

Dear to Dream Big

Gen 37:5-11

Intro: This past Monday we celebrated Martin Luther King Jr. day. MLK is most famous for his ***"I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.'"*** speech. What is often overlooked is the fact that many great men of our world had dreams; dreams of greatness for their nation, greatness for their people. In closing his ***"Old Soldiers Never Die"*** speech General MacArthur said, ***"I am closing my fifty-two years of military service. When I joined the army, even before the turn of the century, it was the fulfillment of all my boyish hopes and dreams."*** These dreams, the dream MLK and MacArthur refer to are not the kind of dreams that you have in the middle of the night. When they speak and others down through history of a dream it is a vision they have for the future.

That upon which our nation was built it is often referred to as the American Dream. The American Dream is a vision; a vision of how things can be. Carl Sandburg wrote, ***"The republic is a dream. Nothing happens unless first a dream."*** Sandburg isn't talking about a dream that wakes you up in the middle of the night; he is talking about seeing something beyond ourselves. When President Ronald Reagan said, in his second inaugural address, ***"We believed then and now there are no limits to growth and human progress when men and women are free to follow their dreams."*** He is talking about hopes and dreams; dreams for the future.

Ordinary people have dreams too. I have a dream; dreams of seeing people come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as a result of my ministry. Some of you had a dream when you moved your church from Hilligas Road to here, a dream of growing this church.

In our text today we read about a young boy (17 years old) who had a dream, in fact he had two dreams. From Joseph and his dreams we are made hopeful for a bright and successful future.

[Read Gen 37:5-11/pray/release children's Church]

Alan Cohen, an inspirational speaker and author said, ***"The only dreams worth entertaining are those which are far greater than the life we are already living. If we are guilty of any sin (Self-Inflicted Nonsense), it is accommodation. We hurt ourselves not by what we ask for; but by what we settle for."*** Author Robert Orben said, ***"Always remember there are only two kinds of people in this world, the realists and the dreamers. The realists know where they're going. The dreamers have already been there."*** Orben goes on to say that he sees three barriers to dreaming big dreams: Fear, Lack of Knowledge and Negative associations.

In scripture when we read about dreams, there are about 121 references to dreams in our KJV, in order to understand the meaning of dreams in scripture you have to understand the culture. Dreams in the culture of Joseph's day saw dreams as communication from a divinity. These dreams were not the kind we dream in the middle of the night, many of these dreams came while the person was in meditation on some aspect of life, family or religion.

Since the people we read about in Scripture did not live in a vacuum we know they were part of the culture they lived in, therefore, their concept of dream was the same as that of those around them. When we read about a man's dream in Scripture we are actually looking into the mind of that person and how he came to an understanding of what God's plan for his life was. He had spent time meditating on God and the teaching of God and then mediated on how those teachings applied to his life and family.

It is in this setting we meet Jacob and his sons. Joseph was Jacob's next to youngest son, he was the first born of Jacob's favorite wife Rachel. He was hated by his older brothers because he was their father's favorite. At 17 Joseph has a dream. Of course, like any dreamer, when he comes to a realization that the dream he has for his future is God's call on his life to be a leader and a provider he had to tell someone so he tells his brothers and they tell dad who cautions him. The brother's anger is only increased by his dream so they come up with the plan to get rid of their younger brother. They sell him to some Ishmeelite merchantmen that take him to Egypt and sell him to Potiphar, Pharaoh's captain of the guard. Most of you know the rest of the story. Joseph is accused of assaulting Potiphar's wife and is thrown into prison and forgotten about. One day Pharaoh had a dream and no one can interpret the dream. Then Pharaoh's butler, who had been in prison with Joseph, remembers how Joseph had interpreted a dream for him and tells Pharaoh. Pharaoh has Joseph brought to him and Joseph interprets the dream and Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of his entire kingdom.

Joseph's big dream years before begins to be fulfilled. He didn't have a small dream he had a big dream. His dream went way beyond himself; it was a dream of redemption. Many of us today go through life just living one day at a time waiting for retirement and then the "golden years." Unfortunately many who have arrived at those years will tell you that they aren't very "golden" for anyone except doctors, hospitals and insurance companies. Life seems to have very little meaning in the big scheme of things. What we all need is a sense of significance in our lives. What we need is a sense that what we are doing has meaning; meaning that will live on beyond our lives.

Joseph's life screams out to us today to **Dare to Dream. But why? Why Dream Big; Why Dream at all?**

Because Dreaming big...

