kim Miller, the worship and campus design specialist at Ginghamburg Church.

Worship-Planning Outlines

Week One: Dreaming the Dream

This Week's Theme

This week, you will introduce the congregation to the idea that they already have a God-sized dream within them. Think together about the role of dreams and visions in Scripture. How can you encourage them to begin to search for the dream God has in mind for each of them?

Biblical and contemporary characters mentioned in *Dare to Dream* this week include Jacob and modern-day musician/philanthropist Bono.

Worship Moment

Find someone in your community or within the congregation who has already found a strong sense of their God-purpose and has begun to actively respond to that call. Ask them to share their story in the service.

Before the Service

Send via e-mail or post online one of the images or quotes from Week 1,

- What do you want to be when you grow up?
- Life is not about chasing the money; it's about chasing the mission. And when you chase the mission, God will go with you.
- If a purpose is from God, it will honor God, bless other people, and bring joy to you.

After the Service

Share these questions from the end of Chapter 1 with your congregation via e-mail or online. If you have an active Facebook page, invite the congregation to share their responses online.

- Think of the person you most admire. What is his or her greatest quality?
- How would your life be different if you lived into that quality?



CHAPTER 3

Planning Worship

Sermon Starter

Each year when New Year's Day rolls around, many of us set goals or resolutions for the new year. We set goals for our career and our retirement planning. Those all might be worthwhile goals, but we seriously need to ask ourselves: Am I thinking too small? Is there a greater God-dream that, if lived to the fullest, would fulfill God's plan for me, my gifts, and my part in God's redemptive plan for the world?

In *Dare to Dream* you will seek to discern God's purpose for your life, and you will create a life mission statement based on it. You might ask, "How will I recognize my God-purpose when I see it? How will I know it's from God and not from my own self-centered plans and desires?" Here's how: If the purpose is from God, it will always honor God, bless other people, and bring you joy. If it doesn't meet those three criteria, then it isn't a God-purpose, no matter how successful you are in accomplishing it.

Success isn't the key here; significance to the kingdom of God is.

Key Scriptures

"Jacob left Beer-sheba and set out for Haran. He reached a certain place and spent the night there. When the sun had set, he took one of the stones at that place and put it near his head. Then he lay down there. He dreamed and saw a raised staircase, its foundation on earth and its top touching the sky, and God's messengers were ascending and descending on it. Suddenly the LORD was standing on it and saying, 'I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac.'" (Genesis 28:10-13)

"I know the plans I have in mind for you, declares the LORD; they are plans for peace, not disaster, to give you a future filled with hope." (Jeremiah 29:11)

"God speaks in one way,
in two ways, but no one perceives it.
In the dream, a vision of the night,
when deep sleep falls upon humans,
during their slumber on a bed." (Job 33:14-15)

Outline

I. The Difference Between Goals and Dreams

- A. New Year's resolutions are not God-dreams.
- B. What's a BHAG?
- C. Your God-dream is not your day job.
- D. Wright brothers' example

II. Jacob's Dream

- A. God uses dreams to get your attention.
- B. Learning from dreams
- C. Waking visions

III. Writing Your Own Life Mission Statement

- A. The three questions
- B. How will you begin your mission statement this week?
When you chase the mission, God will go with you.

Week Two: Discovering Your Birthright

This Week's Theme

This week, we reaffirm that a true God-dream is a dream that honors God, blesses others, and brings you joy. Introduce the BHAG and help contrast the difference between career or life goals and the over-arching, huge, life purpose goal. Part of determining how to live into our BHAG is, like Jacob, to look to see what is at the top of the ladder we are climbing. When we have climbed the ladder and met the goals we can imagine now, where will we be?

In this second week, encourage the church family to continue work on their own life mission statement through the three questions (see outline page 12). For those in the church family who can't imagine what their own life mission might be, reassure them that we aren't alone—the way to discover our mission is through an intimate relationship with our Creator God.

Biblical and contemporary characters mentioned in *Dare to Dream* this week include another look at Jacob as well as at these modern figures: pastor Rick Warren, author Frank Abagnale (*Catch Me If You Can*), prison ministry leader Charles Colson, and television figure and Presbyterian minister, Mr. Rogers.

