

PRACTICAL LIVING SERIES SEVEN
WHAT GOD DREAMS FOR YOU
Pastor Jack Schull
Jer. 29:11; 2 Peter 3:9; Eph. 5:15-18; I Thess. 4:3-8

Intro:

Video: “the power of a dream” (sermonspice.com) (2:56min)

Dreams are powerful things aren't they?...

Dreams have a way of compelling & changing nations and cultures...we've seen that happen
 --*They fuel movements...*

Ever four years we witness the power of dreams thru the Olympics -- we're captivated by the stories of their dreams

On 1 hand: Dreams are powerful things, aren't they?! **(PAUSE)**

Dreams can also be funny AND weird too...

Q who here has ever had a dream...where you wake up in the morning and think that was weird?

→ for centuries, man has set out to interpret dreams – to find their meaning

Gustavus Miller in the early 1900's set up an A-Z catalog of interpretations. He called it the *Scientific and practical interpretation of dreams*

As I was looking thru it – it had everything in the world: dreams about flying; tweezers, groceries, mother-in-laws, macaroni, dentists...

he had rhubarb! Now, if you're dreaming about rhubarb..that's weird...

(anyone here brave enough to admit you've dreamed about rhubarb?)

He said this to interpretations about:

- **Falling:** denotes that you will undergo some great struggle, but will eventually rise to honor;
- **Lobsters:** denotes great favors and riches will be bestowed upon you
- **Lockjaw:** signifies there will be trouble ahead (duh?)
- **Europe travel:** foretells you will soon be on a long journey
- **Hunger:** you will not find comfort and satisfaction in your home (which I thought perhaps is why Taco Bell & Wendy's are open late)
- **Salad:** if you're a young woman eating a salad in your dream – foretells she will marry a cheerful man; with the means to keep her comfortable... (I was handed a note before I came up here that: today's special in our food court: chicken ceaser salad!)

Dreams can be silly

Dreams can be powerful

The reality is: we all have dreams, aspirations, hopes → they have a way of fueling our lives...

We grow up dreaming: we strive to see them materialize; and sometimes they happen!!!

- *Dreams of: driver's license, landing that 1st job, having children*

**** Sometimes, there comes a day when we realize that some dreams have to die, there just not going to happen... Unlike a Disney movie... sometimes they don't come true (I dreamed I'd play in the NBA)...**

Dreams are a part of our lives → it starts when we're kids: **I want you to turn to 3 people right around you (your little neighborhood and share 1 childhood dream you had)**

- talk time: 38 seconds—

Q

How many of you had some dreams fulfilled?
How many had some dreams go by the wayside?...

What about your current dreams?... NO matter how old we get, the dreams will keep on coming...

- dreams for ourselves
- for our children – family
- for our friends – for our future

Q Have you ever wondered what God dreams about? Does He have a dream for you? For me?
What does Our Heavenly Father dream about for us?

I believe His dream is that we would fulfill His will; b/c His will leads to the best possible life, leads to the best possible relationship with Him!!!

Jeremiah 29:11 (He has plans for you...)

I believe His plans, his dreams are knowable! Scripture lays out a lot of them! We don't have to embark on some mystical quest! Or strain to find them...

Illust: I remember grad. High school...

→ see, when I was a kid = I really wanted to know God's will (his dream) for my life. What did he want me to do...so (you might find this odd), I started praying that God would write me a letter! I wanted to go out to my mailbox and open this letter from God that would detail where I was to go to school, who my friends should be, whom I should marry, how many kids, where to live, what to do with my life... I was consumed with wanting to know his will – so I could then go and DO IT.

Friends → we all have those times when we want to know what we should do...God is not afraid of those questions – in fact the book of James says we should ask God for wisdom...

God is much more interested in WHO I'M BECOMING over the WHAT I AM TO DO

WHO I AM

WHAT I DO

Ex: we care more about that too as parents: what you dream and prayer for your kids has much more to do with the type of person they'll be – what they'll be like → then it ever does with what they'll be doing! If they're BEING is right, then they're DOING will take care of itself...

