



## *Dreams—Alive, Dead, Reborn and Other Kinds*

By Kurt von Schleicher

### ***Have you discovered the specific fishing purpose that God has for you?***

Have you ever had a dream that came from really spicy pizza before? I have. There are different kinds of dreams. Perhaps you've had a dream for a happy marriage and family life, but your knight on a white horse in shining armor never showed up. He still can. Jesus is always on time! Maybe you've had a dream of doing something with and for God. Has it come to pass or have you been starting to grow discouraged about the whole thing? Maybe you've been wondering why it seems to be getting farther and farther away from being fulfilled rather than getting closer and closer to the time when it should become a reality ...even though you've worked hard on it and prayed about it for some time.

Man, I remember a time in the '80s when my wife and I were planning on doing some missions work overseas in Europe. I had been working for years just to prepare myself for all that was involved in that endeavor, including several language classes and correspondence. But then all of a sudden, some high profile but immoral American televangelists were nationally exposed for falling in sin. It was horrendous for our entire country and for the Church. Some of them had been long time false teachers in the first place, but it was still very tragic that they did what they did in Jesus' Name, and then missions giving subsequently dipped all across the land. It was understandable, due to the new widespread distrust of preachers. A few rotten apples made some extremely bad decisions and it brought reproach upon the church internationally. How would my unbelieving friends that I was trying to witness to at work ever give the Gospel another consideration? I, along with several other missionary candidates, lost several major donor-churches that now were struggling themselves and even laying off workers. My dreams were crushed. I felt like I had the wind knocked out of me with one swift kick in the stomach. I among others had a dead vision on my hands and I couldn't seem resuscitate it no matter what I did even though I felt like trying.

### ***Hope Long Deferred***

You remember how Joseph had a dream that was born in his heart ...that lived in his mind ...that was probably too much on his lips ...that died in a deep dry well and that was eventually sold off to Egypt as he was purchased from his brothers. But after years of hard work, much grief

from a married woman and a lonely prison there, God raised it from the dead. God had *feeding Joseph and others* on His mind. He didn't want them to starve to death. During the years of heartache, Joseph learned how to go to work on the dreams of others and God then made his own dream come to pass. And the Lord was glorified as He used Joseph and his dream to save countless hungry perishing people from all over the world. What a powerful witness to the nations that God loves ...of the Lord's greatness, mercy and compassion towards all people that was. When God gives you a dream it's because He has more than you on His mind. He wants you to go fishing for souls His way. He wants you to help feed people and rescue them.

I only wish I was there to see that dreamer who gave all the glory to God on that day when, ***"Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him quickly out of the dungeon; and he shaved, changed his clothing, and came to Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that you can understand a dream, to interpret it.' So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, 'It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace'"*** (Gen. 41:14-16).

Tens of millions of people today go through the motions as they try to make ends meet, as they try to find fulfillment and discover the purpose for which they were created ...even if they don't believe they were created. While searching to earn a living, or simply making a living, they continue to agonize in their hearts as days turn into months and months roll into years. Long ago they had a dream that they may have dismissed as immature or foolish. Some Christians even realize that the dream was sent from God, but they are unsure how to go about fulfilling it or, like me in Dallas hotel work, can't seem to make the dream happen.

The Bible says in Proverbs 13:12, ***"Hope deferred makes the heart sick."*** The world is filled with heartsick people whose hopes have been pulled out from under them like a dirty ole rug that's too often been beat with a broom on the outside porch. Though hope may *"spring eternal in the human breast,"* it seems to spring less and less, weaker and weaker after each deadline for fulfillment is postponed. When hopes dim, die, diminish ...or disappear altogether, our vision for the future tends to dim right along with them.

Why do so many people's hopes get commuted and deferred? Why are

the hopes of so many Spirit-born forgiven Christians put off, as well? I believe that there are three reasons for this.

***Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream! Discover. —Mark Twain***

First off, most unbelievers who come to Christ on His terms rather than their own, do so *after* experiencing tragedy, pain, un-fulfillment inside, crushed dreams, deep heartache, a family crisis or some unfair job reversal ...rather than coming to Him on the tails of winning the lotto, or after returning from a some two week free vacation on a south Atlantic cruise. And it is better that they come then than put it off and wait until they permanently lose their opportunity forever. All of a

sudden they see a real need for Christ's comforting power, purpose and peace. They want forgiveness. That's just factual and frank. Christians, on the other hand are forgiven but they could be pursuing some charismania-dream of grandeur, and excess or maybe some other leader's dream that he has for them to chase after... in other words, it could be a wrong dream. As a result, their hopes are deferred simply because God wants it that way. He wants them to grow up. The fulfillment of such a dream would not be good for them, for others or for the overall Kingdom of God.

Father knows best! I've had stupid dreams before and the fulfillment of such would only cause trouble, confusion and disappointment to me and to others. JOY come from having Jesus first, others second, and yourself last. Are you on the give or on the take? We are not called to live for a self-centered narcissistic dream. Winston Churchill puts things in perspective saying, "*We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.*" We are to live chiefly for the dream-Giver, not for any dream. And when dreams crumble in our fingers, there is God and He is enough.

Second, the timing or strategy we address the dream with may not be right. Some people tell me that they are hearing from God about their dream, but then when they tell me what they are

hearing, it is shockingly unbiblical. And many are attempting to do crazy lunatic things in the Name of Jesus just to make a dream come true. We are living in a day when biblical and moral illiteracy are at

***A vision without action: that's not a dream, just pure lameness! And action without a vision; is that more busyness or more of the same mess. Don't waste your time, because that's not sublime. But the right action with the right vision—one that He gave us, that's what it will take just to change us. —KvS***

an all time high. I've even heard some so called Christians say that God spoke to them about sleeping and living with their girlfriend. What Bible are they reading?

Many other Christians seem more skilled at hearing *what* God wants them to do than they are at hearing *when* and *how* He wants it done. We can mistake an inner "impression" concerning God's will for us as His green light to pursue its fulfillment immediately ...without ever going back to Him for the details and that can hurt a lot of people.

