NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

DREAM BIGGER. START SMALLER.

IGNITE GOD'S VISION FOR YOUR LIFE.



STEVEN FURTICK

Praise for Greater

"Writes Steven Furtick, 'Good enough leaves you stuck in stagnation. Grasping for greatness leads to endless frustration. But greater is a third way.' My advice? Don't waste another second to embrace the third way. In Greater, Steven shows you that God's vision for your life is ready to be ignited. Go ahead—strike the match!"

—Jentezen Franklin, senior pastor of Free Chapel, Gainesville, GA, and *New York Times* best-selling author of *Fasting*

"If you ever felt like you were meant for more yet have settled for less in life, then Steven Furtick's new book, *Greater*, is for you! Its proven biblical insights and practical applications will put you on your path to the greater life."

—Кеrry Shook, senior pastor of Woodlands Church, Houston, TX, and coauthor of the *New York Times* best-selling *One Month to Live* and the national bestseller *Love at Last Sight*

"Most people crave more out of life and sense there is a greater reason for our existence. Pastor Steven's new book, *Greater*, is the perfect book to stir your faith, build your spiritual confidence, and inspire you toward the unique calling for your life. If you read only one book this year, make it *Greater*."

—Craig Groeschel, senior pastor of LifeChurch.tv, Oklahoma City, OK, and author of *Soul Detox* and *Dare to Drop the Pose*

"My friend Steven Furtick has an insatiable passion for the church to discover the fullness of life in Christ. In *Sun Stand Still*, Steven

dared us to pray audacious prayers and believe God for the impossible. Now in *Greater*; he walks us through what it looks like to live out an audacious life—a life marked by nothing less than greatness God's way!"

—John Bevere, best-selling author of *Relentless* and *The Bait of Satan*

"Steven Furtick boldly pursues God with audacious faith like no one else I know. He is unapologetic about allowing God to accomplish greater things through him. This book will inspire you to do the same. To reach for greater. To believe for greater. To be greater."

—STOVALL WEEMS, lead pastor of Celebration Church, Jacksonville, FL

"In every generation God empowers a few great leaders to speak his truth with boldness. Steven Furtick is one of those voices in our generation. In his new book *Greater*, you will learn how to embrace God's present plan for your greater calling and purpose."

—Christine Caine, director of Equip and Empower and founder of the A21 Campaign

"Greater is about walking in God's higher purpose for your life. Whether that's as a teacher, preacher, leader, parent, musician, artist, engineer, or entrepreneur, Steven Furtick will show you how to let go of your fears and embrace your greater purpose in God."

—ISRAEL HOUGHTON, Grammy Award—winning recording artist and worship leader of Lakewood Church, Houston, TX

"People today are bored, depressed, and confused because they have settled for 'good enough.' But 'good enough' is keeping us from living the life that God has called us to. In *Greater*, Steven

Furtick embarks on a brilliant journey of transformation that every follower of Christ needs to take. This book delivers!"

—Perry Noble, senior pastor of NewSpring Church, Anderson, SC, and blogger on leadership, vision, and creativity

"Pastor Steven's powerful yet vulnerable teaching grabbed my heart, equipped my mind, and stirred my soul like no other book I've ever read. This is one I will return to again and again. For anyone who has ever dared to dream but doesn't know how to turn their dreams into reality, *Greater* is a must-read."

—Lysa TerKeurst, *New York Times* best-selling author of *Made to Crave* and president of Proverbs 31 Ministries

"Some of us wear ourselves out trying to achieve 'greatness.' Others of us miss our calling and settle for 'good enough.' In *Greater*, Steven Furtick shows us the surefooted path to the *Greater* life."

—Mark Batterson, lead pastor of National Community Church, Washington, DC, and author of *Primal* and *In a Pit with a Lion on a Snowy Day*

"Steven Furtick is living exactly what he's written about in this book—start small, dream big, and see what God will do! Our church has been massively blessed by the example of Pastor Steven, his family, and Elevation Church. Take it from the best. Don't underestimate what God can do with your small start. Get this book and be encouraged!"