Worship Moment

On the *Dare to Dream* DVD, Mike's opening segment for Discover Your Birthright is filmed in the original Wright brothers' bicycle shop in Dayton, Ohio. In about 45 seconds, it presents the difference between a job and a life purpose. (If you don't choose to show the opening animation, Mike begins speaking at about 13 seconds in. The segment concludes with a quick fade to black at 0:55 then quickly goes into the main teaching segment.)

Before the Service

Send via e-mail or post online one of the images or quotes from Week 2.

- Don't let the scope of your dreams be limited by the ceiling of your life pictures!
- When you were created, God knew the plan for your life. God won't back out of it. God won't quit.

After the Service

Share these questions from the end of Chapter 2 with your congregation via e-mail or online. If you have an active Facebook page, invite the congregation to share their responses online.

- Where do you see the greatest need around you in your neighborhood, your community, or your world?
- How can you meet that need?
- What gifts do you bring to further that mission?

Sermon Starter

When God puts a dream inside you, it's not just for you. A God-dream will honor God and bless other people in tangible ways. It's your birthright. God has created every one of us for a particular purpose.

Our purpose is often not our "day job." As we learned with the Wright brothers, their work was bicycle repair but their life dream was manned flight. Their work changed the lives of all of us.



CHAPTER 3

Planning Worship

Last week, we thought about Jacob and his dream. In the dream he saw a staircase, or ladder, with angels going up and down. Most important, though, was what Jacob saw at the top of the ladder. It was God. When you look “up,” what’s at the top of your ladder? Your life dreams will be limited by the ceiling of your life pictures. What limitations are your life pictures placing on you?

We find our life purpose through a close, intimate, listening relationship with God through the Holy Spirit. Often God gets our attention in our brokenness, and that’s when we discover our true birthright and purpose. Examples include Frank Abagnale, who discovered his while in prison after stealing the identity of others! Charles Colson found new meaning in his life after serving time in prison and finding a closer relationship with God.

Birthright is the individual purpose that God has for you. It’s why God created you, and it’s about your mission on Planet Earth—a mission that will honor God, bless people, and bring you joy. How will you use the three questions and a relationship with your Creator to help find your own birthright?

Key Scriptures

“He gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. His purpose was to equip God’s people for the work of serving and building up the body of Christ until we all reach the unity of faith and knowledge of God’s Son. God’s goal is for us to become mature adults—to be fully grown, measured by the standard of the fullness of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:11-13)

“I know the plans I have in mind for you, declares the Lord; they are plans for peace, not disaster, to give you a future filled with hope.” (Jeremiah 29:11)

Outline

I. God has created each of us with a purpose . . . it’s probably not your day job!

- A. Examples of well-known people with a successful job but a very different and deeper life purpose or BHAG
- B. What’s at the top of your ladder?
Are you being limited by what you see now at the top?

II. Discover Your Birthright

- A. You may discover your birthright in a time of brokenness or loss.
- B. Your discovery may happen over years as the result of experiences.
- C. The only way to discover your identity and God’s purpose is through an intimate daily relationship with God. What does Scripture say about hearing the voice of the Holy Spirit?

III. Your Life Mission Statement

- A. Your mission statement can be a grounding touchstone.
- B. Ask yourself three questions:
 - 1. Where do you see the greatest need around you in your neighborhood, your community, or your world?
 - 2. How can you meet that need?
 - 3. What gifts do you bring to further that mission?

Week Three: Your Burning Bush

This Week's Theme

Know that we have each been created to be a part of God's redemptive mission in the world. Part of identifying that dream is to hear God's call to you or to "encounter a burning bush" like Moses. This week we'll explore the story of Moses and his call from God through the burning bush and think about three stages of Moses' life that may be similar to our own.

Biblical and contemporary characters mentioned in *Dare to Dream* this week include Moses, Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., and Oskar Schindler.

Worship Moment

Identify someone in your community or within the congregation who has felt a call around a very specific need in the community or world. This may be someone who leads a nonprofit or charity or an active participant in mission trips to a specific country. Did they feel the call to be an advocate for children, to feed the hungry, to work in the prison system? Help this person create a slide show or other media that presents their understanding of their purpose.

Before the Service

Send via e-mail or post online one of the images or quotes from Week 3.

- A true God-purpose will not burn you out or burn you up.
- God does not invest in our agenda; God calls us to invest in God's plan.

After the Service

Share these questions from the end of Chapter 3 with your congregation via e-mail or online. If you have an active Facebook page, invite the congregation to share their responses online.

