

★ 1. God speaks to you through dreams

The Bible says – Gen. 37:5-11 (NKJV)

- ⁵ *“Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more.*
⁶ *So he said to them, “Please hear this dream which I have dreamed:*
⁷ *There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf.”*
⁸ *And his brothers said to him, “Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?” So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.*
⁹ *Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, “Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me.”*
¹⁰ *So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, “What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?”*
¹¹ *And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind”.*

Here is a wonderful example of how God showed his divine plan for a young man through a dream.

What is a dream?

When we speak of dreams we don't mainly refer to the experience you get while you are asleep at night.

- We rather mean a strong desire, growing inside of us, to accomplish something specific in life.

★ *Dreams are one of God's ways of approaching us*

The birth of dreams takes place in our inner realm – in our heart and mind.

- Many times dreams are channels for the Holy Spirit to speak to us.

When God calls us, he doesn't always do it through a clear word.

Quite often he approaches us through pictures in our mind and desires in our heart.

These desires are the Holy Spirit at work, sowing into us what God the Father wants to communicate. By this he makes sure that we are committed to his plans and will cooperate with him.

- He makes his thought become our thought
- His desire becomes our desire
- And his dream becomes our personal dream

The Bible says – Rom. 8:16 (NKJV)

“The Spirit bears witness with our spirit”

What God wants to communicate to us will be transferred by the Holy Spirit into our spirit.

Then the Holy Spirit and our spirit will completely agree and share the same “feeling” (bear witness).

When we have an active spiritual life with daily prayer and bible reading, God's plans and thoughts will start to grow in our mind as a desire.

This is a way for God to direct our lives towards his plans

✦ 2. Let the dream capture you

The Hebrew word for dream that we read in Gen 37 means **“to bind firmly”**.

This is a true characteristic of a dream. You are tied to it. You can't get the dream out of your mind. You are willing to do whatever it takes to achieve the dream.

Actually you don't have a dream, the dream has you.

You are captured by the dream, and you don't want to do anything else whatsoever, other than fulfill that dream.

This is a way we can recognize a true dream.

✦ *A dream might absorb you little by little*

Dreams don't always come suddenly and strong:

- Many times a dream starts with a mere wish, a small desire, just a thought.

When the wish or desire is prayed over and meditated on, it starts growing into a hunger, a strong inner drive that compels us to make it happen. All your energy, all your resources are directed towards fulfilling that dream.

- That is why dreams are so vital, they are the fuel in life
- Without vision you'll go nowhere

The Bible says – Prov. 29:18 (NKJV)

“Where there is no vision, the people perish”.

So many people's lives produce nothing, because they have no vision for their lives. They just walk around in circles their whole life long, unfruitful and without purpose.

✦ 3. Dreams shape your future

Dreams focus on **what you can become**. The beautiful thing about dreams is that they are not limited to **what you have** or **what you are** right now. They move outside the limitations of your present situation.

Dreams deal with the future. They are so powerful because they can actually shape the future, the future you desire.

Another characteristic of dreams is that they are always positive, because God's plans for you are positive.

The Bible says – Jer. 29:11 (NKJV)

¹¹“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope”.

God's thoughts for you are peaceful and he wants to give you a good future and a hope.

- So for you to expect a bright future is to think in accordance with the mind and plans of God.

✦ *Dreams deal with what is impossible or seems to be impossible*

Dreams release a capacity in us that we never would have had without the dream.

- Dreams move the hand of God in our lives
- Dreams make the impossible possible
- Dreams change the course of individuals and nations

The whole history of mankind has been formed by the dreams of individuals. The power of dreams created the ancient kingdoms, gave rise to the modern inventions and has put man on the moon.

If man had not believed in the power of dreams, we would probably still sit grunting in a cave with hide clothes, nibbling on roasted wild boar.

✦ 4. Dreams are for every area of your life

Some people may think that dreams are only for spiritual ministry, but as we can learn from the example of Joseph, dreams deal with so much more than strictly “church work”.

God put a dream in this man’s heart - to become a business man - and through the fulfillment of that dream he saved the nation of Egypt from starvation.

- So certainly, you too can have a dream for every area of your life!

Your dreams are an expression of your faith, and God works through your faith. That’s why it is so essential to dream, if you want God to be involved in every area of your life.

What do you see? What can you imagine?