—DINO RIZZO, lead pastor of Healing Place Church, Baton Rouge, LA, and author of *Servolution*

"Steven Furtick understands spiritual vision like few people I know. If you desire a life beyond your imagination, read this book! *Greater* will take you to a whole new level and invite you to experience the power of God every day."

— Jack Graham, senior pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church, Dallas, TX, and author of *Powering Up*

"The distance between desire and doing is often intimidating because we don't know where to begin. But in *Greater*, Steven Furtick shows that God's 'greater' for our lives is as far away as our first step of obedience."

—Ed Young, senior pastor of Fellowship Church, Dallas, TX, and author of *Outrageous, Contagious Joy*

"Steven Furtick is in my head again with *Greater*. He's challenging me to be greater—and the good news is that all I have to do is think big and start small."

—TIM SANDERS, author of *Today We Are Rich* and CEO of Net Minds

"My friend Steven Furtick calls us to a faith-filled life of trusting and believing God for greater lives than the ones we are living now. It's not about us, though. It's about God's greater glory in and through our lives. If you are ready for a life-altering experience with Jesus Christ, pick up a copy of *Greater*."

—James MacDonald, senior pastor of Harvest Bible Chapel, Chicago, IL, and author of *Always True* and *10 Choices*

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STEVEN FURTICK



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I dedicate this book to the LTrain.



The start you were handed wasn't much,
but you worked what you had.

And God made your life into something much greater
than anyone could have reasonably expected.

Thank you for teaching me to bunt
and giving me a tractor-trailer to learn punk rock.

I'm proud to be your son.

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Steve and Me

I used to want to do great things for God. That was before I found something greater.



My mom says she'll always remember that she was sitting in a social studies class when the loudspeaker beeped and crackled and someone announced that President John F. Kennedy had been shot. All the kids would be going home for the day.

I wonder if I'll always remember that my two sons and I had just shared kung pao shrimp at P.F. Chang's when I stopped in my tracks on the way out the door. I had to make sure I had correctly read the words that were scrolling across every television within sight:

Apple founder Steve Jobs—dead at 56.

2 Greater

I can't explain why, but my hands were shaky and sweaty as I pulled my iPhone out of my pocket to verify.

One of the first things I saw was a statement from President Obama. He said that Steve Jobs "was among the greatest of American innovators." That "he transformed our lives, redefined entire industries, and achieved one of the rarest feats in human history: he changed the way each of us sees the world."

Then I looked at my Twitter time line to see what the rest of the world was saying about Jobs. Everybody seemed to be weighing in. The outpouring was overwhelming.

"R.I.P. Steve Jobs. You led the world into the 21st century."

"R.I.P. Steve Jobs. You improved life as we know it."

"Steve Jobs—On behalf of every dreamer sitting in his or her garage who is crazy enough to try to change the world, you will be missed."

I suddenly felt the urge to tweet my own thoughts about his passing. But it felt melodramatic for me to share some deep thought about a person I'd never met. Still, he was the greatest business leader of my lifetime. So I fired off a three-word tweet:

Steven Furtick @stevenfurtick "What a life."

5 Oct

My next thoughts made my stomach hurt. Or was it the kung pao? Either way, I got downright introspective. I was wrestling with a tension:

Steve Jobs was a great man. He changed the world through technology.

I'm a pastor. I have a mission to change the world through the gospel.

But am I really achieving that mission? I'm doing well by some standards, I guess.

I love Jesus. I have integrity. I love my family.

But still...

I'm not redefining an industry. I'm not accomplishing one of the greatest feats in human history. So what am I really doing? That matters? That will matter?

That will set my life apart?

In short, I was processing the nauseating feeling that, when I stack it all up, I don't feel like I'm anything close to being the *great* man of God I want to be. Some days, actually, I feel like I sort of suck as a Christian. I didn't tweet any of that. But I couldn't stop thinking it.