- What struggles in your life have you had to overcome? How have those struggles defined you?
- God can use all things to strengthen God's Kingdom. How can you share the lessons learned from your struggles?
- How have those lessons helped you in the past, and how might God use them to shape your future?

Sermon Starter

Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I've Been to the Mountaintop" speech on April 3, 1968. Delivered the night before his assassination, King said, "We've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter with me now, because I've been to the mountaintop. . . . Like anybody, I would like to live a long life—longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will." He embraced the truth that a long life isn't always as meaningful as living into God's purpose for us in the days we do live.

We have each been created to be a part of God's redemptive mission in the world. Moses met his call to purpose through a burning bush, and you will too if you look for it. The ultimate hunger, thirst, and passion that all of us feel is to find the reason we were created. Even though we can't always name that hunger, and we often try to satisfy it with other things, all of us want to know our life purpose.



CHAPTER 3

Planning Worship

Key Scripture

“When the LORD saw that he was coming to look, God called to him out of the bush, ‘Moses, Moses!’

“Moses said, ‘I’m here.’

“Then the LORD said, ‘Don’t come any closer! Take off your sandals because you are standing on holy ground.’ He continued, ‘I am the God of your father, Abraham’s God, Isaac’s God, and Jacob’s God.’ Moses hid his face because he was afraid to look at God.

“Then the LORD said, ‘I’ve clearly seen my people oppressed in Egypt. I’ve heard their cry of injustice because of their slave masters. I know about their pain. I’ve come down to rescue them from the Egyptians in order to take them out of that land and bring them to a good and broad land, a land that’s full of milk and honey, a place where the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites all live. Now the Israelites’ cries of injustice have reached me. I’ve seen just how much the Egyptians have oppressed them. So get going. I’m sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.’” (Exodus 3:4-10)

Outline

I. Moses and the Burning Bush: Finding God’s Purpose for You

Moses had found success in his life, gone through times of trouble, and created a new life. Then he heard God’s call. There is something much more important than living a long life, and that is doing the will of God, however long we live.

II. Stage One: Empire Building

- A. Managing appetite
- B. Need for approval
- C. Driving ambition

III. Stage Two: Disillusionment

- A. Hearing God in your brokenness

IV. Stage Three: The Fire That Won’t Go Out

- A. True God-purpose won’t burn you up or burn you out.
- B. Turning aside from the old, changing our priorities to live out our newfound purpose

V. Your Mission Statement

- A. Being present to God and hearing God’s messengers
- B. Ask yourself three questions:
 - What struggles in your life have you had to overcome?
 - God can use all things to strengthen God’s Kingdom. How can you share the lessons learned from your struggles?
 - How have those lessons helped you in the past, and how might God use them to shape your future?



CHAPTER 3

Planning Worship



Week Four: Lose Your Big Buts

This Week's Theme

In the fourth week, we look at the fears and excuses that keep us from embracing our God-sized dream. Through the story of Moses' first fearful response to God's call, we will examine our own fears.

Biblical and contemporary characters mentioned in *Dare to Dream* this week include Moses, author Ken Blanchard (*One Minute Manager*), pastor Rick Warren, and Australian author Nick Vujicic, who was born without limbs.

Worship Moment

Recruit 4 to 8 people to help in a cardboard confession. Work with them to identify a fear they have had and how that fear was turned into success. Ask them to write the fear on one side of a cardboard sign and the success on the other. Each can come out, with music playing, and present the fear and then reveal the success to the congregation. End in prayer. (This can also be presented as a slide show.)

Before the Service

Send via e-mail or post online one of the images or quotes from Week 4:

- No dream worth pursuing will come easily.
- If you are certain you are qualified, then your mission is not big enough.
- Miracles are often wrapped in opposition.

After the Service

Share these questions from the end of Chapter 4 with your congregation via e-mail or online. If you have an active Facebook page, invite the congregation to share their responses online.

- What excuses prohibit you from living God's dream for you?
- Excuses aren't always something we come up with on our own. Some come from others. From what self-limiting beliefs do you need to break free?
- Becoming clear about your life mission statement means chopping away at excuses to follow the purpose God has for you. What are your excuses? Take some time and write a prayer asking God to remove your excuses. List your excuses in the prayer.

