



Are you a dreamer?

By Beth Jones

This weekend when we attended church, to our delightful surprise, the guest speaker was Pastor Jay Threadgill of Fishers Of Men Ministries of Port-Au-Prince, Haiti.

<http://www.fomhaiti.org/ministries.html>. You may remember that last year when the earthquake hit Port-Au-Prince, my husband Ray flew there and started an urgent care medical clinic there, treating an average of 200 to 300 patients a day for a month. The clinic is still in operation today, with teams of doctors, nurses, and other medical staff helping Pastor Jay.

This Sunday pastor Jay preached about the story of Joseph (Genesis 37), who God took from the prison to the place, becoming the second most powerful man in Egypt, just under Pharaoh. All because Joseph had a dream inside his heart. Are you a dreamer?

I wanted to share with you some of the encouraging points Pastor Jay brought out in his sermon.

- **Have a big dream.** Do you have a big dream and a vision for your life? If you don't have one, ask God for one. We want our dreams to be in alignment with His word and His unique purpose for our lives. What has God called you to do and to be – a writer, a speaker, a life coach, a website designer, an accountant, a bookkeeper, an actress, an artist, a teacher, a computer programmer, a lab technician, a preacher, a vet? God has great plans for your life (Jeremiah 29:11), plans you can't even begin to imagine (1 Corinthians 2:9). Maybe no one has ever encouraged you to dream. Maybe you are surrounded by negative people who think small and want to limit you. Maybe they've even tried to tell you that you can't accomplish what is in your heart, mocked you, or laughed at you. We serve a big God and He has big ideas. He has called you to greatness!

- **Don't share your dream with just anyone!** There are some people who are dream-killers and dream-stealers. Joseph was so excited about his dreams that he shared them with his brothers. But they didn't respond with his joy and his enthusiasm. Instead, they responded with jealousy and anger. In fact, they became so jealous of him that they made plans to kill him!

God's hand was on Joseph's life, though, and He used Joseph's brother Reuben to spare his life and convinced his brothers to throw him into a pit. They stripped him of his coat of many colors that his father had made especially for him, and threw him into an empty, waterless pit. When some Ishmaelites traveled by, carrying spices to Egypt, they decided to sell him as a slave. They took his coat, killed a goat and spread its blood on the tunic, and then took it to their father, lying that a wild animal had probably killed him.

There are some people who would love to just strip you bare with criticism and judgment. Instead of being there to support you and to help you reach your dreams, they want to discourage you, tear you down, or try to kill your big dream. The very ones who are supposed to be there for you are fighting you and are against you! But I have good news for you – God is on your side! And if God is for you, who can be against you? (Romans 8:31)

Be careful who you share your dreams with because not everyone is going to jump for joy and encourage you to go for it. Choose a select few family members or friends who are positive, encouraging, faith-filled people who know that nothing is impossible with God! (Luke 1:37) Surround yourself with people who inspire you to succeed. Most of all, keep your eyes on God. Pray to hear His direction for your life clearly, and He will help you to achieve your dreams!

- **Never stop dreaming! Never give up!** Joseph could have stayed hurt and never forgiven his brothers for what they did to him. He was taken away as a slave, a young man in a strange place. He must have been extremely frightened. He could have allowed bitterness to take root in his heart and to destroy his dreams. He chose instead to believe and trust in God, to live in godly integrity no matter his hard circumstances, and to keep dreaming. Even when he was thrown into prison after Pharaoh's wife falsely accused him of trying to sexually assault her, he kept his faith and he didn't stop dreaming! (Genesis 40)

Because of his faithful heart to God, he was promoted at the prison. Later, after God gave Joseph the accurate interpretations for the baker's and the butler's dreams, and the butler

was taken back to the palace, the butler remembered Joseph when Pharaoh had a troubling dream and told him about Joseph. Joseph was then promoted as second in command in the land because of his correct interpretation of Pharaoh's dream.

Because of the dream and the wisdom God had given Joseph, he was used as a deliverer of the people and of his own family. God used him to spare them from the famine that hit the land, just as God can use your words to feed spiritually hungry people. Joseph never gave up. He never gave in. He continued to dream. His dream about his brothers bowing down to him did come true. Joseph was a visionary. Are you? Can you see great things ahead for yourself – or have you allowed dream killers or dream stealers to take away the dreams in your heart?

Don't ever stop dreaming, dear friend. Maybe things aren't happening as fast as you'd like. Maybe you've got the enemy, satan, and everyone you know coming against you, dissing your big dreams. Maybe you don't even believe you could even achieve anything. But God sees a much different picture.

Don't believe the lies of the enemy. Don't listen to the discouragement of others. Don't give up! Keep your eyes on Jesus. Have faith in Him and His word.

God has chosen you and anointed you for greatness. God has big plans for your life – not because of you, but for His glory and His kingdom. It will happen in His perfect timing! He has a plan in place to use you and your gifts to further His kingdom on earth and to help other people. Just believe. Keep dreaming and doing what God has called you to do!

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