T

So God dreams for us as our Heavenly Father → and he desire for us to know him and be captivated by his dream for you... → I want us to look at 6 places in the bible where God's will, His dream is very clear.

→ we could spend yrs unpacking God's dreams – today we'll be scratching the surface – what it might look like for us to discover and lean into his dreams for us...

1. It's God's dream that you be in intimate friendship with Him!

2 Peter 3:9

Story:

Husband/Wife loses heirloom wedding ring thrown in garbage; trash gets picked up; contact waste management; company dumped all the trash from that area at a certain at the landfill; husband and wife dug through the garbage for hours → finally finding this ring

Pt → when something is valuable – you search for it, want to be reunited with it – you don't say: "well, I've got other rings" → God never says: "well, I've got other kids..."

→ This ring was worth finding! that's how God's heart is for us – his dream is to be reunited with you!
→ Catch this truth: in God's Mind: you're worth searching for – you're worth finding!!

The Bible paints this picture of us as humans beings ...b/c of our sin and brokenness - there is this giant wall that separates us relationally from God– and only through believing in the sacrifice that Jesus made on the cross can that wall be broken down → so we can experience an intimate friendship with God – fully reconciled & reconnected with him

And that → is His greatest dream for you and I!

Reread: 2 Peter 3:9

→ the *GREEK* word for 'slow' here in the verse means that God is (lingering, hesitating, delaying – he's patient b/c he wants EVERYONE to be in relationship with Him. He's continually calling: ***please come home...***

→ his plan to give you a hope/future begins in a friendship w/ Him (reunited thru Jesus)!!!!

2. It's God's dream that you be Spirit-filled

Ephesians 5:15,17-18

The bible is filled with this call for us as Christ followers – to be more and more reflective of His nature.

(Gal 5 – fruit of the Spirit) lists out some of God's core attributes that He so beautifully displays and He desires that they be on display through our lives more and more...(attributes like: love, joy, peace, kindness, self-control, etc) **(who wouldn't want more of that in their life?)**

It's not that I set out to work really hard to make these attributes come out of me – that somehow I can produce them...manufacture this fruit on my own...

Think of a tree:

Illust

You'll never see a tree on a treadmill - sweating and grunting to produce fruit – it never has the mantra of: no strain, no gain

Trees don't have an exercise program, they're not on the south beach diet, don't have a weight training regimen – they're not even reading 7 habits of highly effective foliage..

Q – how does a tree produce it's fruit? --- They soak up the nourishment that God provides and then that turns into fruit production.

The spiritual life that Jesus invites us too – is in line with that picture. God's dream is that as we lean into Him and experience more and more of His nature, his attributes → that he'd be freed up to start producing more of His nature through your life...

You could think of it in a musical picture:

Let's say that this glove is you and this piano is life – in order to play life well, you try to do things on your own, your way, through your unskilled efforts...and your life might sound like this...(jack plays the piano)

But if we surrender to God's dream of letting him have the control – his hands can play life much sweeter... (Melissa plays piano)

Reread Eph. 5: 15, 17,18

3. It's God's dream that we be/live pure!

1 Thess 4:3-8 (*emphasize verse 7*)

God dreams that his people would be pure – set apart to be holy like he is holy. That we begin to operate life with a different set of values...those values lead us to spiritual purity!

King David cried in the Psalms: “God **give** me clean hands and a pure heart”
Why? → **b/c I can't do it on my own...**

→ **Because purity leads to a deeper relationship with God!**

Q how many of you like a clean house?