I'm guessing you've had thoughts like that too. I'm not saying you want to be the next Steve Jobs or build your own technology empire. But I think we all have these honest moments when we're gripped by a desire to feel that what we're doing matters more. That who we *are* matters more.

A few hours later, after I tucked my boys into bed and prayed for them, I sat on my bed and opened my MacBook.

4 Greater

For some reason I felt compelled to pull up a certain Bible verse. It's one of the most staggering statements Jesus ever made.

I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even *greater* things than these, because I am going to the Father. (John 14:12)

I'd read that verse so many times. But I had a new context for it

And it sliced me with the edge of fresh challenge.

Greater things than Jesus, the greatest man who ever lived? What does that even mean? How can we do greater things than Jesus?

Does it mean that we're able to do more powerful miracles than Jesus? Have a bigger impact than Jesus? I don't think so. After all, I don't know many people who have walked on water, multiplied fish and loaves to feed thousands, opened the eyes of the blind, or given salvation to the world.

If you're looking to be greater than Jesus, put down your crack pipe, my friend. That's not happening.

By leaving and then sending His Spirit to dwell inside His followers—ordinary people like you and me—Jesus released a greater power for us to do extraordinary things on an extraordinary scale. The kinds of things the early church saw and did. The kinds of things He still wants to do today through us.

Jesus isn't calling us to be greater than He is.

He's calling us to be greater *with* Him through His Spirit within us.

Meant for More

As I tried to process the brain-bending implications of that claim, I thought through some conversations I'd had recently with people who were feeling disappointed and stuck in their relationship with God and their place in life.

I'm meeting more and more believers who are unsatisfied with the kind of Christians they're becoming and the version of the Christian life they're experiencing. These aren't bad people. They aren't gangbangers and ungodly pagans. If they were, their discontent would make more sense.

The thing is, most believers aren't in imminent danger of ruining their lives. They're facing a danger that's far greater: wasting them.

These are some of the very people Jesus talked about in John 14:12. People who are supposed to be doing greater works than—forget about Steve Jobs—*Jesus Christ Himself*.

Yet it's not happening. For most of us, the experience of our daily lives is a far cry from the greater works Jesus talked about in John 14:12. Or even the achievements of a luminary like Steve Jobs.

We've had some big dreams about what God might want for our lives. But so many of us are stuck in the starting blocks. Or are dragging along at the back of the pack. We know we were meant for more. Yet we end up settling for less.

We're frustrated about where we are. But we're confused about how to move forward.

I wonder if you can relate.

What a life...

Miserable Mediocrity

We all know instinctively, even if we can't articulate it exactly, that something isn't squaring up. There's a huge gap between what God said in His Word and the results we see in our lives.

It's like we've been lulled into comfortable complacency. Then we wake up one day to find ourselves stuck in miserable mediocrity. So we tuck away any dreams and notions of the great things we'd like to do for God.

After all, we're doing good. Good enough. It kind of sucks. But it's all we know.

If that's where you are today, I need to share a strong word of warning with you.

You can't keep living like this. It's not fine for you to settle for going every day to a job you'd prefer to quit, doing decent work, being a pretty good person compared to your neighbor, paying your bills on time, and sporadically reading the Bible as though it's your guide to the great things God did in other people's lives in the past.

Baseline living is not okay. Not for a believer in Jesus.

There's a price to pay for Christian complacency. If you keep living on this level, your heart is going to shrivel. It might already be shriveling. Your dreams are going to die. They may already be on life support. Will you look up one day and be overwhelmed by the stack of regrets staring back at you? The frustration that's simmering on the back burner right now might boil over one day, and you'll be bitter about the opportunities you missed. Opportunities to be used by God, to touch lives, to get outside yourself and be a part of something greater. I know it's not easy. But don't tell me it's not possible. Jesus Himself said it was.

The fact is, we are so much better than we've become, because God is so much greater than we're allowing Him to be through us.

