



**Just Walk Across the Room**  
**“Grander Vision Living”**

*(Biblical Text: Luke 5:1-11)*

*Dr. Michael F. Gardner, Senior Pastor  
Old Mission Church, Fairway, Kansas*

---

For the last four weeks, I’ve been asking you to consider that sharing God’s story might be as simple and straightforward as, **“a walk across the room.”**

We’ve seen that the single greatest gift we can offer people is, though our reaching out, that they might move closer to the God who loves them.

We have looked at **“Living in 3D” - Developing** friendships beyond our comfort zone, **discovering** people’s stories by listening to them, and **discerning** the next steps we should take, gently letting the Holy Spirit lead.

Last week, Pastor Wally talked about the **power of story**, reminding us how important it is that we learn to tell God’s story and our own faith stories.

This morning, my topic is **“Grander Vision Living.”**

I hope that, over the last four weeks, we have developed a vision for taking a walk across rooms, offices, lobbies, stores, stadiums, coffee shops - wherever people gather - to see what God might do. It’s important!

Most of all, I hope that, even though today is the last message in the series, we **don’t actually wrap things up** – you know, draw a line, mentally check the box and say, **“Well, that’s it – we’re done talking about outreach now!”**

Sad to say, some would add, **“Thank God.”** That’s what most Christians and Churches do with programs about evangelism, and Church growth. What I hope to do today instead is to plant a seed that will take root and grow into a different way of being the Church I’m calling the **“Grander Vision”**.

It’s a great topic for today in Kansas City! Who of us after the losses that started the season expected the **Chiefs** to blow the Patriots off the field last Monday? But they did, and we have high hopes against the 49ers today! Even more to the point, who really expected the **KC Royals**, after a 29 year skid, to do something unprecedented in baseball - winning three playoff games in a row – all three in overtime? **Let’s hear it for the boys in blue!**

They’ve turned Kansas City town into Happytown! No one really expected that to happen. Except maybe the **Royals** themselves! And that’s the point.

*They found a higher purpose, beyond individual talent, to do whatever it takes to move forward!* That's what's in my heart for the Church and this Church.

That's what our vision process has been all about to *Activate Spiritual Growth*, to more *Creatively use our campus*, to *Take the Church to people*, and most importantly, to *Share God's Story*. It's about a grander vision!

Most of us settle for just a piece of that. We are interested in spiritual growth, especially our own. But if it's only about what we *receive*, then faith is just another product that meets our needs. If this building and campus, beautiful as it is, becomes the *most important* thing, we've missed the point. It's the same with only taking the Church to people, serving them.

St. Francis is often misquoted as saying, *"Preach the Gospel at all times, using words if necessary."* The problem is that he never said it. In fact, he used words and deeds to reach people, but never just deeds without words.

**Our purpose, our grand vision, is to Share God's story.** If we catch a vision for **that** it will be even more exciting than baseball! I promise!

I caught a glimpse of that when Ann and I went to the Bahamas a few years ago. Before you get too excited, I promised Ann a proper honeymoon when we got married. It *only* took me twenty-five years to be able to afford to fulfill that promise! She's here - you might thank her for her patience!

Anyway, it was stunningly beautiful. White beaches, a beautiful deep, blue ocean. The sun was high, the scattered clouds promised no rain. It was bliss.

Many people go there to snorkel, but we settled for a tour of the reef on a glass-bottom boat. The scenery was stunning, but the real show was just under the water's surface. Who knew we were missing out? We saw...

Huge schools of blue and yellow angelfish, a barracuda swam by, then a green moray eel. I lost track of all the species that we saw, in a dazzlingly colorful commotion, breathtaking and awe-inspiring! What we saw there was a reminder that there's always much, much more to life than what appears on the surface. **That is what "Grander Vision Living" is all about.**

In our passage from Luke 5:1-11, can you imagine how excited Peter, James, and John were because Jesus guided them to unbelievable catch of fish? This was the big one! They'd never seen anything like this! Their nets were bursting and in fact, their boat was so full of fish that it was sinking.

But that was not the true miracle. Let me paraphrase Bill Hybels' description of what Jesus says next in his book, Just Walk Across the Room;

*"I know you are excited! And don't get me wrong, there's no problem with catching fish. I know it's how you make a living! But instead of netting a few pounds, just imagine landing a few destinies. That's where the action is!"*

In verse ten, Jesus says: ***"Follow me, and I'll make you fishers of men and women!"***

And this is not just Jesus' instruction for Peter and James and John, it is his expectation for all our Christ-following lives. There is more to life than what we see on the surface. There is a grander vision for each of our lives than just making a living or raising our children or building financial security.

**Jesus asks us to make our lives count for people.** Not only career fishermen, but business men and women, stay-at-home moms or dads, actors, singers, pastors, hairstylists, teachers, baseball players, mechanics, doctors, lawyers, engineers, bankers, retired folks and all the rest of us!

Jesus knew that if we build a lifestyle around getting to know people, caring for people, serving people, listening to people, embracing people, making friends with people, exposing people to spiritual things, and prioritizing people - then just working for a living will never fully satisfy us again.

I brought a couple of things from my desk with me to worship this morning. They are on the altar this morning. One is a classic car, well a miniature one. It was a gift from Joe Mackey, one of the finest Christian men I know. The other is *"a little preacher man,"* given to me by a woman named Diana.

As a reminder, I put a post-it note on the car. Pastor Karen, would you read it for us? (Temporary) It reminds me that no earthly possession is going to last forever. Not cars, or land, or houses, or bank accounts. Only people.

Years ago, God called me to be a pastor, to lead Churches, and I have accomplished some things, **good things**. I have built buildings, revived congregations, started coffeehouses. But all of those things are temporary.

But Diana, Paul, Sheryl, Jan, Sharon, John, Tony, Nancy, Todd, Lisa, Mik, Liz, Darren, Kevin, Christy, Lisa, and dozens of others? They will live forever.

And here's my promise to you. Once you start living for a Grander Vision – that people really matter - you will never settle for living for a lesser vision again! In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.