ST

Anyone have dogs? /!!!! We have 2. over the yrs during the monsoons...I have experienced this reality. When my dogs would come in from outside → I'd want to clean their feet. Them having dirty, muddy feet tracking all over the house – doesn't lead me to have a better, more meaningful relationship with my dogs. **WHY?**

→ **my idea of clean and my dogs understanding of clean are different!**

We live in a culture that likes clean: **I went to Basha's** and counted over 60 diff products that had to do with cleaning the kitchen/bathrooms (and don't get me started on laundry detergents)...
 --On one hand - we are obsessed with clean – but yet, we are the same people that maybe don't understand “clean”...

Answer the following scenarios in your own mind:

→ **Q** ask yourself...have you ever:

- Vacuuming and a string won't come up – you run the vacuum over it from different angles, then you stop, pick it up, throw it down to give vacuum another chance...go to pick something up and you whiff, so you keep bending over like 5 times to finally get it...
- Using the dust pan – and there is always some little miniscule pieces of dust that don't go into the pan – so you brush it across the floor or under the rug
- We drop a food item and then reach to pick it up → THE 5 SECOND RULE: – and we get it clean again by what? _____ **blowing on it** _____

God's understanding of purity and my understanding are different! He's completely and totally HOLY AND WE ARE NOT!!!

His kind of purity only comes through **sanctification**: big bible word (let me make it not so scary)

Sanctification:

It simply means: **the process** of Jesus continually cleaning out the bad habits and hang-ups within us all...Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, paid for our sins totally and completely → now he's set about power washing our lives so we can:

- **experience God more intimately**
- **and have others see God within us more clearly ...**

→ REMEMBER: Jesus comes along early on in his ministry and says this: "blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God!"

→ one way to foster purity in your heart – is to practice confession and keep short accounts with God

Reread 1 Thess 4: 3&7

4. It's God's dream that you learn to be submissive & do good.

1 peter 2:13-15

Submission is a word we don't like at times...b/c it means we're not in control. We have a hard time of yielding our will to someone else!

In fact at an early age we begin getting frustrated with the idea of submitting and doing the right thing...

- Just look @: every parent trying to get their children out of the giant gerbil cage at McD's

Illust:

Q – how many of you have every been a parent or a child?

→ THERE'S BEEN AN EVER PRESENT BATTLE SINCE THE DISCOVERY OF CHOCOLATE:...

As a parent: I don't want my little kids to eat candy all the time...

My kids have complained about this boundary. They've expressed through persuasive speeches how this is a violation of their freedom and how the sugar from candy can actually fuel them with the required bursts of energy they need to take on childhood best...

Why do I disagree with their speeches and pleas? Why do I not let them have only candy? → B/c I've got their best interests at heart.- it's for their own good...

Duet 10:12-13

12 And now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to observe the LORD's commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?

→ Submission is a part of a healthy way of living...and the spiritual life that Jesus shows us is one of submission and yielding to what the Father is revealing. → you see that pattern all over his life!

AND GOD WANTS THAT PATTERN IN MY LIFE – YOUR LIFE TOO → B/C HE'S CONCERNED ABOUT THE WHO I'M BECOMING...

5. It's a part of God's dream that you suffer well.

→ Rylee - got her hand shut in the van door a few months ago @ Sonic...just wrong place at the wrong time (you've experienced similar things)...it was traumatic → I held her close and comforted her...I NEVER SAID "well, Rylee – it's God's dream/will that we learn to suffer well..."

That's NOT what this is saying – look with me @ what Apostle Peter says:

1 Peter 3:17, 4:19

→ Q – anyone here shut their hand in door?

The Question is NOT: will you and I encounter suffering or hardships – We will, B/C everybody is going to face some suffering... this text is encouraging us to suffer well! Face it well!

→ WHY? b/c God's grace can empower us – as his followers - He promises we'll never be alone...that God is right in the middle of it with you! He can use circumstances to shape our hearts to be more like his...

The TENSION COMES – w/ the whole notion of suffering in general → as we are prone to avoid suffering at all costs:

***We live in the land of medicine – we seem to have a pill for almost every kind of ailment – we don't like suffering...so we ask: what can I take to get rid of it?