Fairy Tale Greatness

It's one thing to believe that. It's another to live it out.

After all, John 14:12 can seem like a fairy tale. The stuff vacation Bible school heroes and Silicon Valley icons are made of. Something that normal people like us will never attain. The president probably won't release a statement calling us the greatest *anything* when we die. And only a few people will remember where they were when the news broke. Nobody will post a blog entry about our lives on a device we invented. And we aren't exactly the caliber of Christian who ends up getting a verse in Hebrews 11.

Besides, we have to pick up the kids from school, haven't

made a dinner plan, and have a big project due at work tomorrow morning.

We have real lives to live and certainly no room in our cluttered minds for pie in the sky.

Most of the time we do well just to make a dent in the mountain of laundry or leave the house in time to beat the morning traffic. It takes everything we have just to stay on top of the obstacles thrown at us like a high-stakes arcade game, let alone climb the mountain of greatness or soar like some sort of eagle. You've seen those posters, haven't you?

Part of our problem with stepping out and being great for God is that it's painfully vague. What does it mean to be *great* for God anyway? I read a book the other day that was like, give all your money away and downsize your house, and then you'll really be great for God. I saw a preacher on television later the same day who told me I would know I'd achieved a higher level of greatness when I got more money so I'd be able to buy a bigger house and a faster car. Which one is really great: modern monasticism or *Cribs*-style Christianity? I'm confused.

What would be a truly great life from God's perspective? Becoming a missionary in Zimbabwe or running a socially conscious software business? Smuggling Bibles into Burma or winning *American Idol*? Working with crack addicts or becoming an NBA star? Or would greatness be doing more than one of those things at the same time?

See, it's one thing to talk about doing great things for God.

But how do you stick a pin in that part of the map and live there? Greatness is a slippery aspiration and a wild beast to ride if you ever get on top of it.

The fact is, that kind of greatness—the unattainable, schizophrenic kind that's always in the back of your mind but always beyond your reach—is a racket.

A Way That Actually Works

That's why I have no interest in presenting you with a plan for pursuing greatness. Instead I'm going to spend the rest of this book showing you the way to a place I call greater.

This isn't just some gimmicky play on words. It's a gamechanging shift in how we approach God.

Let me give you a simple way to look at the tension I've been describing.

Good enough = the baseline living marked by mediocrity, being stuck in spiritual survival mode, and being controlled by complacency.

Greatness = the vague, unrealistic aspirations of doing better that don't work in real life.

Good enough leaves you stuck in stagnation. Grasping for *greatness* leads to endless frustration. But *greater* is a third way.

Greater = the life-altering understanding that God is ready to accomplish a kind of greatness in your life that is entirely out of human reach. Beyond Steve Jobs. Beyond what you see in yourself on your best day. But exactly what God has seen in you all along.

Personally, I've decided to give up on my aspirations for greatness and legalistic expectations of Christian perfection. Not because I've given up on getting to the place God has called me to. But because I've found a better way to get there. A way that actually *works*.

It's a way that doesn't have a lot of neon signs but that leads directly to the place in God we've always wanted to experience. A secret passageway, if you will.

I found it while digging into the scriptural account of an Old Testament prophet. I found it buried in the examples of parents, students, employees, and bosses who are finding a greater passion for God than they've ever known. I finally found the door that leads to the life I've always known God is calling me to live.

And in the pages that follow, I want us to enter that passageway together, leaving our lives of *good enough* behind once and for all. Giving up on false ideas of *greatness*. Placing all our expectations, hopes, and fears squarely on the shoulders of a God whose power is greater than our minds can comprehend. And ascending to a greater realm of God's power than we ever imagined. It's a place where impossibilities cannot coexist with God's promises.

It's not out there somewhere. It's in you right now.

It's not reserved for wunderkinds like Steve Jobs and Father Abraham

It's the birthright of ordinary believers like you and me.