Sermon Starter

No dream worth living will come without obstacles. We see this week that even Moses, who led his people out of Egypt, was full of doubts and fears. There are countless stories of successful people, from Steve Jobs to the Beatles, Edison to Einstein, who dealt with significant rejection and doubt before historic success in their work.

In responding to God's call, Moses voices at least four very familiar fears, "I'm not qualified," "I'm not spiritually fit," "No one will believe me," and "I'm afraid." Have you had these fears in your heart?

To live the dream, we have to know we aren't alone; God is with us. Hear what God is telling you now. Fully possess the rights and privileges we have in Christ Jesus today and don't risk the dream with your own "big butts" or those that others try to impose on you.



CHAPTER 3

Planning Worship

Key Scripture

“But Moses said to God, ‘Who am I to go to Pharaoh and to bring the Israelites out of Egypt?’

“God said, ‘I’ll be with you. And this will show you that I’m the one who sent you. After you bring the people out of Egypt, you will come back here and worship God on this mountain.’” (Exodus 3:11-12)

Outline

I. Losing Your Excuses: Moses’ Big Four

- A. I’m not qualified
- B. I’m spiritually unfit
- C. No one will believe me
- D. I’m afraid

II. Drawing on God’s Strength: I’ll be with you.

- A. God’s power shines through our inadequacy
- B. Deny the naysayers—be careful who you listen to.

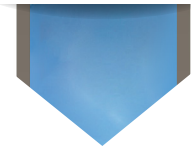
III. Your Mission Statement

- A. Excuse or obstacle? As you come closer to creating your mission statement, what obstacles must be worked through?
- B. Ask yourself three questions:
 - What tightly held excuses prohibit you from living God’s dream for you?
 - Excuses aren’t always something we come up with on our own. What self-limiting beliefs have been given to us by others?
 - What are your excuses? Write a prayer asking God to remove your excuses. List your excuses in the prayer.



CHAPTER 3

Planning Worship



Week Five: What's in Your Hand?

This Week's Theme

As we prepare for week five, the theme is about resources. Is our view of our own resources for the dream too limited? As God asked Moses, we'll ask each other, "What's in your hand?" What do you already have that can be put to the work ahead?

Biblical characters mentioned in *Dare to Dream* this week include Moses and Gideon.

Worship Moment

Help people think of the many natural gifts and learned skills they have "in their hands" that can be used to fulfill God's dream for them. Create a visual of the great diversity of gifts either with a slide show or animated video or by asking a group of congregants to help create a collage. For the collage, create a list of gifts of the head, heart, and hands. Have cards (large enough to be read from the pews) and markers ready. Ask each person to write a gift on their card that connects with their own life. Before the sermon, with music playing, ask each to come and add their gift onto a large display board or poster. Gifts might be as diverse as auto repair, computer skills, teaching, cooking, management, painting, medical training, and more.

Before the Service

Send via e-mail or post online one of the images or quotes from Week 5:

- A God-dream is an impossible dream because you can't do it; God does it through you.
- We are born for and wired for a God-purpose in the world.
- God's question to you is: "What is in your hand?" Everything you need has already been given to you.
- Thomas Edison: "Vision without implementation is hallucination."

After the Service

Share these questions from the end of Chapter 5 with your congregation via e-mail or online. If you have an active Facebook page, invite the congregation to share their responses online.

- What are the gifts of your head?
- What are the gifts of your hands?
- What are the passions of your heart?

Sermon Starter

When Moses encountered the burning bush, his doubt and negative view of his own abilities rushed to the forefront. God asked the question that led to all the confidence and resources Moses would ever need, "What is in your hand?"

God has a purpose for each of us, and we have been created with everything needed to fulfill that purpose. Life is short. We downsize our dreams when we only look through human eyes, seeing obstacles, personal limitations, and a perceived lack of resources. A God-dream is an impossible dream because you can't do it; God does it through you.



CHAPTER 3

Planning Worship

We've heard Moses' story but there are other heroes in the biblical story. Gideon, in Judges 6, even though he was visited by an angel who called him a warrior, didn't believe he was the man for the job. What dream are you resisting? The gifts of your intellect, the skills you have learned, and the passion in your heart are all given to you to live into your God-sized purpose. You may not have everything today, but once you answer God's call, what you need will come.

Key Scriptures

"The LORD said to him, 'What's that in your hand?'"

"Moses replied, 'A shepherd's rod.'"

