

Wednesday with the Word: A Conversation Around Scripture and Culture

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Daring to Dream Another Dream: God Has Something in Store for You Lesson #1: Mary, Joseph, Jesus and Dreams

Introduction:

When God bless a church God is not blessing a building. God blesses a community of faith to be a blessing. The vision is not for the building but for the people of God and the people we love and will serve. I am not looking for the church to grow to help pay bills. I praying for the church to grow to save and change lives. This is not about how much money raise but rather how much a difference we make in the lives of real people, facing real issue. We were created to love the world and make a real difference in the world. We were not created for retreat but rather for return. We were called to return to the world!

Dreams & Visions: Definitions

Dreams: contemplate the possibility of doing something or that something might be the case...a series of thoughts, images, and sensations occurring in a person's mind during sleep

Visions: an experience of seeing someone or something in a dream or trance, or a supernatural apparition. The ability to think about or plan the future with imagination or wisdom. A vivid mental image, especially a fanciful one of the future.

What do you dream about for your life?

What do you dream about for Wheat Street?

As you dream what do see as the cost to make that dream come true?

Are you willing to pay the cost to live the dream?

What is the vision for your life?

Wheat Street Vision Statement

Vision:

We exist to develop mature disciples of Jesus Christ / who make a real difference in the world / by actively seeking the love, justice, freedom, liberation and peace of God.

(Luke 4:18; Matthew 25:31-46; Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 1:16-20; Mark 6:30-44; Mark 7:1-23; Mark 9:33-37; Mark 10:13-16; Mark 12:41-44; Acts 1:6-11; Acts 2:14-21; Acts 2:43-47; Acts 4:23-37; Philippians 4:4-9)

Can you see this?

What does this look like?

Mission:

We are in union with God's work of liberation in the world. We reach outside the walls of the church to be the church. We are committed to innovation and change as God's calls us to reach and disciple people by doing ministry that makes a *real* difference 365 days a year. We get people closer to God, their community and God's will for their lives by *keeping it real*.

"We leave worship to be the church in the world. Make a difference this week!"

"We are a church in the heart of Atlanta with Atlanta in our heart!"

"We are a church with a rich history and an even brighter future."

The Promise of Dreams and Visions

Acts 2:14-21

14 But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. **15** Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. **16** No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: **17** 'In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,

- and your old men shall dream dreams.
- 18** Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.
- 19** And I will show portents in the heaven above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.
- 20** The sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day.
- 21** Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

What does this say to us about God's spirit of inclusivity?

Who does God promise to speak to and through?

As God is speaking to me as your pastor, God is also speaking to you. It is not just up to me to hear it also up to you to hear. When we hear God together there will be some "sense of unity" - operational unity. There will never be unanimity because we are not all going to hear from God. Some are deaf to God, some don't want to hear God and some are like Cain, they want to do it their way. You have to decide if you want to hear what God is saying, follow God and do this thing God's way. We have a choice.

The Power of a Dream: The Jesus Story Our Faith is Rooted in a Dream

Matthew 2:7-18

7 Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. **8** Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." **9** When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. **10** When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. **11** On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. **12** And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

What were the wisemen warned about?

How were they warned?

Why did they heed the warning (there is no right or wrong answer)?

How would you have responded?

The Escape to Egypt

13 Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him."

14 Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, **15** and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

Who appeared to Joseph?

How did he/she appear to Joseph?

What was revealed?

Why did Joseph listen?

What is the connection between biblical prophecy and Holy Ghost revelation (Hosea 11:1)?

Hosea 11:1

When Israel was a child, I loved him,
and out of Egypt I called my son.

Note: Our vision and faith is linked to God's word. It is God's word that speaks to our faith, informs and brings our vision to pass. The word of God is the unseen, along with the Holy Ghost that empowers, moves and provides as we respond.

See Hebrews 11:1-3 (NKJ)

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

2 For by it the elders (ancestors) obtained a *good* testimony (report).

3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed (created) by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

The Massacre of the Infants

16 When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men.

17 Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

18

“A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.”

So what are the implications of dreams?

Is it all good?

Is it all bad?

How do we deal with the mixture of good and bad when it comes to our embracing the dreams God has for us individually?

How do we deal with the mixture of good and bad when it comes to our embracing the dreams God has for as a congregation / faith community / church?

The Story Continues

Matthew 2:19-23

19 When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, **20** “Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.” **21** Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. **22** But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. **23** There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, “He will be called a Nazorean.”

What do we see?

Who appears to Joseph?

What is the medium God chooses to use to speak to Joseph?

How does Joseph respond?

What is the connection between the dream, the word of God and biblical prophecy?

What has God said about you to you?

What has God said about Wheat Street to you?

What do you see God doing?

How is God at work in your life to make the dream for this church come true?

Notes: