

This sermon is based on chapter seven of the “Someone Like You” book (pg. 101)

This message is focused on how big impact starts with small steps of obedience. We should use what we have, say “yes” even when it’s messy, and serve needs wherever we find ourselves.

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Introduction

Today, we continue in our series “Someone Like You,” which really focuses in on how ordinary people can do extraordinary things with God. And that includes you. And that includes me, includes all of us, because God wants to use us in his incredible plan.

But you might be sitting there thinking, “Well, where do we even start? Like, I’m just one person and I don’t know if I have what it takes.” And here’s the idea that we want to focus in on: **big impact starts with small steps of obedience**. If we just start taking small steps in the right direction, God can do incredible things.

And what I know without a shadow of a doubt is that God can’t steer a parked car or a parked van, for that matter. And so as we start to take small steps towards God’s plan, it leads to big impact. To illustrate this idea, we have a video that’s provided that’ll give you some backstory and context about Dennis Massie and his journey of founding Massie’s Mobile Mission.

Massie’s Mobile Mission is a mobile van with a serving window that provides food, clothing, and other items to people struggling with homelessness. Every Sunday afternoon Dennis and a few volunteers pull the van up in front of a homeless shelter or tent city, typically serving over a hundred people. Serving people right where they’re at.

Let’s take a look at Dennis’ story.



Show the week seven sermon video here, available for streaming or download by following this QR code.
Length: 4 minutes 22 seconds

That's amazing. Right? You can learn more about that story in chapter seven of the book. But today, one of the video's main ideas that we want to really focus on is not just taking this small step of obedience in the right direction, but also how things get going and have momentum. What we learn from Dennis' story and we learn from the teachings in the book is that **one faithful step can roll into a movement**, that one step leads to another.

Now, we don't always see completely where we're going. If you drive at night or in the early morning, it's dark and you can't see beyond the headlights. But usually that's all you need. In the same way, God is providing just enough direction for us to take the next step.

Now, when I think about being on mission, I get to thinking about TV and movies, and the 80s, and when I was a kid there was a TV show called the A-Team.

Now this is going to resonate with people that are in their late 40s and above. And for our youth, I apologize, but you can look it up. They actually made a movie about it. It's popping up on Netflix right now. But I got to thinking about the A-Team.

The A-Team was a group of four guys that were on a mission, and this was the poster back in the day of the A-Team.

(Show the image of the A-Team poster, "Slide5-A-Team-Poster.PNG")

And there were really four main characters and one big focal point. You had these guys, and the good-looking guy with the longer hair, he was called Face. He was a confidence man.

And he would negotiate and kind of move things along. And then the guy with the chains and the mohawk, that's Mr. T, but he was B.A. Baracus, and he was the transportation guy. He had the van. And then the guy that's wearing the blue shirt and smiling with the cigar in his mouth, well, that was the colonel, and he was known as Hannibal.

He's Hannibal Smith, and he was the guy that had the plan. And then you had the crazy guy on the end with the hat. Murdock. He was the demolition guy. And these four people came together and got in that van that's driving out of this explosion, which was often the storyline of the show. And they would solve problems for people that were in these areas.

But every week the formula was the same, they would roll into town or some other place, find out about some need, and then they would use their special gifts and skills to come together and make an impact. And in the last seven minutes of the show, it would all work out. And then the colonel would light up a cigar and he would say, “Man, I love it when a plan comes together.”

Okay, if you’ve never seen it, now you need to go YouTube it. All right. But one of the key focal points of the show was this van.

(Show the image of the A-Team van, “Slide6-A-Team-Van.PNG”)

Man, I can’t tell you how many people I knew wanted a van like that back then. It was cool, man. I see this van every once in a while out on the road, or you see it at a car show or someplace like that, and the van was just as much of a character in the show as the actors were, because without the van, they didn’t have a way to get from where they were to where they were needed.

The van was part of the plan each and every week. And so when we think about being on mission, you might not think of yourself as being on the A-Team, but we can all be on God’s team. And in Proverbs 16:9 it says this, *“In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps.”*

You know, the funny thing is, I often hear people say, “If you want to make God laugh, just tell him your plans.” But whenever you get on plan with God, he will blow your mind in the ways that he provides or connects people or brings it all together. Honestly, just like Hannibal on The A-Team, we really are excited when we see God’s plan come together.