Many dreams God gives have a directive or a Bible-loyal message attached to them regarding some action or adjustment we need to take. And when we think that it's God who plants that certain dream in our heart, we all really need to test it quickly against what the Bible says to make sure, just like the Bereans in the book of Acts did when they heard the directives and Message of Paul. Paul commended them for doing this. For quite often, on the wings of God's directive, an idea or a dream, will come *our* own idea of application and how to get the ball rolling. There are way too many striving, pushy, carnal Christians out there blabbing all kinds of wacko statements of faith that are merely statements of pure presumption pointing them towards self consumption. When you get a dream, this is a very important time to check it out with the Word of God, to check with godly counsel, or to maybe check your bank account for your debt to income

ratio, or to check your inner motives and intent. Is your strategy heaven-sent, world-system-sent, ego-sent, hell-sent or well-meaning-pastor-sent? What about the original idea—you need to know where it came from! If it is sent from God, it won't go against the Word of God or lead you to rudely impose upon other people. You won't have to compromise spiritually, hurt people in any way or sin at all to see it fulfilled.

The Bible says, **“See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil”** (1Thess. 5:15-22, nkjv). Paul went on to say **“Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves”** (2 Cor. 13:5). The Apostle John said, **“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world”** (1 Jn. 4:1). The just shall not live by fellowshipping with demons or by hinting or by another person's faith. Does your strategy appeal to your fleshly nature or ego? Can God's leaders see the wisdom of God in your strategy as well as in the idea? The wrong strategy can set back the fulfillment of our dream for years. Why? Because we may have to dismantle the infrastructure or supporting apparatus of our own strategy before God sends us His.

A third reason for the setback of many of our dreams is that we lack spiritual strength when it is possible for us to have it. Paul commanded Timothy, **“Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus”** (2 Tim. 2:1, kjv). He said, **“Be on guard. Stand true to what you believe. Be courageous. Be strong”** (2 Cor. 16:13, nlt). And you remember how Abraham had to wait years but he, **“staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform”** (Rom. 4:20-21). Too many of us do not sow to the Spirit like we should—we watch too much TV, work too many hours and play too many video games, etc. I once heard the story of an American Indian chief who was led to the Lord by a missionary. Following that, the missionary was away from that area of the country for many years. Eventually he had the opportunity to stop by and visit with the old chief. When the missionary asked the old chief if he had been growing in his faith, this is how he answered:

*“It's like I have two dogs living within my body. One dog is black. He is a bad dog, and causes many problems in my life. The other dog is white. He is a good dog, and brings me much happiness. These two dogs are always fighting within me. When the black dog wins I am one sad chief all day long, but when the white dog wins I am victorious and jubilant inside all throughout the day.”*

To this the missionary asked, *“Which dog wins most of the time?”* The old chief answered, *“The dog I feed the most is the dog that wins.”*

It's like all Christians have those same two dogs living inside of them. The white one represents the Spirit who yearns for right living in harmony with God, and the black one represents my fleshly nature that wars against what God wants to see happen in my life. They never stop fighting for control. Every time I've ever been tempted to sin, my fleshly nature has always been all for me committing the sin. But I have also found the same thing is true of those two dogs in the

chief if you will ...living inside of me. The one I feed the most wins. That's why I need to take the time to sow to the Spirit daily in God's word, in reading sound Christian books, in fellowship with growing Christians, in hearing edifying Bible based messages at church or over the radio, in prayer, praise and worship of Christ and in witnessing to unbelievers. Those things build me up and make me strong in faith.

You remember how Hezekiah lamented, ***"This day is a day of distress and rebuke and disgrace, as when children come to the point of birth and there is no strength to deliver them"*** (Isa. 37:3). Before the births of our three boys, my wife Liney and I took these Lamaze prenatal classes to prepare and strengthen her for each upcoming birth. She would laugh when I had to help her breath—it was like panting. We were so excited in anticipation for each one. Part of the Christian's spiritual preparation is to live both in the reality of the present and in the hope of the future. So never allow your hopes to dim because of postponement, just keep Jesus first and you will be OK.

One time when my wife experienced a miscarriage it was such a huge disappointment for both of us. Seeing her weep made me feel such sorrow and like weeping myself. Later, I remember how she went past her due date with one of our boys. Man, I was having a hard enough time waiting up until the due date. I even remember giving her a teaspoon of cod-liver oil after that just to get the show on the road ...and she was willing to work with me on that believe it or not.

Yet how much better for the health of both mother and child to allow the birth at the proper time, rather than attempt to induce a birth when we *think* it ought to happen. We shouldn't try to induce the birth of your hopes and dreams either. Hope deferred is far better than hope destroyed because of inaccurate timing, improper strategy, or insufficient strength. So don't be weak.

### ***Dream fulfillment calls for Spiritual Warfare***

Remember the words of Paul about putting on strength, ***"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication"*** (Eph 6:10-18).

That passage is also about doing battle and being prepared for it. Many bibliophiles understandably feel like writing-off things written about *spiritual warfare* because there are many so called Christians that error big-time in this area. But when you became a real Christian you basically signed up not to play with toys on a playground. You signed up to war with weapons on a battleground—spiritual weapons rather than carnal. And you've got to know that some things are

worth fighting for, like for your marriage, for your family, for your church and for your evangelistic or missions ministry. Sure the Lord will fight for you, but you've got to participate with Him. Yes, you have a part to play in the warfare. That's how to see your God-give dream come to fruition.

Mister John Maxwell reflects and describes spiritual warfare saying, *"Early in my ministry, I was naive about how much Christian leaders have to battle the devil. But as I continue in my ministry, I find that I have to fight Satan more and more, and the battles usually occur when I'm making major decisions. I believe the evil one watches for the right time to attack Christian leaders, and he is especially active before an advance for God's kingdom, after a victory, and when a leader is just plain tired."*

Doesn't that fit the physical parallel we've seen in the old movies about World War II? You remember seeing the big B-17's as they came under heaviest attack from the Me109's and the FW190's and also from lots of flack right before they approached their drop target, or just after hitting the target as they embarked on their return flight home. Also, the German's would especially go after crippled aircraft or ones separated from their formation. Talk about why Christians shouldn't be loners, having no church or small Bible study group to attend. Loners don't survive. German's hated attacking a tight box formation of B-17's, each having 13 fifty caliber machine-guns to train out on their respective side of the box. And John Maxwell continued on by saying this: *"Any time a person is doing positive things for God, Satan will try to stop it. The higher you go up the ladder of Christian leadership, the higher you go on Satan's hit list. That means pastors and other church leaders are going to be under continuous spiritual attack because they spend the majority of their time working to build God's Kingdom."*<sup>1</sup>

Man, what American likes war these days? We like end them and bring soldiers home? What American believes we