All throughout the life of Jesus and in the Scriptures: There is this spiritual truth: at times: suffering will be a part of spiritual growth

b/c: God prefers, in almost every instance, our growth over our comfort:

James writes: James 1:2-4

Endure, Persevere, Keep doing the right thing → don't allow struggling circumstances to cause you to buckle and begin doing the wrong thing..

Illust:

My Mother was the best example of this I've ever seen (briefly describe her condition) → she may have had times of disappointment, frustration – but she never complained...what she experienced in intimacy with the Father made it worth it too her.

1 Peter is teaching us: → in the midst of suffering: there's this fresh

- exp. of the the mystery of Christ (THAT WHEN I'M AT MY WEAKEST – HE'S AT HIS STRONGEST) his power is at work within you – and you're drawn into a deeper walk with Him

- As a Christ-follower – our suffering is for SOMEONE! -- Jesus gets the glory as we do it well...people marvel at how we're handling our struggle – and we get to say: it's his power at work in my life – His name gets the spotlight –

T

And now, the last part of the dream we'll look at today:

1 Thess 5: 17-18

**6. It's God's dream that we be filled with joy
Constantly praying
Overflowing with gratitude**

Seems pretty self explanatory: but what's the heart underneath this?

Remember when you were first in love? Those early days of dating...

- Every time you saw YOUR SWEETHEART – filled your heart with this unexplainable joy
 - You were constantly communicating with one another (phone, email, text, IM)
 - You were continually doing things for one another and saying thanks, *SNOOKUMS*
- I know: and then you got married...

→ that kind of emotional connection is what God desires to share with us...that he can provide that constant joy (despite our circumstances), that he wants to be in constant communication with us and how as our lives are filled with gratitude for all the things he not only did for us through Christ, but all he does day by day – and All that He is!!!

T

The way to stay aligned and tapped into God's dream for you is: through delighting in Him

Psalm 37:4

The person who is delights in God is fulfilling His dream

Conclusion:

B/C the reality is: Dreams are powerful! – God's dream can empower your life!

Q → so how are you doing at dreaming God's dream for your life?

I'd like to invite us to reflect for a moment on God's dream for you. The WHO YOU'RE BECOMING! (knowing that as you allow him to work on the WHO YOU ARE (he will give you the desires and wisdom for what you're TO DO)

→ the worship team is going to lead us in song...a moment to reflect – just b/t you and God!

In your Sunday program is a card listing those 6 parts of God's dream we talked about; I'd like you to consider which part you might be out of sync with – maybe the one that you feel God is wanting you to align with a bit more?

You spend some time b/t you and God praying through that...listening to Him during this song. ---I'll come back up to close us in just a moment---

(Larry & worship team)

SONG

I hope today has been helpful for you – maybe discovering a part of God’s dream you!

- Now if you’re here this morning and the first part of God’s dream – being in relationship with him is the part you’re missing, than why not get that aligned today? As we’re dismissed in just a moment: You come see me right down here...
- Maybe you’re wanting to join our church family – I’d invite you to meet our pastor’s in the hospitality room
- Lastly – **if you filled out that card and you’d find it helpful to have our staff pray for you;** baskets located by the exits, just drop your card in there and this week our staff will be praying specifically for you, for you to experience God’s dream and wisdom more in your life!

I’d like to ask you to stand with me for a closing prayer...and we’ll be dismissed *to comm’ty groups!*

Closing Prayer

Lord, I’m grateful that you are a Heavenly Father that has dreams for each one of us. That your dreams are full of hope and lead us into a deeper intimacy with You. This week would you search our hearts and allow us to experience and be drawn into more of your dream...

Lord - I know you have dreams for your Church, your Kingdom, as well...we ask that you’d guide our hearts to be aligned with your dreams for Casas...that your expression of your church here at Casas would be everything you want her to be and nothing short of it..

Father - Bless us, Guide us, Speak to us – as we go, simply b/c you love us. We ask for all this in Jesus name...Amen