And so we want to join God where he’s at and meeting needs for people that God is putting in front of us. And so today, I want to talk to you about three ways God turns our next move into a movement. Where we’re asking God, how can you use me? And where is my next assignment? And discover that there are three ways God turns our next move, our next small step into a big impact that leads to a movement and gets things rolling. And so if you’re ready to jump in today, say “ready.” All right. I love it when God brings a plan together. And you are part of God’s plan.

Point Number One: Start With What You Have

Start with what you have. God doesn’t expect you to use things that you don’t have. He’s just asking us, what **do** you have?

We can make all kinds of excuses for why we can't do something. But God never calls us to make excuses. He calls us to make disciples.

He doesn't call us to use something we don't have. He calls us to use something we do have. This is not just a New Testament idea. This is actually an Old Testament idea that is also used in the New Testament and used today.

There was a guy and his name was Moses. Moses was a guy who, literally, his life was on the line as a baby. His mom puts him in a floating basket because she thought he would die. And in that small step of obedience, the Pharaoh over all of Egypt, his wife picks up this baby and then adopts this child into their family.

He's trained and grows up in this world of privilege and understanding, rejects that, goes away into the desert, runs away from his calling. But there's a million of his people that are held in captivity. And by the way, there are millions of people all around us that feel stuck in prison to the decisions they've made, circumstances of life. And they need to have an encounter with God.

Moses knew his people needed an encounter with God. And so God comes and speaks to him and calls him out to go and speak to Pharaoh and say, "You need to let these people go." And he's reluctant. And every time he has an excuse, God provides an answer.

There's this moment where he's going to face off and talk to Pharaoh, and there's a whole series of these, and I would encourage you to read Exodus to really get the whole story. It's an amazing thing. If you've never read it for yourself, please do that. But there's this moment where he has to talk to the new Pharaoh, and Pharaoh doesn't want to listen to his adopted brother that walked away.

Pharaoh listens to the magicians of the day. Kind of like the way, today, we listen to whatever person says what we want to hear. They kind of validate what we think. And these magicians of the day would perform these quote "miracles" and they would throw down their sticks, and they turned into snakes.

Moses thinks, "How am I going to respond to this?" And in Exodus 4:2, it says, "*Then the Lord said to him, 'What do you have in your hand?'*" Moses is standing there and he's holding the stick, the staff that he would use to shepherd. "*A staff,' he replied,*" and if you play out this story, he throws down the staff and it turns into a snake and eats the snakes of the magicians, and everybody's standing there like, "Whoa!"

And then he's scared to pick it back up because he just watched it eat something. I mean, can you imagine what it would be like to have something in your hand and God use it to work a miracle?

God has things that he's put in our hands. Every one of us. And he wants us to throw it down before him and let it be used.

I'll give you an example.

Share a story of someone who used their gifts and talents to bless people – could be a personal story about someone you know, but it doesn't have to be.

So here is a living, breathing example of a person who said, "This is what I have in my hand," and they threw it down before the Lord, and God used it. And God doesn't want to just take a staff, and God doesn't just want to take some money, and God doesn't want to just take a pen or a PC.

God actually wants to take **us** in his hand and throw **us** down and let **us** be the miracle.

When more people pick up what we're putting down right now, this city will never be the same. We need to not be shocked that God does that. We need to be asking the question, "God, could you take me in your hand and work through me?" But it starts with what do I have in my hand that I can cast before the Lord.

Here's the point: **God multiplies what's already in your grip.** You know, time and time again, Massie's Mobile Mission was just taking one small step, moving in a direction until God finally brought the plan together.

Point Number Two: Say Yes Even When It's Messy

Say "yes" even when it's messy. Oh man. It's easy to say "yes" when everything's nice and tidy and good and perfect.

It's hard, man. It's hard whenever everything's messed up like it really is. It's hard to find the message in the mess. But that's what God does with us.

If you take a look at the incredible things that God does time and time again, he fulfills this passage of Scripture: Proverbs 3:5-6.

“Trust in the Lord,” it does not say, trust yourself, does not say that. Because if you and I do that, we’re already in trouble.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” I don’t know about you guys, but I feel like sometimes when I’m operating under my own power, I’m walking around in a fog and the analysis leads to paralysis and I get stuck.

And it’s fear that cripples me. And why would I be afraid? Because I know I’m not God, and I know what’s at stake. And if you lead a family or you lead anything and you’re struggling, listen, it can be overwhelming. But we don’t have to fear anything when God is in control. Because the Bible tells us perfect love casts out all fear.

