

MEN'S LIFE BLOOMINGTON & GOD @ WORK

Tuesday, May 9, 2017

Feed the Dream

1 Samuel 1:9-18

Definition: A dream is an aspiration, goal or aim. It is not just a hope or bizarre vision. Dreams often take time to develop and realize, but they are worth it. A dream killer is one who looks at the task at hand and says, "it can't be done." A dream feeder is one who helps build an environment that moves towards the desired outcome. Which are you? Are you someone who often says "no" to dreams. Or are you actively feeding the dreams of your family, co-workers and church. Let's feed the dreams, especially those that are in line with God's desires.

Segment Questions:

- Where on the "dreamer" scale would you place yourself. (1= you rarely dream; 10 =you are always dreaming) Why did you give this answer? Note, there is no right answer.
- Why did Dr. King's line of "I have a dream" resonate so well with people? What would have happened if he instead said "I have a plan?" Why is dream so much better?
- Eli's initial response to Hannah was "are you drunk." Have you ever felt a time where you've shared a dream and been shot down? How does it feel to get that response?
- Hannah's dream for a child was fulfilled. She gave birth to Samuel who became one of the Old Testaments great prophets. What were some of the actions that she and others took to see this dream realized?

Action Questions:

- What do we learn about how Eli responded to Hannah's dream and desire for a child?
- Why is it so hard to feed people's dreams?
- How should you handle a situation where you know a person's dream is unrealistic? What type of counsel would you give?
- What is the best way you have found to discover and feed God's dreams? (either for yourself or for your family)

Closing: *What steps can you take to move away from being a dream killer to a dream feeder.*

Feed the Dream

Early in our years of parenting, Donna and I heard a message by pastor and radio teacher Chuck Swindoll. The theme was parenting and he made a point that we need to “Just say yes.” He illustrated our tendency is to tell our kids the reasons why they can’t do something. He had us take a step back and ask the question, “How hard would it be to just say ‘yes’?” It was a great question. I realized that my child’s desire to help paint, attend a camp or build a tree fort in the back yard could easily be answered yes, yet so often I would tell them why they can’t do it.

Over the years, Swindoll’s comments combined with some other talks, have help make the axiom of “Feed the Dream” a key motto not only for our parenting, but for all of life. With my oldest, we fed his dream of Legos. He now is an engineer and lead US writer for Block’s Magazine. My daughter’s dream was travel and helping people – today she lives in Amman, Jordan working with refugees. The dream of my youngest was sports which we fed by letting him try them all. His dream took him to an NCAA Div 1 soccer championship. I’ve tried to carry dream feeding into my work as well. I play a supportive role where ever I can.

We’ve heard of others who’ve done the same. We all recall the “I have a Dream...” speech by the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. What’s interesting about that speech is that that was originally not to be his theme. But the night before, he went to “consult with the Lord.” He prayed about what to say and asked God for guidance. The next day as he was speaking, someone called out “share the dream.” It wasn’t in the script but he let the Spirit lead and the rest is history.

The Dr. King example is a testimony to what should be at the core of our dreams – that is, God’s desires. We see this in the Old Testament story of Hannah that is recorded in 1 Samuel 1:9-18

Once after a sacrificial meal at Shiloh, Hannah got up and went to pray. Eli the priest was sitting at his customary place beside the entrance of the Tabernacle. Hannah was in deep anguish, crying bitterly as she prayed to the Lord. And she made this vow: “O Lord of Heaven’s Armies, if you will look upon my sorrow and answer my prayer and give me a son, then I will give him back to you. He will be yours for his entire lifetime, and as a sign that he has been dedicated to the Lord, his hair will never be cut.”

As she was praying to the Lord, Eli watched her. Seeing her lips moving but hearing no sound, he thought she had been drinking. “Must you come here drunk?” he demanded. “Throw away your wine!”

“Oh no, sir!” she replied. “I haven’t been drinking wine or anything stronger. But I am very discouraged, and I was pouring out my heart to the Lord. Don’t think I am a wicked woman! For I have been praying out of great anguish and sorrow.”

“In that case,” Eli said, “go in peace! May the God of Israel grant the request you have asked of him.”

“Oh, thank you, sir!” she exclaimed. Then she went back and began to eat again, and she was no longer sad.