**Theoden: *I will not risk open war!***  
**Aragorn: *Open war is upon you whether you risk it or not.*** —J.R.R. Tolkien, Lord of the Rings film

are in a spiritual war that calls for prayer? Physical battles are not popular in most places, but in our day spiritual ones will happen regardless of how we feel about them. We've got to be prepared for them! John Piper asserts, *"Life is war. That's not all it is. But it is always that... But most people do not believe this in their hearts. Most people show by their priorities and their casual approach to spiritual things that they believe we are in peacetime, not wartime... Very few people think that we are in a war that is greater than World War II, or than any imaginable nuclear war. Few reckon that Satan is a much worse enemy than any earthly foe, or realize that the conflict is not restricted to any one global theater, but is in every town and city in the world. Who considers that the casualties of this war do not merely lose an arm or an eye or an earthly life, but lose everything, even their own souls, and enter a hell of everlasting torment? Until we feel the force of this, we will not pray as we ought. We will not even know what prayer is... Prayer is the communication with headquarters by which the weapons of warfare are deployed according to the will of God... Prayer is the walkie-talkie of the church on the battlefield of the world in the service of the word. It is not a domestic intercom to increase the temporal comforts of the saints. It malfunctions in the hands of soldiers who have gone AWOL. It is for those on active duty. And in their hands it proves the*

*supremacy of God in the pursuit of the nations. When missions move forward by prayer it magnifies the power of God. When it moves by human management it magnifies man."*<sup>2</sup>

Has the Lord given you a specific dream or something to do in His Name? Christ won't leave you with it alone, **"He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it"** (1 Thess. 5:24). Paul tells us to put our hearts in it, **"And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men"** (Col. 3:23). As you begin to do God's Word, think it not strange when you suddenly come up against heated opposition. Amy Carmichael exclaimed, *"Don't be surprised if there is an attack on your work, on you who are called to do it, on your innermost nature—the hidden person of the heart. It must be so. The great thing is not to be surprised, nor to count it strange—for that plays into the hand of the enemy. Is it possible that anyone should set himself to exalt our beloved Lord and not instantly become a target for many arrows? The very fact that our work depends utterly on Him and can't be done for a moment without Him, calls for a very close walk and a constant communion of spirit. This alone is enough to account for anything the enemy can do... Don't be surprised if you suffer. It is part of the way of the cross... So rejoice! You are giving Him what He asks you to give Him: the chance to show you what He can do."*

The battle is for the minds and souls of people and the enemy of your soul seeks to hinder you filling your God-given-evangelistic (or other type of ministry) dream. He uses lies and deception hoping you won't sow to, or walk in the Spirit. He seeks to draw you into conflicts with people, knowing that if he can get you to react in the flesh towards someone misbehaving; he can eat your lunch! He wants to trip you up with pride, lust and selfish greed. But we are not to be ignorant of the wiles of the devil.

Contrary to what many preachers think, the Bible clearly teaches that no demon can possess any part of a real Christian and though the enemy is not even close to a match for God at all, the flaming arrows or darts of the wicked one are aimed right at the minds and emotions of people—even at Christians. It's because he literally hates Christians ministering and fishing for souls! But the Bible says, **"You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world"** (1 Jn. 4:4, nkjv).

Never allow bad attitudes, thoughts or worthless imaginations to preoccupy your mind. Why allow such dream-killers to drown you in hopeless doubt, gossip, suspicion, weird competition, unbelief, fretting, fear, murmuring, complaints or failure? That kind of negativity-jive just leads people into oppression and depression—yup, more insidious *wiles* of the enemy. We aren't to be focused on the enemy though.

Satan and the demons can access the mind if people let them do this. They are able to influence our minds by suggestion, or impose certain kinds of negative emotions upon us. You probably remember how the enemy moved King David to sin by numbering Israel.

**Let's talk more about some wiles of Satan that seem to work well against Christians who would witness and fulfill a dream:**

**1. Condemnation and accusation; don't live under those dark clouds!** Condemnation usually comes following hard on the heels of a Christian failing in something. It has to do with

feelings of separation, and alienation from God, like God's patience has somehow totally run out towards His beloved child. The believer's mind is then filled with those kinds of subtle satanic suggestions and accusations that point the finger at the Christian for the purpose of making him or her feel so worthless—like some sub-losers until they eventually choose to give up trying to follow Christ. Yup, Satan's goal is that the Christian will end up living a defeated life spiritually, but he won't stop there. Satan's desired result is always to kill you, to rob you blind and to squish you like a bug as he destroys everything he can in your life ...destroy you slow or fast, but fast is preferred by him. And if he can't do that, his goal is to simply drive you, the Christian, away from Christ—away from any close fellowship you enjoy with Him. He wants you to think: "*What's the use; God doesn't hear me or answer my prayers in the affirmative anyways. I shouldn't waste my time on my knees. If He loved me, He would...*" You see, if Satan or a demon can get you to believe that God doesn't care about you, then you will lose all motivation to commune with Him. You'll stop praying tomorrow and simply neglect having any relationship with the Lord, the One with the power to change things in a moment of time.

**2. Evil thoughts and vain imaginations are counterproductive, so take every idea captive to the obedience of Christ!** Another manifestation of what I am talking about; yes, additional "wiles of the devil" are these: the entertaining of evil thoughts. Have you ever been in church or in prayer and had your mind suddenly assaulted by some horrible blasphemous thought? They can come so suddenly. You shake your head trying to get rid of it, because you really want to stay focused and continue worshipping the Lord. You desire to please Christ every moment. But have you ever had a wicked image flash across your mind right when you were trying to witness to someone on the streets? Deplorable thoughts that sickened a Christian can be oppressive if you dwell on them. It's one thing to let the birds fly over your head and quite another thing to let them start nesting in your hair. Don't be like a passive idiot. God is there for you. I personally like to quote Scripture to get my mind quickly back on the right track. For some reason our ears need to hear our mouth speak the Word—it'll redirect your foreign ambush thoughts, turning them back to the pit. Try carrying Bible memorization cards in your pocket. This just works, but be aware of who is watching you. Christians shouldn't come off like they are in some scary religious anti-Christ terror flick. If you need a quick manumission from the harassing instant assaulting thoughts of immorality, murder, or suicide simply call on the Lord.

You remember what the Apostle Paul was speaking about when he spoke of the "fiery darts" or more literally the flaming arrows of the wicked one. But maybe you are wondering how you can tell the difference between the flaming arrows of the wicked one and the sin of evil surmising? Evil surmising originates from inside a person, as Jesus said: "***Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts...***" (Matt. 15:19). Evil surmising is controllable by you. It just takes a decision even if it has an element of delight in it. The flaming arrows of the wicked one, on the other hand, come from an exterior assault, yes from outside of your person. We are given self-control, but these are to a degree beyond the Christian's power to control as they fly at your mind. You don't want to think these thoughts. Both types are hideous and must be rejected.