It's not a state you'll achieve one day when the kids are out of the house, or the retirement account hits a certain threshold, or a particular sin isn't breathing down your neck anymore. It's a place in God you can tap into immediately, even while the dishes are piled high in the sink and you have unpaid balances on three credit cards.

Just as Jesus told Zacchaeus He would be coming to his house that day, I want you to know that greater things are coming your way, starting now. The summons is sitting in your hands. Greater works are within your grasp.

So what do you have to do to experience it? It begins with belief.

For now, let's just clarify our focus and prepare our hearts. I want you simply to ask the Lord, in this moment, to begin to open your eyes—*by faith*—and help you perceive that He has greater things in store for your future. As you read the upcoming section, let these simple promises stack up in your heart. These truths will be like kindling for the fire God wants to ignite in the pages to come.

But it starts here, with a question: Are you ready to open your imagination to the possibility that God has a vision for your life that is *greater*?

Greater than the labels you were given when you were young.

Greater than the cynicism that may be settling in as you're getting older.

Greater than a life spent aimlessly wandering in cyberspace.

Greater than empty earthly success that brings no eternal reward.

Greater than the shame tethered to you like a stone from the sins of your past.

Greater than the abuse you suffered at the hands of people you once trusted.

Greater than the hell you've been through in the trials of your life.

Greater than the specter of missed opportunities hovering over your bed at night.

Greater than the dreams you've dreamed for yourself.

Greater than even the greatest moment you've had thus far.



You don't have to understand the implications of all this. Not yet.

You only have to be willing to believe and press into the greater things God has already prepared for you.

I'd understand if you were tempted to write me off as just another self-help hype man, wheeling and dealing promises about a better you that won't hold up in reality. You've probably heard it all before, about how if you really believe and follow this one specific plan, you'll have a better life. A great life even. I'd be suspicious too about someone who said those kinds of things.

But I haven't said, and don't plan to say, any of those things in this book.

Instead I want to walk you straight into the gap between the greater things God has promised in His Word and the results we see in our lives.

Since writing my first book, *Sun Stand Still*, I've been overwhelmed by the miraculous reports we've received from thousands of people all over the world. In that book I dared readers to pray audacious prayers. Now I want to show you what it looks like to live an audacious *life*.

And when you live this way—the greater way—God will empower you with:

- the *confidence* to know that nothing is impossible with Him
- the *clarity* to see the next step He's calling you to take
- the *courage* to do anything He tells you to do

You'll begin to get a real sense of what greater things God wants to do in your life. Maybe God will call you to make a major life change. Or maybe He simply wants you to come at your present life with greater passion from a fresh perspective. Either way, I'm going to show you that the pathway to God's best is paved with *faith*. And I'll give you specific, tangible steps of faith to get there.

If you choose to come this way, don't expect a final destination where you can announce, "Now I'm officially greater for God!" Because the call to be greater is the call to walk with God Himself. God's greatness will not just be working *around* you—it will start working *through* you. The result will be a life of greater effectiveness. Greater impact. Greater vision. That's why the book is called *Great…er*. Emphasis, *-er*. And it's important to embrace the joy of the journey, because the destination is a mirage.

That's the thing about God's leading in our lives. It's not static. It's not automatic. But it's imminent. And it has the potential to change everything.



God's greater vision for your life isn't based on a formula. It's built on a promise: God created you for more. We'll look closely at what the Bible says "more" looks like. You'll be inspired to dream bigger than you ever have. But you'll also be challenged to start smaller, through simple steps of radical obedience.

So if you are worn-out on cul-de-sac Christianity or selfhelp pseudosolutions, the good news is this: today is the day God's greater plan for your life begins in full force.

The bad news is that every Batman has a Joker. And the greater life God has promised you isn't going to show up and save the day without a fight. I should know. I'm a guy who has had a front-row seat to see God do some of the greatest things you could possibly imagine. But I'm also a guy who has had to tangle with insecurities so ugly that some days they make me feel like I'm not even a Christian, let alone a pastor.



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