



## Dreaming # 1

Hello everyone, welcome to "Notes From the Presence." Today I thought I would talk about dreaming. In using the term "dreaming," I am not referring to our night time dreams, but the dreams and desires of our heart. This subject has been quite dear to my heart and I have been doing a lot of thinking about it lately. I might take a few weeks on this idea depending on how things go today. The fact is, we were meant to live from heaven to earth and I believe this is the process our dreams take as they make the journey from inside our hearts to the external, natural realm.

I would like to start with a couple of scripture verses that I ran across a couple of months ago. They are found in the book of Ecclesiastes.

*Ecclesiastes 5:2-3, 6-7 Do not be hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore let your words be few. For the dream comes through much effort and the voice of a fool through many words.*

*Do not let your speech cause you to sin and do not say in the presence of the messenger of God that it was a mistake. Why should God be angry on account of your voice and destroy the work of your hands? For in many dreams and in many words there is emptiness. Rather, fear God.*

When I first discovered these verses, I must admit to being a bit put off. However, as I have processed them over the past weeks, I have come to see the wisdom contained in these statements. Dreams do not come to pass without much effort and too many dreams at once can actually be confusing. This is especially true if we pass from dream to dream, not giving each one the time to develop properly. In the process, we literally abort multiple dreams. I think we all know people who go from big idea to big idea, always talking a big talk, but never having any substance to back it up. As Solomon

states, there is a distinct emptiness in this kind of lifestyle. Instead, dreams are meant to be treated with great respect and their development is a divine process, sometimes spanning decades and requiring focus and dedication. The dreams of our heart are sacred ground.

I have always been a dreamer but recently there has been a lot of theological attention given to the dreams of our heart and how they are a divine link to the thoughts of heaven. I have spent quite a bit of time in Redding, California at Bethel church, a place where they actually nickname their culture the "dream culture." Actually, I remember the first time I made the trip down the coast to Bethel. When they started talking about the dreams of our heart, how it is OK to dream, and how God uses these dreams to co-labour with us to bring His kingdom to earth, there are no words to describe how alive I felt inside. It was like someone turned a light bulb on in my heart. From that moment on, what once was a shadow in my life became a full blown concern and I began dreaming unashamedly and boldly. I picked up Bill Johnson's book "Dreaming With God," and practically devoured it whole, then re-read it time and time again. I have been living a pretty extreme "dream based" lifestyle for almost a decade now and so the processes and perspectives that I am going to try to share in this blog come from a lot of experience and testing. Today, I am going to start a list of things I have discovered about dreaming with God. They are in no particular order and I will likely finish this list in the next article. So, if you are ready, here we go.

First, God built us to dream. The process of conceiving ideas in our heart and then processing them until they manifest in the natural world is central to our make-up as humans. Our human spirit was made to interface and connect directly with God's spirit. This divine partnership is so inspirational in nature that it produces all kinds of ideas. And so, our dreams have their origin in the "spirit" realm.

Second, dreams are much like children - they need to be birthed. There is a gestation period for all dreams. This waiting period is where dreams are refined and either developed or lost. The waiting process itself, can be complicated and is often unpredictable. Some dreams happen rather quickly, while others might take a lifetime to come to fullness. There are many things that can happen in a natural pregnancy and these same circumstances are mirrored in the dream world. Think of this fact: you never know what a baby will look like until it is born. Dreams are also like this. We have an idea, but until it actually happens, we don't know exactly what it will look like. In fact, we don't even know if it is a boy or girl and this is pretty fundamental information. Do we paint the room blue or pink - there is no way of telling. When dreaming, we often make a basic mistake - we get an idea of what we think something will look like, and we stick to this pattern with everything we have, even to the point of it destroying us. I have

learned that it is always wise to be flexible with dreams. There are also many complications that can happen in a pregnancy. Sometimes there are painful miscarriages (I understand that the normal rate is between 15-20%). Then there are pre-mature births, medical conditions, and other things that can come into play. In the end, birthing itself is a painful process that almost defies description. All of these things are mirrored in the world of dreams.

Thirdly, God is not intimidated by our dreams no matter how crazy. I do not believe in telling people that their dreams will not work. I don't care what it looks like, I have decided that I will never put someone down for their dream. God is the same. He never tells us not to follow our dreams, but instead gives us the seed-form answer to help us get the process started. The testing time that follows will provide an ample refining process. In the end, the dream might look much different than how it started, but it will be tested and tried by fire and it will be pure gold.

Fourth, dreamers are hotly contested by the devil. The devil hates those who dream and he uses every trick in his bag to discourage and dissuade them from their dreams. He delights in stealing a dreaming heart from people and he especially delights in getting people to abort their dreams. If he can get us into a pattern of aborting dream after dream, he can then use deferred hope to make sick hearts. In the process, he robs God's children of the will and desire to dream.

Fifth, dreams should not be blabbed carelessly for all to hear. I am thinking of Joseph here. He had a dream and then told it to the wrong people. In the process of his dreams coming true he was hated by his brothers, taken into captivity, and put into prison. When a couple becomes pregnant, they, by tradition, have a waiting period of approximately three months before starting to tell others. In fact, once a fetus develops a heartbeat at around 8 weeks, the likelihood of a miscarriage decreases by almost 80%. In the dream realm, there is much wisdom in a similar approach. This waiting period is a testing ground, a safe place to let the dream begin to develop and take on life and a heartbeat. It is a time to begin journaling, sifting, praying, resting and waiting before God, placing the dream in His sovereign hands over and over again. In this stage, I offer my dreams up to Him as an irretrievable act of worship over and over again, telling Him that they are His. I will only pick them up again if He gives them back to me. When He does give them back to me, often they appear slightly different from how they looked before. Dreams take on life and refinement in an environment of rest, trust, and worship. There is much safety in this modus operandi, both for our hearts, and also for the dream. When I begin to tell people of a dream, it is usually a trusted friend, or a small group of confidants. I usually go to them asking for wisdom and council and accountability as far

as the dream is concerned. As things develop, I will tell more and more people until the birthing time, which is a time for celebration for all.

In my next article, I am going to continue to talk about dreaming. I have several more items to add to the list that I have started today and admittedly, I am having way too much fun with this subject. I will end today by recapping the wisdom of Solomon that we started with: much effort goes into a dream, and when it comes to the sacred dreams of our heart, few words is often better than many words. However, there is nothing that compares to the joy of seeing a dream fulfilled. It is infinitely more than worth it in the end.

Thanks for reading. Jesus is real - and He wants us to dream on!