

Dreamcoat Part 1: Dreaming Ugly 10.16.11

Scripture: **Genesis 37:1-11 ESV**

Video: **"Dreamcoat Promo" [1:15]**

Intro: Today we begin our new Dreamcoat series. Over the course of the next month we're going to look at the life of Joseph in Genesis. We're going to talk about the role of dreams in our lives. Sound good? In a few moments, today, we'll talk about dreaming ugly. Next week we'll look at dreams from the outsiders view point - how do we handle other people having big dreams and/or big success... how do we handle the Green Giant of jealousy and envy. In a couple weeks we'll talk about what we do when our dreams aren't being realized - "Thanks for Nothing." Then finally we'll talk about how to handle when our dreams come true beyond our wildest imaginations - "Thanks for Everything!"

Before we get there, though, I want to affirm to you just how important our dreams really are to us. The last thing I want you to take away from Genesis 37 is that we shouldn't dream.

Our dreams are important! Both to us and to God!

Consider that our Bibles are filled from beginning to end with dreams! In my ESV Bible I find dream(s) mentioned 112x!

- Jacob dreamed of a ladder going to heaven and back.
- Joseph dreamed his family would bow down to him.
- The cupbearer, the baker, the Pharaoh all had dreams for Joseph.
- Solomon heard God's answer for wisdom in a dream.
- King Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of the end of the world. (Daniel)
- Joseph (Mary's husband) dreamed the escape to Egypt.
- Pilate's wife dreamed her husband should have nothing to do with...
- Apostle Paul dreamed of a man inviting him into Macedonia.

Dreams continue to play an important role in our world today!

- Wilbur Wright had "for some years been afflicted with the dream that flight was possible for man."
- Eleanor Roosevelt, wife to our 32nd president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, though no beauty herself said: "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."
- Martin Luther King changed the thinking of a generation with "I have a dream!" speech.
- JFK dreamed of landing a man on the moon within a decade.
- Robert Kennedy: "You see things and say why? But I dream things that never were and say why not?"

Why are dreams so important? They are a window into 2 views:

View #1: Dreams are a window into our PREFERRED FUTURE.

Dreams have always been our first step into the future we would like to create for ourselves. Sure, there's lots of hard work and planning - but it all starts with a dream. What would we like our future to look like?

*"Yesterday is but today's memory, but tomorrow is today's dream!"
Khalil Gibran, poet (1883-1931)*

It's no wonder that younger people **dream** more and older people **remember** more, but we're never too old to stop dreaming. We should

always have a healthy interest in our preferred future. **However, our dreams are vitally important to us for another reason:**

View #2: Dreams are also a window into TODAY'S DISCONTENT.

What is it about today that makes us want to change our tomorrows? Another way of thinking about this is that our dreams are a window into our soul. What is it about life today - that if we could change it - would be better tomorrow? The prophet Isaiah (also one of the Bible's greatest poets!) knew what soul searching really meant to our dreams!

“It shall even be as when a hungry man dreams, And look—he eats;
But he awakes, and his soul is still empty;
Or as when a thirsty man dreams, And look—he drinks;
But he awakes, and indeed *he is faint*, And his soul still craves:”
Isaiah 29:8a NKJV

When you dream, what does your dream tell you about what your soul craves now? It's important we move forward, we work hard to make our dreams come true, but we should remember that when we arrive, when we have accomplished all we dreamt about, ***there we are!*** Along the way we should be enjoying the journey itself and looking to God to fulfill whatever it is our souls are craving.

When we look at Joseph's early life we can read some discontent into his dreams, can't we? Consider the early verses of Genesis 37 in light of his dream that his family would bow down to him:

- “**Pasturing the flock WITH his brothers.**” v. 2 - At 17 years of age he had greater plans than just being another shepherd, and more than likely being the errand boy of his older brothers.
- “**He was a boy with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives.**” v. 2 - A mixed family, hanging out all day with sons of other wives!
- “**Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father.**” v. 2. He got even by being a tattletale, a narc! Always made them look bad.
- “**Israel loved Joseph more...**” v. 3 He enjoyed father's love but at the expense of brothers' hatred.
- “**They could not speak peacefully to him.**” v. 4. Probably the understatement of the year!

