

LEARNING MY TRUE IDENTITY IN CHRIST

Week 5: Time to Dream: Trusting God to Open Doors,
Part 5

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Due to the COVID-19 virus many people have lost their desire to think BIG, even dream BIG. We believe that God is looking for people who want to dream **BIG dreams** - so big that you and I cannot accomplish the on our own. **GOD says**, “Think of the **GREATEST DREAM** for your life and I can **TOP THAT**. I can beat your dream, it's bigger than you can think, request, guess, dream, imagine, and I don't do it by pushing you. I'm not driving you, I'm pulling you and I'm working gently within you.” God's dream for your life is always bigger - always bigger than your dream for your life. Not only that, but when you line up with God's dream for your life, **HE ARRANGES THE CIRCUMSTANCES SO THE DREAM HAPPENS**. He does it in a way that you couldn't possibly arrange on your own!

AS with anything new, we all may need to re-adjust our thinking on dreams, so this series will include a **CONCENTRATED 40-DAY TIME TO DREAM CHALLENGE**.

WHY DO WE USE 40-DAYS? Why do we use about six weeks? Well, it takes six weeks to develop a new habit. If you're going to change your routine, if you're your going to change your thoughts, if you're going to grow, you

have to **DEVELOP NEW HABITS**. You have to do something every day for approximately three weeks for it to become comfortable, and then do it for another three weeks to actually turn it into a habit. JOIN us and find out if it is worth the challenge and see if God can make our **DREAMS COME TRUE!**

CROSSROADS' SPIRITUAL GROWTH CAMPAIGN is a concentrated 40-day spiritual boost to your life that we commit to doing together using multiple learning styles to equip & energize us for our future!

*“God can do anything -- far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request or dream in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working gently within us.”
Ephesians 3:20 (MSG)*

WHAT TO DO IN WEEK #5 OF TIME TO DREAM

1. Read the devotional sent each day.
2. Pray for everyone else participating in this 40-day spiritual campaign.
3. Memorize this promise:
“You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God.” 1 Peter 2:9a

TIME TO DREAM – Day 29

“Then He said to the crowd, “If any of you wants to be My follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow Me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for My sake, you will save it. And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but are yourself lost or destroyed?” Luke 9:23-25

COUNTER CULTURE

TO build quality friendships, we not only look for the right kind of person; we also have to be the right kind of person. In our culture, we are often taught to focus on ourselves and what makes *us* happy, but God’s ways are counter cultural! He says that if we want to be happy, we have to give ourselves away and look for ways to make others happy. If we want to have the right kind of friends, we must be the kind of friend that we are looking for. If we want to have friends who are giving, we must be humble and not push for our own way. If we want people to be patient with us, we must be patient and kind even though it seems like that is the last thing we want to do. And if we want people to overlook and forgive when we make mistakes, we must be willing to forgive others just as God has forgiven us.

That’s a tall order to fill! But God, in His great wisdom, sent us a helper, the Holy Spirit, to help us every moment of the day. So begin your week by asking God to help you become the kind of friend He wants you to be to someone in need of a friend today. Thank Him for filling your life with the qualities needed to be a good friend. Then keep your eyes open for the people God will place in your path who are waiting to meet you!

TODAY’S PRAYER

Father, Today I pray that You would help me to see the areas in my life where I am being self-focused and selfish. Help me to lay down my life and follow Your ways, especially following Your ways when it comes to my friendships. Help me to be humble, loving, patient, kind, giving and forgiving, and open my eyes to see the needs of those around me. Help me to take the time to be the friend You desire for me to be to someone You know who needs a friend. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

TIME TO DREAM – Day 30

“So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.” Romans 5:11

FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD

THE greatest relationship we will have the opportunity to enjoy in this life is our friendship with God. The Bible speaks of His love for us in the most quoted scripture of all time, John 3:16. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son." This word "love" in the Greek is the word "agape", and it means the kind of love that covers all, the love without demand, and the love that is impossible to measure. This love so great is the love that God has for us, and His greatest desire is not for us to be religious, but for us to have a relationship with Him!

All other loves we will have in this life will, at some point, fail us or let us down, but the love of God will never fail us. At times, you may feel like He is not there, He has forgotten you, or He does not care about the situation you are in. Even then, however, His love is still with you, beside you, reaching out to you, and holding on to you. In fact, the Bible tells us that our minds cannot even fully comprehend the eternal, everlasting love of God. We just need to trust that love and gratefully accept Him as the greatest friend we will ever know.

TODAY’S PRAYER

Father, I thank You today for Your amazing love for me! Thank You for proving Your love by giving Your one and only Son, Jesus, to die for all of my sins so that I can have a relationship with You! I pray that my life will be a reflection of my relationship with You so that others will want what I have and ultimately, can find a friendship with You! In Jesus’ name, Amen.

You were created to make a difference.

TIME TO DREAM – Day 31

“Worry weighs a person down; an encouraging word cheers a person up.” Proverbs 12:25

BE AN ENCOURAGER

HAVE you ever thought to yourself, “I wish I had an unlimited supply of money so I could shower my family, friends, and those in need with gifts?” Ironically, each one of us has an unlimited supply of gifts that we *can* give, but most of the time we keep them all to ourselves! The gifts I am talking about are not physical gifts, but they are the gifts of encouraging words. The gift of an encouraging word can meet a need and bless a person more than any physical gift ever could.