That great preacher, Spurgeon, went through a prolonged period where his mind experienced the noxious fumes of blasphemous assault and as he came close to the point of despair, he started to question his own salvation. For how could a true saint of God have such thoughts fly into his brain? Then Charles had a talk with his grandfather who also happened to be a

committed Christian minister, and his grandfather posed one simple question: *"Do you take pleasure in those thoughts?"* Spurgeon thought for a moment and replied: *"No, I hate them!"* His grandfather quickly responded, *"Then have nothing to do with them. Do not own them because they are not yours, but the devil's."*

The devil's wiles are very subtle. He often whispers in your ear in first person as he tries to tempt you and make you think such wretched thoughts in your mind are yours and originated from you. He loves it when you use the words: I, mine, me, and my. He says stuff like: *"I think that pastor distrusts me because I'm different, and looks down on me due to my cool tattoo, so why should I even be in this church?"*, *"I'm suspicious of that Christian, as to what his real motives are for sharing the Gospel with those outsiders. What's he trying to prove on our turf?"*, *"Man, who needs to know that the bank gave me too much change back. They make so much in interest off the people anyways and of course God wants me to survive so I can finish the mission He has set before me to accomplish. Besides, ten bucks isn't much, no one will mind or notice. I've been praying that the Lord would meet my needs. Praise the Lord for His answer!"*

Recognize what he's doing. Don't own or dwell on the thought from the pit; instead reject it quickly and realize who's behind it. He's a con and rip-off artist that will do what he can to get you to compromise. But turn the enemy's weapons back on their source—upon him by using those occasions as opportunities for prayer or for witnessing. If a very attractive young lady walks right in front of your coworkers on the job who are quietly lusting after her within earshot of you, then turn your eyes back to the job at hand and silently pray for her salvation as well as for theirs, just like they were your little brothers and she was your sister headed for hell. If she calls you or maybe comes back later to clearly flirt with you as you are getting off duty, then don't act religiously strange, but casually and bluntly tell her briefly about how you got right with God through Christ, how He means everything to you and possibly share some verses that really gave it all meaning for you, to help you better understand God's plan at the time. If they meant something to you, God might use those verses to plant some seeds in her heart. Of course Christian employees really need to know their company's handbook and be wise if other tattletale workers come around to listen in. But the devil that seeks to take you down, indeed won't want that young lady there at all if you are about to lead her into righteousness! You can be like Benaiah who ***"wrested the spear out of the enemy's hand, and killed him with his own spear"*** (2 Sam. 23:21).

When you're tempted to camp on the wrong thoughts, remember that God has something important for you to accomplish in holiness. Paul admonished us, ***"...in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things"*** (Phil. 4:6-8, nkjv).

They say that idle time is the devil's playground, so put it into gear for the Lord. As nature abhors a vacuum, so too our minds cannot long remain empty and inoperative. Be on the offensive without offending people if possible, rather than playing defense reacting to the enemy's wiles and ploys. Proactively overcome evil with good as the Spirit leads you. If you are busy serving God,

learning His Word, witnessing, seeking to know and do His will as you sow to the Spirit, then you won't have time to sin or sow to the flesh. Good thoughts leave no room for bad dream-killing thoughts.

**3. Doubt and unbelief are simply waste a Christian's emotions and time?** These kept God's people from possessing the Land that God had for them. They will also keep you from fulfilling the dream you have from God if you let them. Those are more of the devil's darts—that's what they are! The enemy tries to use his own words or even God's words out of context (sometimes through false teachers preaching outside or inside Christian churches or through other carnal Christians or even sinners talking to us) to plant seeds of doubt in our minds. I call that giving Scriptorture. Mister Lu Cifer is cunning and will do his very best to make you doubt God's existence, the veracity of His Word, Christ's dying in your place to pay for your sins and your very salvation in Him. Please know beloved, that there is a difference between doubting and the sin of unbelief. It is possible to be plagued by doubt for a time and yet remain innocent in regards to the sin of unbelief. Doubt becomes sin when we choose to act upon it, allowing it to direct us. You remember how the devil tempted Eve to doubt God's Word and yet, when she believed and submitted to his suggestions that's when she actually sinned. Charles Spurgeon said *"My peculiar temptation has been constant unbelief. I know that God's promise is true. Yet does this temptation incessantly assail me to doubt Him, distrust Him?"* He really he struggled in this area but didn't give in to unbelief.

You remember how Satan tried to get Jesus to sin this way when He was in the wilderness saying, **"If You are the Son of God...?"** (Lk. 4:3). But don't give in to his unbelief campaign, but stand firm on the promises of the Word of God.

You might have some honest questions—that's not wrong or a sign of doubt. It's totally all right to ask God questions. It's through asking questions that we all learn. It's through honest inquires that God who can not sin can will transform your temptations to doubt into a fuller understanding of His will and His ways. That's how we grow spiritually, as Paul concludes in Romans 3:4, **"Let God be true and every man a liar."**

**4. Fear and fretting are more ingredients that kept God's people from entering the Promise Land.** If fear is like a full-blown disease, then fretting is like a low grade fever. Are there things you've been fretting when you really need to just put it all out on the table with the Lord in prayer? That will fix the problem fast. Yes, another one of the devil's wiles to short circuit a dream is the use of fear

tactics. Do you have giants to conquer in front of you that make you feel like a tiny weak grasshopper?

***You only block the dream when you allow your fears to grow bigger than your faith. —Mary Manin Morrissey***

When revivalist George Whitefield asked his friend John Wesley to take over his open-air evangelistic ministry, John was suddenly hit with the weird impression that if he were to do so, he would indeed die early. Can you imagine that? Then through lucky-dipping, Wesley casually sought for guidance by randomly opening his Bible on four different occasions, and the Scriptures seemed to confirm his fear of early death. That's also called Bible roulette. Wesley's fears proved

to be nothing more than the work of Satan seeking to thwart and prevent him from doing the work that God had for him to do. And through the acceptance of that invitation from Whitefield, Wesley entered his most fruitful years which lasted for more than fifty years in reaping souls into God's Kingdom. Yes, tens of thousands of people were converted to Christ and they formed the Methodist Church.

If we even contemplate starting to obey the Lord, the devil often threatens to give us a bad consequence, ill health, painful or deadly consequences just as he tried to do with John Wesley. Just ignore him. They're just empty harmless threats. The devil will even use people we'd least expect to threaten us just like how Saul threatened David or as he did through Tobiah and Sanballet in threatening Nehemiah. Lies, deception, threats of confusion—that's all he is able to put out because **"Greater is He who is in you, than he who is in the world"** (1 Jn. 4:4). Again, if its God is on our side loving us, pulling for us who is going to get in the way of that? (See Rom. 8:31). Refuse to allow the enemy to keep you from the will of God through this lame fear tactics. Remember that fear isn't of the Lord for, **"God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind"** (2 Tim. 1:7). Your Father in heaven has good plans in mind for you—He has your best interests and eternal welfare in mind. Fear only Him and yield to Him minus that bad fear from the pit. Watch what He will do in and through you. Father knows best.

**5. Depression and oppression.** Can you think of more devastating "wiles of the devil" that these two? The devil loves to gathers up all the wiles he can find, wrap them up nice and neat in the package of despair and then present you with this gift of an overwhelming sense of hopelessness. And who can live long without any hope? Many of God's people throughout Church history have experienced firsthand what it feels like to be oppressed or depressed by the enemy. Do you remember how Psalmist and the Apostle Paul were depression for a time? Listen to their words:

The Psalmist said, **"I cried out to God with my voice—to God with my voice; and He gave ear to me. In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord; my hand was stretched out in the night without ceasing; my soul refused to be comforted. I remembered God, and was troubled; I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah. You hold my eyelids open; I am so troubled that I cannot speak. I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times. I call to remembrance my song in the night; I meditate within my heart, and my spirit makes diligent search. Will the Lord cast off forever?"** (Ps. 77:1-7, nkjv).

Paul exclaimed, **"We know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also you will partake of the consolation. For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and does[fn1] deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us"** (2 Cor. 7b-10, nkjv).

Many wonderful saints from church history have suffered strong bouts of depression, as well. In fact, William Cowper, the great English poet and hymn writer, battled his entire life with

manic depression. Charles Spurgeon said, "*I, of all men, am perhaps the subject of the deepest depression at times... Depression so fearful I hope none of you ever get to such extremes of wretchedness as I go through.*" God's people are not exempt from suffering, pain or depression. The question for us is: How will we deal with depression? Will we throw in the towel, or run to Jesus for His sustaining grace?

We each need to learn what is causing it. There are at least four types of depression. There's depression that is 1.) Organic in nature (you know, a bodily malfunction, i.e., hormonal or chemical imbalances), there is a type of depression that is 2.) Circumstantial; (the daily problems of life that can be so perplexing at times that they just wear you down), then there's depression that is 3.) Directly related to sin, and then lastly there is a type of depression that is the direct result of 4.) Demonic activity, where demons are trying to mess with you enough in order to see you stick up a white flag of capitulation. The evil minions of darkness want you to just roll over and die before you worship Christ, fish for souls or minister to His saints in His power. They even want to help you die prematurely.

It can be kind of challenging to figure out what type of depression a person is battling against. But God has promised wisdom for those who ask Him for it (Jam. 1:5). Once God helps us discern the cause (and He might lead you to get a medical doctor's help if there is a chemical imbalance in you), then we can go forward with the treatment. Again, if the root cause is organic, the treatment will be medical along with prayer. If the cause is circumstantial, the treatment will be gaining a biblical perspective on your circumstances (possibly through Bible-based counseling) as well as simply trusting God. If the cause is sin, confession and true repentance are necessary. And if the cause is satanic, Jesus Christ the living Word is your only Solution. Yes, the spiritual weapons of the Word of God and prayer are what He would have you employ, for they are the only things that will prevail.

Do you remember reading about William Cowper and how he was ministered to out of his deep, dark, suicidal depression by his praying friend and pastor, John Newton? There weren't any antidepressant drugs back then. Today treatment with the right medications can be beneficial but we Christians should never put prayer aside. And these treatments should never ever replace the Bible and prayer offered to God through Christ in faith. Today there is a lot of false teaching about generational curses passed along to our offspring, but Christians will never get generational curses. Go read the context regarding curses. If you continue in sin, you will have many problems you can't deal with, but the blood of the Covenant in Christ is much stronger than the blood of generation. Consequences from bad choices indeed can be passed down to a Christian's kids, but not curses. Jesus took away the curse for us Christians. I believe that all depression regardless of its source should be treated through biblical counseling from a born again, spiritual Christian who is very balanced along with prayer coupled with faith (and fasting for many).

Have you suffered from depression? God can still give you a dream—a wonderful ministry vision. Remember that, "***the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world... And God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape...***" (1 Pet. 5:9 and 1 Cor. 10:13). Now I have a Christian friend who attends a class at his church where the teacher promises to teach everyone attendee there how to interpret every dream each of them ever dream. And my friend

believes that there is a spiritual meaning and application for him to find in every dream he has. This is unbiblical nonsense. But God can still use a believer to interpret *some dreams* today, just like He did through Joseph in the Old Testament. And the application and meaning will not go against what the Bible teaches. Please do not believe the devil's lie that there's no hope for you! Look to the Lord! Call upon His Name! Believe and claim His promises. Stand upon His Word! Pray, and ask others to pray for you. God will give you a good plan and an uplifting hope for your overall welfare. Seek out godly counsel from a spiritually sound pastor or a mature Christian friend. Understand that as you continue to seek the Lord, **"the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly"** (Rom. 16:20).

**6. Temptations are irritations!** Now consider one final aspect of the devil's war against us—temptation. The devil wants to make you feel that God's hand isn't on you, that He's fed up with you, that He wants no part of you, Christian. Satan wants to succeed in giving you emotions that make you feel totally cut off from God, from His love, from His forgiveness, from His kindness and His mercy. Maybe you have done something that you knew you shouldn't have done or maybe you didn't sin at all ...but some religious or hyper-strict-people have foisted some false guilt upon you. It is then that such condemnation usually strikes. However, it is very important for all of us distinguish between God's conviction and the enemy's condemnation. Conviction is a legitimate work of the Holy Spirit that produces guilt over our sins and then leads us to the cross to receive forgiveness. Conviction is sweet—it hurts so good, because we know the outcome of us turning will be great! Condemnation is sour on the other hand. It hurts so bad inside. It's the gift for the enemy that keeps on giving and it produces guilt that leaves the victim with a sense of hopelessness.

The devil sidles up to you and begins to whisper in your ear that God is finished with you. The devil will say stuff like: "You've gone too far this time." He implies that forgiveness is no longer unavailable to you. You've been written off for good. You'll probably experience those overwhelming ugly feelings that God has abandoned you, forsake you and that He no longer loves you at all. All of this is so typical of the **"fiery darts of the wicked one."** These darts can be nullified, rendered useless and extinguished and by taking up the shield of faith in Christ Jesus—that's faith in the Word of God. There is nothing that will help the person who is outside of Christ and stubbornly chooses to stay there. I'm not talking about you right now. I'm talking to Christians. The power of condemnation lies in Satan's ability to deceive the saints into thinking that God is the one condemning them. Yes, many Christians still believe lies and it hurts them. Hey, if God is against us, who can be for us? But the Bible says **"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit... Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?"** (Rom. 8:1 and 10-31, nkjv). Yes, the Lord is totally for us! The accusing harassing thoughts and feelings of condemnation only come from the filthy **"accuser of the brethren"** who will be permanently cast down once and for all very soon (see Rev 12:10). Having confidence in the blood of Jesus is what it will take for us to overcome all demonic condemnation, wiles and evil ploys of hell. It's the blood that gives us strength from day to day—it will never lose its power to help us fulfill the specific ministry dreams that God has for us!

If you've sinned, don't play the blame-game or let the devil drive you away from Jesus Christ through his wicked wiles and false conviction. Engage in biblical spiritual warfare. Thoroughly confess your sins and ask God for true repentance and forgiveness. Repentance is the gift you and I need from time to time so we'll permanently turn away from a lifestyle of sin. Remember that **"He is faithful and just to forgive your sins and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness"** (1 Jn. 1:9). Basically, in the garden of God's dreams so to speak, there are things to weed out, things to prevent from entering and things to cultivate deep into the soil so that the fruit will spring forth in its time.

### **God's Waiting Room**

Never allow the enemy to make you be anxious so that you'll run ahead when you should be waiting or lag behind the Lord's lead when He wants you moving. Sinning as well as having *best friends* that are half committed to Jesus (or don't even know Christ at all) will surely hinder the dream coming to fruition. Do love and show respect to all people, but only choose *best friends* that are saved and spiritual, rather than natural or carnal people who talk trash in your ears like some blabbermouth-fools. If you have best friends that are fully committed to Christ, they will encourage you to wait for God's best and assist you in detecting the wiles of the enemy that can trip you. The Bible says, **"He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed"** (Prov. 13:20, nkjv). Solomon said, **"For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by multitude of words"** (Eccl. 5:3, kjv).

This might be real hard for us activist-Americans to understand, but we need to learn to *be* in the will of God before God will releases us to *do* the will of God. We need to talk to God about men before we need to talk to men about God. We need to go to the right Spirit, before we can have a right spirit. We all need to hear from God before we go speak for God—too many so called Christians do the opposite. They lack the Spirit's wisdom and unction to function properly and lives are not changed for eternity. How many Christians can get alone with the Lord to quiet their spirit; to rest and to listen to Him and to worship in His presence anymore? I'm not talking about ohm-ing-out or meditating on nothingness here? But I call this period God's "waiting room" experience.

We all need to know that any time spent in God's waiting room is never wasted time. It is an opportunity to redeem the minutes. It's time for us to grow and to learn that there really can be a touch of freshness, of newness and of glory even in the mundane ordinary occurrences of life, as we simply fellowship with Him before we fellowship with any other person and do all things in His honor. It could be a time to ask good questions and witness. We can never retrieve hours ill-spent. Dietrich Bonhoeffer understood that, *"Time is the most valuable thing we have because it is the most irrevocable. Time lost is time in which we have failed to live a full human life, gain experience, learn, create, enjoy, and suffer; it is time that has not been filled up, but left empty."*

Does your life and fishing experience lack a yoke-breaking-anointing that sets the captive free? You don't have to be sedentary or bored in God's waiting room; you can make the most of your time in there. Others might be with you who need God's ministry through you too. This is a good time to learn from the Word, yes to be a book-worm, a tape-worm, a podcast-worm, to go on a prayer-walk, to hear a kicking Christian band or symphony, to listen to or just hug your kids ...or some kid near you—all to the glory of God. It reminds me of what Paul told the Corinthian

believers, ***“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God”*** (1 Cor. 10:31).

Believe that the Spirit of the Lord God can [use you](#) to ***“console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified”*** (Isa. 61:3). Do you realize that some of the greatest accomplishments of God’s leaders and missionaries have been done while they were in that dreaded waiting room. Remember Paul in prison, or John on the Island of Patmos writing the Revelation? They were just fallible men with an infallible God with them, but the Lord used them mightily. It’s in that room that God is developing our character and what could be more important than that? I can’t think of anything. Never become despondent, down or discouraged. Keep your eyes on Jesus. You are headed for a better Place and that should excite you!

While we are in God’s waiting room, because maybe our dreams have turned to ashes in our fingers or have been majorly postponed by others, our hearts are sometimes crushed. When we are crushed in spirit, whatever is in us (attitudinally or spiritually) could come out and surprise us. But as the Lord builds His character in us and strengthens us, we can consistently show forth the upbeat lifestyle and praises of Jesus, ***“For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life”*** (2 Cor. 2:15, 16). Then when our dream is fully realized, our character will more than likely be tested again. That’s the reason why character development must precede dream

fulfillment. It’s so that it will be there and in fact after your prayers are answered and everything seems to be going your way. You’ll really need it then—after you have success. Lots of Christians start to feel they don’t even need God anymore and they get more hung up on the blessings than the Bless-er. But we aren’t to make an idol out of even good things.

***Here’s what I ask, O Lord; here’s what I dream,  
That I may know You well and never lose the steam!  
Why come under Satan’s spell or see any enter his hell...  
When your second advent is about to ring his bell?  
To be in Your house all of my days,  
Just learning Your ways and singing Your praise!  
That’s what I long for—that’s what this song’s for!  
Just to see Your vision and express thanks for the provision.  
I trust in Your power and hope to see You clearly this hour.  
Hey, I’m already blessed, but this is my request.  
’Cause many have died as I dream of being close by Your side.  
Who else could be the goal of my soul as I beam and abide?  
So please intervene; it’s only You that must be seen!  
How many more need to physically pass away...  
Before they can hear and obey! —KvS***

Those who God would use mightily He often first crushes thoroughly. But young missionaries take heart! Somewhere a congregation is waiting to be made by God’s Word powerfully taught and lived-out through you, after your character is formed by God. Are you in the waiting room so to speak? Hey, relax and let God work on your character. To God it’s more

important what He does inside of you and through you. Your dream may have been deferred and it may even appear or die. No worries. Deep in your heart your dream is being developed. God is working on all ends to make things ready and He's working on you.