"The LORD said, 'Throw it down on the ground.' So Moses threw it on the ground, and it turned into a snake. Moses jumped back from it. Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Reach out and grab the snake by the tail.' So Moses reached out and grabbed it, and it turned back into a rod in his hand. 'Do this so that they will believe that the LORD, the God of their ancestors, Abraham's God, Isaac's God, and Jacob's God has in fact appeared to you.'" (Exodus 4:2-5)

Outline

I. What's in Your Hand?

- A. Focusing on what you have
- B. Winter wheat: you already have what you need

II. The Gifts of Head, Hands, and Heart

- A. Gifts of the Head: what you know
- B. Gifts of the Hands: your skills and abilities
- C. Passions of the Heart: your deepest dreams

III. Release to Increase

- A. Release your gifts to God's use

IV. Your Mission Statement

- A. What are your three best gifts?
- B. How can these gifts be used to fulfill your God-sized purpose?



CHAPTER 3

Planning Worship

Week Six: Perseverance

This Week's Theme

In this last week, we look forward. Once you discern your life mission, there is the reality check that nothing worth doing is easy. For most people, identifying the mission may be the easy part. The hard part is dealing with the frustration that comes along the way.

Biblical and contemporary characters mentioned in *Dare to Dream* this week include Moses and Abraham, Albert Einstein, Thomas Edison, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Beethoven, Ray Charles, Stevie Wonder, and James Earl Jones.

Worship Moment

Create a slide show or other media to present well-known people—inventors, performers, writers, statesmen, musicians—who had notable failures before their success. There are a number of web sites you'll find when searching for “success stories with early failures” or similar phrases. You might try a slide series with this format presenting the success and then the failures or obstacles:

1. J. K. Rowling reached a global audience with her Harry Potter novels and movies.
2. Rowling was rejected by numerous publishing houses before finally being accepted.
3. Michael Jordan is considered to be the best basketball player of his generation.
4. Jordan didn't make the high school varsity team until his junior year.

Two of many web lists are:

<http://breakingmuscle.com/sports-psychology/failing-forward-7-stories-of-success-through-failure>

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/09/25/successful-people-obstacles_n_3964459.html

Before the Service

Send via e-mail or post online one of the images or quotes from Week 4 in the appendix (links are included).

- What will become of your God-dream when obstacles appear? Quit is not in the vocabulary.
- What separates those who do from those who don't?
- Robert Louis Stevenson: “Saints are sinners who kept on going.”

After the Service

If you have an active Facebook page, ask the congregation to share what they are exploring in their life mission statement. As activity picks up, ask for responses to these statements.

- This is not your mission; it's your part of God's mission.
- It's not just for this year or even five years; it's for your whole life.
- The mission should be challenging and may even seem impossible. That means you're on the right track.



CHAPTER 3

Planning Worship

Sermon Starter

Moses' God-dream, freeing the people of Israel from bondage and then leading them through forty years in the desert, was not a walk in the park. But quit was not in his vocabulary. What about yours? What will become of your God-dream when obstacles appear?

No truly God-sized dream will be fulfilled immediately. It will have setbacks and frustrations. The question is: What do we do when those challenges arise? What separates those who do from those who don't?

Your eyesight, your vision, has to have a clear focus, without distraction, on the one thing, the God-thing. As Billy Crystal's character Mitch learns in *City Slickers*, it's all about "the one thing" and finding out what that is for your life. Have you figured out your one thing? Are you prepared for the distractions and detractors? Will you persevere? Just remember, in moments of darkness never doubt what God has promised you in the light.

Key Scripture

"The eye is the lamp of the body. Therefore, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how terrible that darkness will be! No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be loyal to the one and have contempt for the other." (Matthew 6:22-24)

Outline

I. Sustaining Your Vision

- A. The biggest and best plans will face significant obstacles
- B. Going to the mountain: Keeping your focus through prayer and retreat
When you get tired of dealing with the obstacles, go to the mountain. Talk to God. Listen for God's vision, and don't be afraid to change.