I’ll give you another Old Testament example of why this is true. Think about Noah. Everybody say, “Noah.” Noah was a guy who God saw as righteous. He was asked by God to build an ark, which is a very big ship. And if you ever want to know, like what that size of that ship is, you can go down to Kentucky and visit the Ark Encounter.

You can walk through a physical building of this thing, of what they think it looked like. And it is massive. It’s massive. And it took him a hundred years to build it. And it didn’t rain, like, could you imagine building something? And people are saying, “Do you need this thing?” “Well, you know, I don’t know.”

It’s kind of like if you’ve never had a hole in a boat, do you need a sump pump? Right? And people were laughing at this guy, mocking him. “What are you doing? That’s the dumbest thing I’ve ever seen.”

The point is, **obedience doesn’t wait for clarity.**

How many of you parents, how many of you have asked your child to do something not out of anger, but out of their own benefit or their protection, like they’re about to run out in traffic and you see the car coming and you say, “Stop!”

Listen. Obedience doesn’t wait for clarity. When God calls and speaks, he’s speaking to us in love that he knows how we would benefit and the kingdom would benefit from our obedience.

And that leads us to point number three.

Point Number Three: Let Your Mission Be Mobile

Let your mission be mobile. A really good example of this is in a story where these religious people are debating about who is your neighbor, and everybody knows that your neighbor is the people that are around you. But that's not too big of a deal, because usually we only like to be around people that are just like us.

And if we think that's going to be the plan in heaven, we are going to be really, really shocked because that will be the most diverse crowd imaginable. And the thing we all have in common is that we all believe that Jesus is the way.

What happens is Jesus tells the story about this man that gets beat up. I mean, he needs more than just a Ziplock bag of stuff. He got robbed. He got beat down, his own people that would have known him were too busy and walked past him. The religious leaders, too busy, walked past him.

And then Jesus describes how this Samaritan came and we hear, "Good Samaritan." We think, "Samaritans are good." But in that day, they were diametrically opposed to the very person that was wounded on the side of the road. And they would have been scared of one another. And yet he still took action. And Jesus drops this in Luke 10:33-34, "*But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds.*"

That is an unlikely character in the story. But the bigger principle, the takeaway from this, is that he let his mission be mobile. That the Samaritan was on mission. It didn't matter if he was standing in front of people. He wasn't doing it for an audience. He wasn't doing it to earn an award. He wasn't going to get bonus points for it.

He was just doing what he was on mission to do wherever he was. And when we think about that, we never know where the disaster is going to happen. I shared with you last week that in Thailand they would have typhoons hit. In the Philippines, they had typhoons hit. They would wipe out places. Nobody knows exactly where or when that's going to happen.

But we know that when it happens, people have needs and there are people who are devastated each and every day of their life.

And so today I'm going to ask the question in perfect A-Team fashion, and in honor of Massie's Mobile Mission, where will **your** van take you this week? And I'm going to use VAN as the acrostic. And it's a few simple ideas.

The **V** in van is **value what you already have**. What do you have?

You might say I have nothing but myself. Great. God can use you. But God could use your time. God could use resources. God could use you to fill up some bags that would fill up somebody's soul. Take an inventory of those resources and offer them to him. This week.

The **A** in van is **act. Even when it's messy**. I'm not asking you to do everything. Just do something. It may not be convenient, or perfect timing. It may not be totally clear. I promise you. It will be messy. But trust God with the outcome.

And the **N** in van is **notice needs around you**. If nothing else, hold the door open for somebody walking behind you. Look somebody in the eye.

Dennis makes these blessing packs, that's something you can make and give out as well. So when you pull up at an intersection and somebody is struggling, you don't have to pretend to be picking a radio station. You can actually look them in the eye and bless them with something. So let's notice the needs around us. Be intentional.

As we wrap this up today, I think there's two things that we can do. We can mobilize the van, just do something this week. Take action. But also, if we want to be mobilized, the first most important step we take is a step of faith to trust Jesus.

And I'm not asking you to do any of this without Jesus, because if you do it without Jesus, it's going to be a problem. But if we all work with Jesus and we follow Jesus, then we are going to be in motion because Jesus says, "Follow me." He didn't say, "Hey, that's cool, take a seat and wait around for me to come back."

I think the only time we really need to be sitting down on the mission is when we're in this place, huddling up to go run the play that Jesus called.

So today, let's pray and let's ask God use each and every one of us with our next small step of obedience.

(Close with prayer.)