1. Enables us to realize that God has a Plan for us!

- a. Jeremiah 29:11 tells us, ***"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."***
 - i. Joseph understood this; he understood that God had a plan for his life
 - ii. Joseph dreams clearly paints a picture of God's plan for his future:
 - iii. Actually it seems that it is two dreams that address the same issue from two different angles. The first one speaks of how one day all his brothers would come to depend on him for their sustenance and the second speaks of how he would also be ruler of them; including his father
 - iv. Joseph held on to that dream all through his life.
- b. Dreams give us direction for our life – it puts things into perspective
 - i. Vince Lombardi said, "I firmly believe that any man's finest hour--his greatest fulfillment to all he holds dear--is that moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle--victorious."
- c. Have you ever taken the time to just get alone with your thoughts and talk to God about your desires; your dreams?
- d. When you do; and I mean really spend some alone time with Him you will find that He will begin to develop in you a dream, a desire, a determination that can motivate you beyond anything you have ever realized.
- e. You see, this kind of Dream can Reveal God's...
 - i. Presence
 - ii. Plan
 - iii. Purposes
- f. When you dare to dream big dreams you are like the engineer of the Brooklyn Bridge. During the building he was injured. For many months, he was shut up in his room. His gifted wife shared his toils and carried the plans to the workmen. At last the great bridge was finished. Then the invalid architect asked to see it. They put him on a cot and carried him to the bridge. He lay there helpless, looking at the beautiful structure he had created. His critical eye looked at the cables, the peers, the beams, the rods, the rivets. He noted that every detail was carried out precisely as he had dreamed it in his dreams. In delight he cried out, "It's just like the plan, it's just like the plan."
- g. When we dare to dream big dreams God can reveal His plan for our lives and when we arrive at the end of our days we can look back at our life and say with this engineer, ***"It's just like the plan, it's just like the plan."***

Because Dreaming Big...

Enables us to realize that God has a Plan for us...

2. Enables us to live by faith in spite of the Life's Circumstances – Live by Faith

- a. Dreams can keep us going when the going gets tough (Gen 41:10 – 40:23)
 - i. Life in the Pits –
 1. Before the brothers sold Joseph he put him down in a pit; do you suppose that has he set there in that pit the dream he had crossed his mind?
 2. Or, after he was sold to Potiphar and Potiphar's wife came on to him do you think that it was the dream he believed was from God enabled him to remain pure when it would have been much easier to give in?
 - ii. Life in the Prisons –
 1. Then he is tossed into prison when he is wrongfully accused by Potiphar's wife; yet he was able to go on?
 2. In fact when he was put into prison the Bible says that ***"the LORD was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that***

was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.” Gen 39:21-23

3. Do you just suppose that when all this was going on his dream was a memory in the front of his mind?
 4. Without the dream Joseph's faith may not have been as strong.
 5. He remained faithful because he understood that God had a plan; He had revealed it to him when he dared to dream big.
- iii. Life in the Palaces –
1. Once Joseph was released from the prison for interpreting Pharaoh's dream he was elevated to the highest ranking person in the land other than Pharaoh of course.
 2. When he arrived at that place of all authority he never used it to rule with an iron hand do you suppose he understood that he had finally arrived at the fulfillment of a dream God had given him years before?
- iv. When you dare to dream big dreams and God reveals to you His plan for your life then you become single minded to see that dream through to fulfillment.
- b. The movie City Slickers starring Billy Crystal, is the story of a man who (going through a mid-life crises), decides to go out with some buddies and rustle cattle for a week. The trail boss they report to is named Curly (played by Jack Palance).

Curly really seems to have his head together and Crystal's character keeps asking him what the secret is. Curly's only reply is to hold up his index finger and say, "One thing."

Finally in frustration Crystal asks, "Well, what is that one thing?" To which Curly replies, "That is what YOU have to figure out - no one can do it for you."

- c. What are you singularly focused on? Have you dared to dream big dreams? Has God given you a dream and are you focused on that dream?
- d. If not maybe today is the day you can take a moment and focus on God and dare to dream big then set back and watch as God fulfills that dream in your life.

Why dream big...

Because Dreaming...

Enables us to realize that God has a Plan for us...

Enables us to live by faith in spite of the Life's Circumstances – Live by Faith...