IOW, Joseph's life was FILLED with discontent. His dreams became his escape. His dreams were the indicator of what his soul craved. What should we - as Christ-followers do - when we look at our dreams through the window of discontentment?

“Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth.” 1 Timothy 6:6 NLT

We look to God to fill our discontent with our present circumstances. Being content regardless of how unpleasant our current life has become is a hallmark of authentic Christianity.

BUT... that doesn't mean we stop dreaming about the preferred future! God also might not be content with your present circumstances. He loves you. He loves those around you. He might have big plans for you and He lets you in on those plans through your dreams.

The issue is not so much NOT dreaming as handling our dreams in the right way. We call this part of Genesis 37 “ugly dreaming.” What was ugly about it? It wasn't the dream itself - that Joseph wanted out of the family business, that he wanted to be a leader. It was how he handled it.

KEY TRUTH ABOUT OUR DREAMS: My dreams by themselves won't make a difference; its WHAT I DO WITH MY DREAMS that count!

3 ways to turn my dreams ugly:

#1 - Tell everyone I know about my dreams.

“He told it to his brothers.” v.5/9 “He told it to his father...” v. 10

It wasn't the fact that Joseph dreamed that the sheaves bowed down to him or that the sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed down to him that was ugly. His dream was his dream. We should be free to dream whatever the Lord might give to us. And let's face it - in Joseph's case his dreams were 100% accurate; they were true. We read the rest of Genesis and we find this is exactly what happened. So what was ugly? Telling everyone! OFTEN! There are times when discretion is a virtue. Choose carefully with whom you share your dreams. Will they benefit too? Will they be on your side? Will they help you achieve your dreams?

#2 - Doing nothing but talking about my dreams.

We can be guilty of talk, talk, talk, without the do, do, doing of accomplishment. The Bible tells us that the dreamer being only the talker and not the doer is just a fool!

“For dreams result from much work and a fool's voice from many words.”
Ecclesiastes 5:3 HCSV

What do my actions say about my words? God does not give us dreams lightly. It is one of the many ways He communicates with us. What am I doing about my dreams? Am I talking about them endlessly with people who are tired of hearing about them? Put yourself on the other side. When you hear someone who has a history of accomplishing things tell you he/she has a new dream, don't your ears perk up?

#3 - Ignoring my dreams - giving up on their realization.

Giving up on our dreams - not talking about them, not thinking about them, not *doing anything about them* is perhaps the most ugly thing we can do to our dreams. God not only communicates to us through our dreams, *but He also develops our character* in the achievement of our dreams.

“Until the time came to fulfill his dreams, the Lord tested Joseph's character.”
Psalm 105:19 NLT

It is so easy to give up, so easy to get sidetracked, so easy to allow ourselves to think that our dream was only fantasy, only wishful thinking. God tests us in the achievement of dreams. He doesn't just hand accomplishment over to us. He GROWS us as we pursue our dreams. Working to make our dreams come true takes courage!

Example: Cathy Rush was the head women's basketball coach for Immaculata University from 1972-1977. Over that time she led her teams to 3 national titles. She and her players - facing much larger schools tallied an overall 149-15 record. Not easy. Players like Trish tempted to settle for less than their best dreams. Movie release 10/21.
PLAY VIDEO: “You Have The Gift,” from The Mighty Macs [1:20]

Conclusion - How about you today? Are you settling for the 50% employee discounts or are you pursuing the gift of God's dreams in your life? This week I want you to think about your dreams and how you're handling them. Maybe like Joseph you are making others hate you because of your dreams. But I think more are like Trish, either doing nothing but talking or giving up. Don't give up. Allow God to develop your character as you pursue your dream. **Let's pray.**