Our encouraging words have the power to turn somebody’s day around. They have the power to change someone’s attitude about life and about their eternity! Today, look for opportunities to be generous with the gift of your encouraging words. Maybe it will be your co-worker, someone next to you in class, your neighbor, or it might be even be your child, your spouse or another family member who needs that gift of your words. Will you hold back or will you make a choice to be generous with your words of encouragement today?

TODAY’S PRAYER

Father, I pray today that I will be very aware of the people around me who might need a word of encouragement to lift their spirit. I know that as I give away words of encouragement, You will begin to meet my need to be encouraged in the process. Help me to focus on being generous with my encouraging words today. Help me to see the unlimited supply of gifts that I have to give to those around me. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

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TIME TO DREAM – Day 32

“Don’t use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.” Ephesians 4:29

SPEAK LIFE

THERE is a popular saying among young children, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” Nothing could be further from the truth. In our me-centered culture, it is easy to get caught up in tearing others down in order to build ourselves up. God desires for us to be builders who build and invest in the lives of those around us! The Bible teaches that the power of life and death are in the tongue, (Prov. 18:21), and as Christ-followers, we have the incredible ability to speak life into people by the words we choose to use.

If we open our spiritual eyes, we can see that there are so many needs around us. People have the need to be loved, encouraged, empowered, and to be told that they have unlimited potential and value because of what Christ has done for them. As you go about your day, think about the words you speak. Are you a builder or are you part of a wrecking crew by the words that you speak? Become very aware of the words you speak and let your talk be life-giving today!

TODAY’S PRAYER

Father, Thank You for Your word to me today and that Your words are life-giving to me. Help me to be aware of the words I speak today. I pray that the words I speak will be helpful to build others up! Remind me often of the power that is in the words that come from my tongue and help the words I speak to others to be life-giving today for Your glory! In Jesus’ name, Amen.

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TIME TO DREAM – Day 33

“Then a poor widow came and dropped in two small coins. Jesus called His disciples to Him and said, “I tell you the truth, this poor widow has given more than all the others who are making contributions. For they gave a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she had to live on.”

Mark 12:42-44

SACRIFICIAL GIVING

CAN'T you just hear the sound of people dropping their coins into the offering box outside of the temple that day as Jesus stood nearby with his disciples? Then the poor widow came and dropped in two small coins that probably didn't even make a sound. Jesus was so impressed with her heart that He brought His followers over to teach them a lesson on generosity. And out of that moment, the poor widow's seemingly "small" offering grew to a very great and lasting lesson.

The lesson Jesus wanted His disciples to learn then is the same one He wants us to learn now when it comes to giving: it's not an equal amount, but an equal sacrifice that matters to God. God is more pleased when we give joyfully in our hearts than He is with the amount we give. What does our giving say about us? Are we giving out of surplus or out of sacrifice?

TODAY'S PRAYER

Father, Thank You for loving me so much that You sacrificed Your only son, Jesus, to die for my sins. Help me to have a generous heart, a heart that is willing to go above and beyond my own comfort so that I may honor You through sacrificial giving. Thank You that You have promised to reward my faithfulness and generosity. Help me to live by faith and not by sight. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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TIME TO DREAM – Day 34

“Remember this – a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.” 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

GIVE CHEERFULLY

WHAT brings more joy to you, giving a gift or receiving a gift? In reality, both can be joyful experiences. When we see giving as something we “get” to do rather than something we “have” to do, our attitude is more inline with God's design.

Today's verse reminds us "God loves a person who gives cheerfully." God desires that we give out of sacrifice. He also desires that we do so cheerfully. When we give “cheerfully” or with a “happy to do it” attitude, not only does it make giving more joyful, but it also positions us to receive blessings from God that can bring even greater joy to our lives. This is why Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give than receive.” We cannot out give God. The more generous we are with our giving, the more generous God is with His blessings, provision, and favor upon our lives. Remember, for God, giving starts in the heart. What does our attitude about giving say about us?

TODAY'S PRAYER

Father, Thank You for Your generous heart. Thank You that rescuing me from sin and eternal separation was not something You “had” to do but something You “wanted” to do because of Your great love for me. Help me to have the same kind of heart as You do when it comes to giving. Help me to see giving as something I get to do rather than something I have to do. It is my prayer today that You will bless me with the opportunity to bless someone else or to help advance Your purposes with a cheerful heart. Thank You for blessing me so that I can be a blessing. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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TIME TO DREAM – Day 35

“Then, calling the crowd to join His disciples, He said, “If any of you wants to be My follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, follow Me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for My sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it.” Mark 8:34-35

LET GO AND LET GOD

WE know that God is calling us to be generous with our words, our time, and our money, but He also calls us to be generous in sharing the Good News that Jesus died for our sins. He was buried and rose again on the third day, conquering death and the power of sin over our lives! As Christians, we carry the hope of Christ in us. We cannot be selfish with that hope. We must give it to every person God puts in our path.

God’s ways are not the norm. He may call us to go places that we would not normally go. He may call us to reach people we would normally not associate with. He may call us to give up things we would normally hold on to. He tells us that the way to find true life is to give up our life for the sake of the Good News! What is it that you are tightly holding on to that God is calling you to give up so the Message might be shared? Are you willing today to let go and let God do miraculous things through you as you are generous with His Message?

TODAY’S PRAYER

Father, Thank You for giving me the gift of salvation! I am so blessed to carry with me the hope that is found in a relationship with Jesus. Today, help me to see with my spiritual eyes those around me who need to hear about that hope. Show me what I need to lay down so I can be generous with the Good News of Christ in my life. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

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