II. Facing Frustrations and Setbacks

- A. Facing resistance—from inside and outside
- B. Relentless perseverance

III. A Life Mission Lives Beyond You

- A. What is your legacy?
- B. Investing in the next generation

IV. Walking Back Through the Mission Statement

- A. Who are the people and qualities you admire?
- B. What are the needs around you?
- C. How have your own struggles defined you?
- D. What excuses prevent you from living your God-dream?
- E. Claim the gifts of your head, heart, and hands.
- F. Build a life mission statement that is:
 - For a lifetime
 - Big to the point of seeming impossible
 - One that belongs to God

Stage or Worship Center Design

From Kim Miller

Worship and Campus Design Specialist
Ginghamburg Church

Envisioning our worship center/stage design for the *Dare to Dream* series, I wanted to create a space that felt conducive for worshipers to actually dream about their lives and all the possibilities that await. Two components came to me: the ability of words, quotes, and key scriptures to pave the way toward our dreams—and the expanse of a “wide open space” environment.

We came up with a list of powerful quotes. To find them, I used Pinterest and Google to search for quotes on dreaming. We combined these with key scriptures. Here is our list of phrases:

- According to your faith let it be done to you.
- Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the LORD.
- Remember your word to your servant, for you have given me hope.
- But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength.
- Therefore our hope is in you, for you are the one who does all this. For I know the plans I have for you . . . plans to give you hope and a future.
- Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.
- Capture your dreams and your life becomes full.
- The future you see is the future you get.
- Go confidently in the direction of your dreams.
- Better to have an impossible dream than no dream at all.
- The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.
- Nothing happens but first we dream.

Once we had our list of the strongest, most succinct quotes, I asked a graphic artist to print them in long strips with a 3.5" high font. If you don't have a printer for this sort of thing you can create a jpeg and take to Staples or FedEx for the printing.

Our Makeover Design Team cut foam “boards” (2" x 4" x 8") from large sheets of 2" white insulation available at most home improvement stores. Once cut, we glued the quote strips onto the foam and made a plan for attaching them to the walls at the back of our stage as well as those at the side and back of our worship center in a tasteful design.

When coupled with our ambient-colored wall lighting, this created an ongoing, inspiring visual environment for the *Dare to Dream* series. The additions of six large wax vases we already had, housing LED battery-powered candles inside, helped offer the “dreamy” vibe we were going for.

Our Dayton campus churches were able to replicate this design with an edited-down version using fewer quotes strategically hung throughout their worship spaces. Hobby and craft stores offer strong temporary adhesives that can be used in such a situation. In actuality, any canvas, chalkboard, paintboard, or posters could be used for the quotes. Just be sure to artistically arrange them so the “feel” of the environment is balanced and uplifting. The results will sway your church family to **Dare to Dream.**



CHAPTER 3

Planning Worship





CHAPTER 4

Words from Leaders
about *Dare to Dream*

We conducted the Dare to Dream series this past January at Fellowship United Methodist Church in Trophy Club, Texas. We used it as a great New Year's resolution concept for folks to get more deeply connected to their faith and personal calling. We did the sermon series, asked Sunday school classes to use the study, and created new small groups to use the study.

It was deeply impactful. We had more people involved in small groups than ever before. We had people working on plans to initiate new ministries in our community, and we had more folks engaged in worship and Bible study than previously.

I am now in a new appointment, and because Dare to Dream was so successful at Fellowship UMC, we will be doing it this coming January in the new setting.

Daniel Humbert
Senior Pastor
Trietsch Memorial UMC

I am excited about Mike Slaughter's Dare to Dream study. Trinity United Methodist Church is a growing church, with 575 in weekly worship and 875 members. We currently have four worship services. One of the challenges of growing so quickly is that we don't know each other as well as we used to. Dare to Dream gives us the opportunity to be on the same page—children, youth, and adults, all daring to dream at the same time!

Many of our existing small groups have chosen to study Dare to Dream, and we are offering four new classes. We also are offering free books for those who would like to create their own small groups or would like to follow along with our sermon series.

We spend a lot of time focusing on the church's mission. I can only imagine what God will do with Trinity as our members spend time with God to determine their own God-given mission! These are exciting days!

Michelle Sabin
Associate Pastor
Southport Trinity UMC

CHAPTER 5

Dare to Dream Resources

For Adults



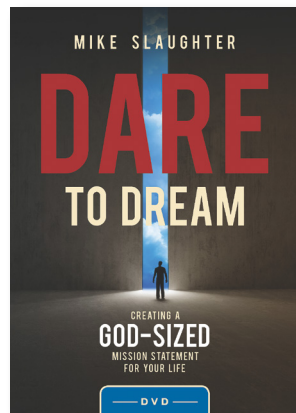
[Dare to Dream](#)

[Mike Slaughter](#)

[9781426775772](#)

144-page paperback

One for each adult in small groups, Sunday school, or reading groups.