The Bible says - Gen 11:6 (NKJV)

“...nothing they have imagined they can do will be impossible for them”

An important part of dreaming is to imagine - to make a clear picture inside of us.

- If you can see it, you can have it!
- If you can imagine it, you can do it!

This is the truth for followers of God as well as for non-believers. God reveals in this verse the unlimited power of dreams for all human beings.

✦ *Dreams visualize things in your mind and heart*

When you start to visualize, faith will start to be activated within you. It is triggered by pictures. Faith is actually seeing, but not with your physical eyes, but the eyes of your heart (Eph. 1:18).

- 2 Cor. 4:18 says that we have our eyes fixed on the things unseen and not on the things seen

When you start to have a clear picture in your heart of what you want to achieve, and you nourish that picture, it will start growing and become like a substance inside you.

That substance is what the Bible calls faith (Hebr. 11:1).

- At this point you just know, that you know, that you know that you will fulfill your dream. You have a strong conviction!

If you can’t imagine it, you can’t have faith for it.

- When you can imagine
- faith will follow
- and where there is faith, God moves!

Do you want to achieve something in life?

Then your ability to imagine and make a clear picture in your mind for what you want to achieve is crucial to get results.

By this you can get something more in life than what you have right now.

Discussion

✦ Discussion

1. Has God given you a dream that burns in your heart?

✦ 5. Dare to desire

The Bible says – Phil.2:13 (NKJV)

*“For it is God who works in you both **to will** and **to do** for his good pleasure”*

To find out God’s dream for our life is usually very natural. The first thing we have to ask ourselves is “What do we desire?”

- Not “What might God desire?”, because God usually works through our desires

If we have fully committed our lives to Jesus, he will be able to easily work through our will and desires.

- Faith is actually born out of desires.

Good and pure desire is the starting point for both dreams and faith:

- No desire - no dream - no faith

Now we are not talking about evil desires: the wish to satisfy the passions of the flesh, but positive and constructive desires.

✦ *Jesus encourages us to focus on what we want*

Jesus once asked a blind man “What do **you** want me to do for you?” (Mark 10:51-52).

- If we don’t know what we want, God can’t bless us.

Psalm 37:4 says that he wants to give us the desires of our heart. So if there is no desire, there will be no blessing either!

Successful entrepreneurs are people who are driven by their dreams and desires. That’s why we need to allow this side of our personality to bloom.

For us to be free to start imagining good and great things, we have to brush aside all the negative feelings and thoughts that suppress us.

Dreams can actually develop if we allow them to, and when we expand the borders of what we think is possible, God will move according to our beliefs.

Now, the picture we carry inside of us must be specific. It can’t be general, but must be clear in our heart and easy to describe.

✦ 6. Write down your dreams

The Bible says - Hab. 2:2-3 (NKJV)

*“Then the Lord answered me and said: Write down the vision and make it **plain** on tablets, that he may run who reads it”*

The importance of written goals and dreams - A study

At Harvard and Yale Universities (Two of the most prestigious universities in the world) an extensive study was conducted. They interviewed a group of students:

- 3 % of these had clear goals in life which they had written down
- 10 % had goals in life which they had only in their minds
- 60 % had general dreams and goals in life
- 27 % had no idea what they wanted in life

✦ 20 years later, another study was carried out. They examined the impact on a person's future of early goal-setting. The result was amazing:

- The 3 % that had clearly specified and written down goals had a fortune that was bigger than all the other 97 % put together!

Similar studies have been made several times with the same results.

The effect of writing down dreams and goals can't be overestimated

When you write down your dream and define it, you are giving your life a clear direction. It is a creative proclamation.

- When you transfer your plans from your mind to the paper it's like making a contract with yourself to achieve this goal.

This act creates commitment and direction and releases your potential. In God's eyes it is like a prayer and a dedication that he will release his power to support, granted it is within the boundaries of his will.

Remember!

When you write down your dreams you must

- Make it plain - specific, pithy and easy to understand.
- Keep it in a place where you often see it.
- Read it regularly and remind yourself of the dream.

Feed the dream and nurture it!

When we read it, we get new energy so that we can run with the dream without becoming weary.

The dream needs to regularly be prayed over, read, thought of, spoken about, proclaimed over our lives and acted upon.

- We think, speak and breathe the dream.
- We love the dream and the dream loves us.

By constantly repeating and reminding yourself of your dream, you are feeding the dream substance in your heart.