3. Enables us to accomplish Great Things for God

- a. People who dream big are able to find Success when others see failure.
- b. Paul understood this when he said to the church in Philippi, **"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."** Philippians 4:13
 - i. Joseph could have become very discouraged setting in that pit – but he didn't
 - ii. He could have allowed the circumstances that landed him in prison bring him to the conclusion that he was nothing but a loser and a failure –
 1. His brothers hated him
 2. Now his boss was mad at him
 3. And he is in jail for no good reason, he had every reason to through up his hands and given in and become just like the rest of those in jail
 4. But there was one thing that caused him to keep going, you see he had his dream and as long as he had his dream he knew that what seemed like losses were only stepping stones to success.
 5. God had a plan for him; his dream and until he was able to provide for all his family and until he was ruler over all like that dream revealed each seeming set back was really only part of the process to success.
- c. Dreams can Led to great accomplishments for God (Gen 41:1 – 46ff)
 - i. The total number of Joseph's family that came to Egypt was around 75 or 89.
 - ii. The total number that left 2,000,000 (Ex. 12:37)
- d. God's Dream is complete to Him but not to you so as long as that dream has not been fulfilled the circumstances your in at the moment are only part of the fulfillment process
- e. Most individuals want to have their dreams and yet are not willing to give up anything to achieve them. This is self-deception. Choosing to become great in any area means choosing to not be great in something else. There will always be a price to pay - there will always be a sacrifice.
- f. Dwight L. Moody understood this when he said, **"The world has yet to see what God can do with one man totally committed to him."** – Dwight L. Moody

- g. You want to accomplish something great in this life?
- h. You can, take time to dare to dream big dreams and let God reveal to you just what it is He has for you then commit your life to seeing it through.
- i. Novelist Anatole France once said **“To accomplish great things, we must dream as well as act.”** (1844 - 1924)
- j. When we were down in Branson at Christmas my son, son-in-law and I took all the older kids to the IMAX Theater. We saw a documentary about the Lewis and Clark expedition. I was overwhelmed by what they accomplished for our nation. These two men with a handful of men and one Indian woman, Sacagawea, traveled more than 3,700 and 19 months to find the Northwest Passage and a land rout to the Pacific Ocean. While watching that movie I was struck with the fact these two men could have never accomplished such a great thing for their nation had they not had a great vision. When you read their journals all you read are comments that show a determined and driven group of men. They had a dream of reaching the Pacific Ocean and they were going to accomplish it and nothing was going to stop them.
- k. What made them keep going when the temperature dropped to 50 and 60 degrees below 0? They had dared to dream big and that dream kept them going and they accomplished great things.
- l. The same is true of us, when we dare to dream big it enables us to accomplish great things for God.

Conclusion: Henry Ford had a dream that grew out of his interest in mechanical things as a boy. He was intrigued by the automobile, built his first one out in a shed behind his house. His dream was to put the horseless carriage, at that time only available to the wealthy, into the hands of the common person. He helped form the Detroit Motor Company, where his fellow organizers balked at the idea of manufacturing their product inexpensively in order to sell to the masses. Ford left the company, but he did not leave his dream. In 1903 he organized the Ford Motor Company and produced the Model T. The first year, only 6,000 cars were built, but only 8 years later, over 500,000 cars a year rolled off the line. They were able to reduce the cost from \$850 to \$360, Ford's dream, like Joseph's, came to pass.

You might be a dreamer; and like Henry Ford you to have a dream; purse it go for it.

But remember Satan will always have those around you trying to destroy your dream. They might try to destroy your dream because of contempt or jealousy but keep holding on to your dream.

Let me give you 5 quick steps that will clear away the clutter and help you discover or fine-tune your dream.

1. Believe in your ability to succeed. You cannot perform in a manner inconsistent from which you see yourself.
2. Get rid of your pride. People who are full of themselves usually don't have much room left over for a life-changing dream. Pride puts the focus on appearance rather than potential, and it prevents you from taking risks.
3. Cultivate constructive discontent. Discontent is a driving force that makes people search for their dreams. Complacency never brings success and only constructive discontent will motivate you to find your purpose and grow to reach your potential. Every invention registered in the U.S. Patent Office is the result of creative discontent. Each inventor, not satisfied with something the way it was, found a way to constructively overcome their dissatisfaction, either creating something new, or improving on what already existed.
4. Escape from habit. Habits can be defined as something you do without thinking. Habits can kill a dream because when you stop thinking, you stop questioning and dreaming. You accept what IS without considering what could be.
5. Balance creativity with Character. Successful people have enough creativity to think it out and enough character to try it out. They have enough creativity to see it in their minds, and enough character to produce it with their lives.

All the dreaming in the world will not work unless you wake up and go to work.

Then, after you have caught the dream, you must invest in it emotionally; it has to go beyond your thoughts to your feelings. That is when Joseph became a threat to his brothers; they could sense the feelings of his dream. Then you have to seek after it. It takes hunger, tenacity and commitment to see a dream through to become a reality.

Are you tired of going through life felling insignificant? Then dear to dream big because big dreams...

Enables us to realize that God has a Plan for us...

Enables us to live by faith in spite of the Life's Circumstances – Live by Faith...

Enables us to accomplish Great Things for God