

Living The Dream

Text: Genesis 37: 5-11

The Plain Truth

God's dream is fulfilled _____ you when you are _____ the _____ of the dream.

A) Joseph _____ God.

B) Joseph had _____.

C) Joseph chose _____ over the prison of _____.

One Year Bible Reading

May 3: Judges 17:1-18:31, John 3:1-21, Psalm 104:1-23, Proverbs 14:20-21
May 4: Judges 19:1-20:48, John 3:22-4:3, Psalm 104:24-35, Proverbs 14:22-24
May 5: Judges 21:1-Ruth 1:22, John 4:4-42, Psalm 105:1-15, Proverbs 14:25
May 6: Ruth 2:1-4:22, John 4:43-54, Psalm 105:16-36, Proverbs 14:26-27
May 7: 1 Samuel 1:1-2:21, John 5:1-23, Psalm 105:37-45, Proverbs 14:28-29
May 8: 1 Samuel 2:22-4:22, John 5:24-47, Psalm 106:1-12, Proverbs 14:30-31
May 9: 1 Samuel 5:1-7:17, John 6:1-21, Psalm 106:13-31, Proverbs 14:32-33

May 2 & 3, 2015

Living the Dream

Life Group Lesson • Week of May 3

Just this week I heard someone say, “I’m living the dream, man, living the dream.” To most people *Living the Dream* is the notion that life is good and things are going our way. But as followers of Christ in a broken world, we must remember that God says: “My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts...and my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine” (Isaiah 55:8). God loves His children too much to let them settle for selfish dreams. *Living the Dream*, that is, faithfully living into God’s dream, God’s call, and God’s purposes for you, will have these two factors in place: (1) God will always be at the center of the dream and (2) God will always bless others—help them, not harm them—through His dream for you.

Read Genesis 37:1-11

Joseph was seventeen when the Lord gave him the two dreams—the bundles of grain bowing before him, and the sun, moon, and eleven stars bowing before him. Perhaps he was a bit naïve to so blatantly share the dream with his already-jealous brothers, and eventually his father. And yet, had young Joseph not shared those dreams with his family they would not have recalled what he said when those dreams were fulfilled many years later.

1. Think of a time the Lord revealed something to you—a calling, vision, passion—and you knew undeniably you weren’t making it up. It was definitely the Lord’s voice. How long did it take you to share the “dream” with someone else? Who did you share that “dream” with? How did they respond? What has become of it—how is that dream unfolding?

Jacob favored Joseph and although Joseph wasn’t his firstborn, Joseph was the first born of Rachel. Jacob loved Joseph so much he had a special gift made for him, a beautiful robe. Like many parents, Jacob obviously had high hopes for Joseph. Perhaps Jacob could envision Joseph eventually leading the family to prosper in Canaan, or perhaps to diplomatically secure alliances with surrounding peoples in Canaan. Certainly Jacob envisioned his son being by his side throughout his old age. But things did not unfold for Jacob as he has envisioned. Jacob had no idea when he sent Joseph to check on his brothers that their beautiful relationship would be severed. Jacob had no idea his other sons were so full of jealousy they wanted to get rid of Joseph.

Read Genesis 37:12-35

Bitter jealousy can lead to hate and even murder. Jacob’s sons not only had murder in their hearts (sold Joseph for twenty pieces of silver) but they made up a story to deceive their father who trusted them. Before selling Joseph to the Ishmaelite traders they took the beautiful robe and stained it with the blood of an animal. When they gave the robe back to Jacob, Jacob believed that his beloved Joseph was dead. Jacob’s sons never told their father the truth. How far down we spiral when we allow someone to believe a lie for years! Sin is deadly and provokes us to do things we never thought we would do – to lie, hate, and even murder. Sin can blacken our hearts and rob us of beautiful things like relationships and dreams.

2. Think about the complexities of this story—the plotting, the crime, the cover-up. How did sin try to snuff out the dream God had for Joseph and eventually Jacob’s entire family (and descendants)?

How has sin attempted to thwart God’s dream for you and your family?

Christ has defeated sin through His death on the cross. Even though the story of Joseph takes place many years before Jesus died on the cross, Christ has existed from the beginning (Colossians 1:15) and God’s plan of salvation has been in place since before the beginning of time (1 Peter 1:20).

While in Egypt the Lord is with Joseph and grows his character to reflect the image of the coming Christ. Like Christ, Joseph learns obedience through suffering, and remains faithful through false accusation and imprisonment. God’s dream for Joseph was not thwarted by the scheme of his brothers. In time, God used Joseph to not only spare Egypt from starvation, but to save the entire family of his father, Jacob, and each one of his brothers who had betrayed him.

3. In closing read **Romans 6:6-13**. How do these verses parallel Joseph’s choice to not allow sin and bitterness to destroy the dream?

How can sin lose its power in your life, so that God’s dream for you is not destroyed, but reclaimed?

“So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires...now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language. Don’t lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds. Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like Him.”

(Colossians 3:5a, 8-10)