And the substance in your heart will grow all the time. You will get the feeling that you have already conquered it in your heart before it has become a reality.

- When you reach that point, nothing can stop you from fulfilling your dream.

★ 7. Beware of dream killers

God created man to conquer life through the power of dreams, but there can be many things that hinder us, things that don't allow us to tap into this powerful source:

1. *Past experiences*

Maybe we have failed in reaching earlier dreams and goals.

Setbacks are inevitable on the bumpy road to fulfilling dreams.

The question is not if we will have setbacks but how we manage them. The good thing with past experiences is that they are in the past.

If your dream is crushed, dream a new dream, a bigger one!

2. *Your past or present social environment*

You may live in an environment that limits your thinking about what you can become in life.

You, your family and the people around you may tell you that "this is what you have and there will be no change".

- **Invisible walls** that keep you in custody!

This is the function of dreams - to pull you out of your present situation and give you something better.

3. *Condemnation*

You may struggle with an inferior feeling like "Who am I to think something great about my life?", or "I'm not good enough!". Always remember that God loves you and wants you to believe in yourself. He is for you and not against you. Think well about yourself!

You must have confidence in two persons to be able to succeed: **God and yourself!**

4. *Caution*

Dreams must be bold. Otherwise they are just ordinary plans. Raise the appraisal of yourself and dare to think big and beautiful!

5. *The attitudes of other people*

Other people can never understand your dreams, because they have not seen them.

- It is you who carry the dream, not them.

So if others mock you or question you about your dream - do not care! Just make sure that your dream is genuine and sanctioned by God.

You must always understand where the source for the fulfillment of your dream is - it is God and not man.

Like for Joseph, dreamers are often questioned in the beginning and praised in the end. Ask God to sanction or reject the dream by the confirming testimony of the Holy Spirit in your heart and a bible verse to ensure if he stands behind your dream or not.

✦ 8. Testing your dreams

Now dreams can't be taken easily if they are to come true.

There is some testing we must do before we start to consider our dreams as true dreams.

1. You can't dream about something that is sinful, or in conflict with something God has revealed to you.
2. Be honest and dig deep into your heart to find out if you have a true conviction that you:
 - a) really desire this dream,
 - b) are willing to do what it takes to pursue the dream
 - c) believe it is possible to reach the dream
3. Ask God to sanction or reject the dream by the confirming testimony of the Holy Spirit in your heart and a bible verse to ensure if he stands behind your dream or not.

If you have passed all these tests, just go for it, an adventure lies ahead of you!

If not, commit yourself once and for all to the Lord, seeking first his kingdom and his righteousness.

- Prioritize God, and He will inspire your dreams and desires

✦ 9. Commit your life to the dream

The Bible says - Luke 14:28-30 (NKJV)

“For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it – lest after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, ‘this man began to build and was not able to finish’”

We must understand that every halfhearted attempt to realize a dream will lead to failure.

- The realization of a dream will require a complete commitment from our side.

We must focus decisively and single-mindedly on the goal that is set ahead of us.

We must give everything we have into that dream.
We need to make a quality decision to persistently complete what we have started.

This is the price that our dream requires. The temptations to give up will be many:

but quitters never win and winners never quit!

The bigger your dream, the bigger the price to pay

That's why you must always honestly ask yourself:

“Am I willing to do what is required to fulfill this dream or not?”

If not, lower the level of your dream, until the level of the dream and the price you are willing to pay match each other. Then set your life on fulfilling it.

A smaller dream that you fulfill will get you greater satisfaction than a big dream that you don't fulfill.

We don't have to ask if it is possible to fulfill a certain dream or not, because God can make all things possible. The crucial question is “Am I willing to pay the price or not?”

Because success derives 90 % from attitude and 10 % from ability

If you have the right attitude, then you can acquire the knowledge and the abilities along the way.

✦✦ Homework

Prayer

Thank you Lord Jesus you are the origin of dreams, the true dream-maker.

Thank you that you gave me the ability to dream.

Deliver my mind and faith to start dreaming bigger.

I commit myself to be a person who dreams and pursue dreams.

I decide today that I will no longer walk around in circles, but head forward.

I believe when I move you move.

When I start to dream, you inspire those dreams.

You paint them on the canvas of my heart with the colors of faith.

Holy Spirit, be the brush.

I confess myself to be a dreamer!

In Jesus name!

Amen