### ***How Many Things are Truly Necessary?***

If we are to see our dreams realized we must be born of the Spirit and then sufficiently strengthened in the inner person where dreams develop. Often our spiritual weakness is directly linked to our shallow or superficial relationship with the Word. He knows when we're acting the poser or like a hypocrite and He knows how to help you become real when you are ready to. There is only one way to develop any relationship these days and that is to invest relational time in it. God-called leaders love to spend time with the Lord. Prayer is the spawning ground of gaining a dream that counts—or a vision of what to do, or the most noble of goals. And prayer produces the spiritual stamina necessary to make it through the waiting room. Has God placed a dream down inside your heart that would appear like it will never become a human-helping reality? Ask yourself: Was this dream received or conceived by God as you communed with Him? If so, it needs to be brought forth in the same way—through prayer.

We Christians often take our unique privilege of prayer for granted. We fail to see how wonderful it is to have access in approaching God. While the majority of the world's population is made up of ardent, sincere, committed followers of some religion, only those who have been born anew of God's Spirit can dare to actually gain an audience with the King of kings. Jesus emphatically declared that, ***"No one comes to the Father except through me"*** (Jn. 14:6). John Wesley said, *"You can do more than pray after you have prayed, but you can do nothing but pray until you have prayed."* I take that to mean that what I do if I shove prayer to the wind and try to go it alone, what I do will be worthless in the light of eternity. But you can learn to sit at the feet of Christ like Mary did. Besides, when your dream starts coming to pass, your activity might increase along with the pressures so take advantage of the time now while you can. God is giving you the opportunity to pray over your priorities and maintain your priorities that way. In the future there will be many things that will be urgent and demanding, but only one thing is really necessary.

I like how the Weust's translation puts it: ***"And a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him as a guest into her home. And she had a sister called Mary, who also having seated herself beside the Lord's feet, was listening to His word. But Martha was going around in circles, over occupied with preparing the meal. And bursting in upon Jesus she assumed a stance over Him and said, Lord, is it not a concern to you that my sister has let me down to be preparing the meal alone? Speak therefore to her at once that she take hold and do her part with me. And answering, the Lord said to her, Martha, Martha, you are worried and excited about many things, but of few things there is need, or of one. For Mary chose out for herself the good portion, which is of such a nature that it shall not hastily be snatched away from her."***

It's pretty interesting if you do a study in the Bible on "one thing"? The rich young ruler, was addressed with those words, ***"Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, 'One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.' But he was sad at this***

**word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions” (Mk. 10:21-22). Paul said, “Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13).**

The Psalmist exclaimed, **“One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple” (Ps. 27:4).**

Never forget that there’s one thing more important than the others things. It is often difficult yet always precious to wait on the Lord. The Bible promises, **“But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint” (Isa. 40:31, kjv).** When the God-given dream is realized, you will need God-given endurance. Do you feel that you are on an obscure practice field of life, waiting for your big chance in the game so to speak? Your chance will come—probably when you least expect it. But if you are faithful in the small things; in executing the basics, then God will give you greater things. If you are trustworthy and honest in all the small dealings of ministry; doing things with excellence for an audience of One, then you will be the same way in handling the bigger opportunities that God brings your way in His timing. Is God pruning you to produce more fruit? Inner motives matter, so never resort to being a mere man-pleaser. If you’ll stay faithful even when the world isn’t watching, God will make you ready for a time when perhaps it is watching.

I’m sure you remember the time when young David was sent on an ordinary errand by his father, but the ordinary became extraordinary when he arrived there standing before a giant of a problem named Goliath. In one day young David was spiritually promoted to the status of Israel’s hero. It wasn’t a gradual thing that day. It was totally unexpected, but he was ready. God had been preparing him for years as he did his best in the faithful service of his dad. Some believers receive their reward in heaven, but what’s important is not that we appear to be faithful to many, but that we truly are found faithful by One.

You remember how the martyr Stephen was faithfully unto death. He was Spirit-filled to overflowing—exuding joy and victory. He was committed, enthusiastic, forgiving and non-distracted. He indeed had singleness of eye rather than having a divided heart or duplicity of spirit. Guile was not his thing. He didn’t start out as a preaching leader. God doesn’t really make leaders per se, He makes servants and servants who prove themselves faithful become His leaders in time. Stephen started out by working—serving tables as a deacon in the church at Jerusalem. Suddenly, one gruesomely eventful day, his lifestyle of steady faithfulness unto his Lord held him tight during the hour of his greatest trial. He was stoned to death—or should I say to eternal life. The righteous might sleep, but they will live for ever. Stephen's name has sense that time, been associated with greatness. Today we still honor his memory. He was a Christian example for us in life and in death.

Philip was also a behind the scenes guy, in that same band of hardworking Jerusalem deacons. But he, too, because of persecution, was thrust into an arena of greatness. One day he was wiping up slop on the tables for the widow women. A few weeks later he was out giving

sinner the Gospel ...to literally thousands with attending miracles from God to confirm the Word he preached. He was another Christian model for the ministry of the evangelist.

When I was teenager I remember attending the *Institute in Basic Life Principles*, a great seminar with Bill Gothard who taught us about the concept of "birth of a vision, death of a vision and then rebirth of a vision." Some times he would even mention the "double death of a vision." He used many illustrations from the Scriptures to give people in hopeless situations, new hope when they were either ripped off by circumstance, by Satan's opposition, by stupid decisions. It was wonderful 1. God gives us a dream, vision or goal—whatever you want to call it, 2. The dream dies—the goal you thought you could reach becomes impossible to reach or achieve 3. Then the dream-goal becomes doubly impossible before 4. God gives a supernatural fulfillment to the dream He gave you and you reach His goal for the betterment and blessing of many other people. 5. God gets the glory, because all those who observed your life knew that it had to be God who pulled it off when you could not.

Never forget that our God is a God of resurrection. It's only when we die to ourselves—to our own way, and will and whims that we will experience real life. Jesus said, "**He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it**" (Matt. 10:39). He said, "**For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it**" (Mk. 8:35). It's only when we die to our dreams that we can see God fulfill them, but it might not be when or how we think He will. Why would God want to bless his kids with dreams that they become over enamored with to the hurt of his Body?