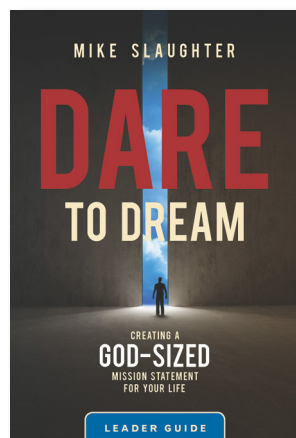
[Dare to Dream DVD](#)

[Mike Slaughter](#)

[9781426775789](#)

DVD with six video sessions featuring Mike, each 7–10 minutes in length. The author filmed the opening shots at locations around Dayton that are related to the Wright brothers, one of Mike's examples for people with a God-sized dream bigger than their "day jobs."

One for each class or group.



[Dare to Dream Leader Guide](#)

[9781426775796](#)

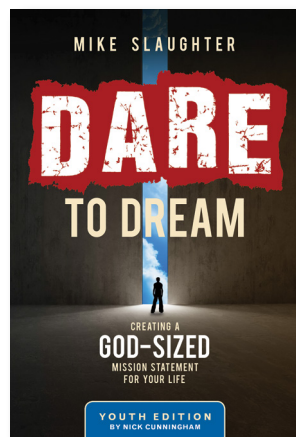
This leader guide contains six session plan outlines, complete with discussion points and questions, activities and prayers, as well as leader helps for facilitating a group.

One for each class or group.

CHAPTER 5

Dare to Dream Resources

For Youth

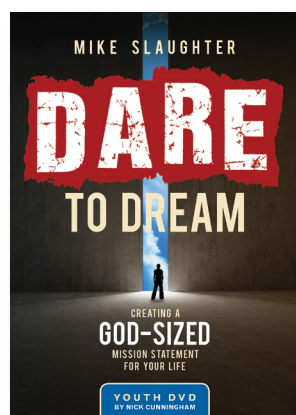


[Dare to Dream Youth Edition](#)

[Mike Slaughter and Nick Cunningham](#)
[9781426775802](#)

This edition created for teens 13–18 years of age helps teens start today developing a God-sized mission for their life. Helps for leading a group are included in the back of the book.

One for each teen and the leader in small groups, Sunday school, or reading groups.



[Dare to Dream Youth DVD](#)

[Mike Slaughter and Nick Cunningham](#)
[9781426775826](#)

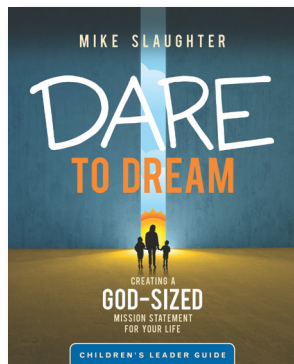
DVD with six video sessions featuring Nick Cunningham, each 7–10 minutes in length, was produced specifically for teen audiences. The video follows Nick through his day, unpacking key topics about a God-sized mission. Nick also interviews teens who have already started fulfilling their life purpose through service and ministry.

One for each small group or Sunday school class.

CHAPTER 5

Dare to Dream Resources

For Children

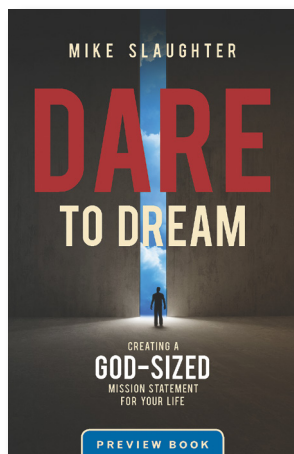


[***Dare to Dream Children's Leader Guide***](#)
[9781426775819](#)

This guide includes session ideas for younger and older children including reproducible handouts.

One for each leader or for each classroom.

For the Congregation



[***Dare to Dream Preview Book***](#)
[Mike Slaughter](#)
[9781426775833](#)

This 4" x 6" minibook introduces you to the major themes found in the study that help us discern God's dream for us and learn to live it out, prayerfully and enthusiastically.

One for each member of the congregation as an invitation into the study.