#### **Hope of the dream's fulfillment:**

Remember that a living hope for a God-given dream comes from Him—"**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**" (1 Pet. 1:3). To a Christian, hope is not some unlikely wish, some word-faith blab it grab it, but biblical faith in a sure thing (see Hebrews 11:1). When opposition or trials threaten to dampen or destroy you, how will Christ's hope keep you on track? Check out:

- *Psalm 42* Have you ever had the same type of struggle as the Psalmist has had? See what was his response was in vs. 5 and 11?
- *Psalm 119:74, Romans 15:4*: Put your hope in [God's word](#).
- *Psalm 147:10-11*: Put your hope in His agape love.
- *Isaiah 40:27-31*: Hope will bring you renewed strength from God.
- *Romans 5:3-5*: Hope will not disappoint you if it's placed in the right location.
- *Romans 12:11, 12*: Hope in Jesus can bring joy, combined with patience and believing prayer.
- *Romans 15:13*: Overflowing hope comes to you by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- *Colossians 1:27*: Christ in you can give you the hope of glory.
- *1 Thessalonians 5:8-11*: Put on the helmet—the hope of salvation to protect your thoughts.
- *Hebrews 6:18-19*: Remember that God cannot lie; let hope become an anchor for your soul (your mind, will, and emotion)—it will keep you firm and secure.

- *1 John 3:2, 3: hope will help keeps us pure as we keep our focus on Jesus the Author of all hope.*

**Consider the Dreams of:**

- **Abraham**—He given a promise of a great nation of descendants, 2. His wife is barren for many years, 3. He and his wife become too old to have kids, 4. God gives Abe a son in his old age.
- **Joseph**—He was given a dream of leadership and ruling and let his family know about it, 2. He was then sold into slavery by his own brothers, 3. His boss’s wife keeps hitting on him and falsely accuses him 4. He was put in prison—the dream was twice dead by this time, 4. He goes to work on the dreams of others using the spiritual gift that God gave him. 5. He then becomes the ruler of Egypt, second in power and the savior of his family and countless others who were hungry.
- **Moses**—He was raised in the King of Egypt’s household, but he learned that he was a Jew. Later by his own attempt to protect and rescue a suffering Hebrew slave from Egyptian oppression and harsh mistreatment, Moses, ***“looked this way and that way, and when he saw no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand”*** (Ex.. 2:12, nkjv). His hopes and desires to help and deliver his kinsmen were literally impossible especially since he was then hunted and banished to the backside of the desert for many years. Those who sought to kill him finally died. But Pharaoh’s heart only grew harder and harder after Moses was commissioned and returned to Egypt. The Pharaoh proudly wanted to keep his Hebrew workforce with him, slaving away but God had seen their struggles and had been listening to their prayers. Then the birth pangs of a new nation only grew stronger and stronger and at just the right time (when Moses was 80 years old) with the rod of God, Moses was then used of God to totally deliver the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, as God worked one powerful miracle after another to set them all free and lead them on their way towards their inheritance—the Promised Land.
- **Mary**—She was told by an angel that she would bear the Savior of the world even though she was a virgin, 2. She was rejected by Joseph who sought to protect her reputation, 3. She takes a trip to Bethlehem as a pregnant virgin at the exact right time and place according to Old Testament prophecies, 4. She gives birth to Jesus and visitors rejoice over this. 5. Herod tries to kill Jesus prematurely by killing all first born male children, 6. Pilot, the religious leaders and Romans (due to our sinfulness as fallen humans) are allowed to kill Jesus on the cross. 7. He gets buried. 8. Jesus rises from the grave on the third day to become our eternal King and Savior.

God’s goals or dream for you is grander than you can come up with on your own. His mission or goal for you will be bigger than what we can do with human resources. His vision for you

could meet with insurmountable opposition. Give yourself fully to God. Cry out to Him for supernatural intervention – and He will do it in His time. What God has determined, He will do!

Paul had a dream for others being properly disciplined by God's Word. He said, ***"My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you."*** (Gal. 4:19)

The Bible says Isaiah 40:31 that Christians who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. Deuteronomy 11:8 tells us that the continual appropriation of strength for us is based upon our obedience.

Typically a wonderful transformational dream and inspiration "whose time has come" comes to us with power and all kinds of wonderful confirmations and synchronicities, urging us to translate it into our life and the material world. But then, beware, there is Stage 2! Almost inevitably, visions retreat and retract and suffer an immaterial and illusory phase while under incubation. One logically questions at this stage whether the vision was real at all, and whether it will ever return or be met with resonance and relevance in the world. All looks pretty bleak in a venture vision's Stage 2.

Stage 3 of a vision's life cycle is, thank God, "Re-birth of a Vision," where quickening occurs again on its own timetable and lily pads again appear in the stream ahead, pointing the way to the next step and the next step.

Can or should we really expect an almost biological, predictable life cycle regarding supernatural dreams, visions, commissions, God-given-goals and new ventures of faith? What is the dream, vision or goal

that gives meaning to your life? Will it affect other people to help them or is it a self-centered dream? Does

the Dream-giver—a two way relationship with Him in His presence daily—mean more to you than seeing the fulfillment of your dream, the attaining of your goal? What is the message conveyed by your life?

***You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream. —C.S. Lewis***

Is there a holy light and love from God that shines through you and positively influences those around you to come to Christ? Jesus said, ***"Let your light so shine before men that they may behold your good works and glorify your Father, who is in heaven."*** (Matt. 5:16). What about that life of Jesus—has He come inside of you to rule without rival, because of your expression of sincere vertical repentance and an invitation of faith you extended to Him? The Bible says, ***"In him was life; and the life was the light of men."*** (Jn. 1:4). It also says of Him, ***"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life - for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life..."*** (1 Jn. 1:1-2)

You can have life, [a new start](#), a dream that's really good, but it won't come about apart from Him. Maybe God has blessed you and you've accomplished many goals that were constructive, but let me ask you this: Do you have a dream that will make a difference for at least some one a hundred years after you are gone? I'm no great man of God like many of the people I mentioned, but I did finally enjoy the privilege of going overseas to be a missionary in Europe and worked hard with some wonderful churches there for four years. A European church opted to pay me to pastor there. I was so honored, humbled and beyond delighted—I just can't explain it well. And if the Lord would answer the prayers of an ordinary guy like me, to make my dream come true, then He can certainly do that for you. Just ask Him to and always love Him more than the dream.

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<sup>1</sup> That was a quote from pages 83-84 Partners in Prayer, by Dr. John C. Maxwell.

<sup>2</sup> This quote came from Pastor John Piper, Let the Nations Be Glad, p. 41-45.