

### **Dreams 3:**

Genesis 37:5-11 ESV

*(5) Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more.*

*(6) He said to them, "Hear this dream that I have dreamed:*

*(7) Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf."*

*(8) His brothers said to him, "Are you indeed to reign over us? Or are you indeed to rule over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.*

*(9) Then he dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers and said, "Behold, I have dreamed another dream. Behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me."*

*(10) But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?"*

*(11) And his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying in mind.*

### **Recap:**

I hope you all did your home work last week and refreshed yourself with the story of Joseph in Genesis 37- 50.

Last week we started looking at the life of Joseph, a man, a hero, an example of one who pursued his dream at great cost and with great success.

We learned that dreams are the substance of great achievement.

People who dream become builders of great things.

In spite of opposition, hardships, persecution, ridicule, they never lose their dream.

They continue on and give their life to the pursuit of their dream and the translation of that dream into everyday reality.

Everything God does is according to a pattern that is based upon a principle in His Word.

When we base our lives on the principles of God's Word and not on the personalities of the church, the straighter and more productive our course will be.

### **Potential:**

There are two types of potential.

There is **realized** potential and there is **latent** potential.

**Potential** means: possible, but not yet actual.

### **Realized Potential:**

Realized potential means that this possibility has become an actuality.

That what has lain dormant has manifested itself.

It has become fruit,  
it has matured,  
it is evident.

### **Latent Potential:**

Latent means that something is dormant, it is present but not expressed. It is believed to be there, but not evident.

We often talk about people having great potential.

What we are saying is that we believe their life has possibilities, their giftedness has possibilities, but that these possibilities are just not visibly evident.

To be honest most people live in a sort of deluded sense of latent potential.

They judge others by their actions and themselves by their intentions. They judge others based on what they are or are not doing and themselves by what they one day plan to do.

Let's continue this morning looking at the lessons we can learn from the life of Joseph as we see him chasing his dreams and the dragons - the personal demons - he has to overcome in order to get there.

### **1. Exchange is the process of life:**

The first concept I wish to discuss this morning is that exchange is the process of life.

You have the God-given ability to exchange your dreams for reality if you're prepared to pay the price of pursuing them.

That is what Joseph did.

He gave everything he had in order to obtain something that could not be bought....his future.

One of the common misconceptions people have about the story of creation is that God made everything from nothing.

But that is not what it says.

Hebrews 11:3

*By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.*

There was something there, it was not just invisible.

It was latent.

It had possibility, it had potential, that potential just needed to be realized.

God didn't make something from nothing.

He exchanged something for something.

He realized the potential that was stored in the invisible and made it a physical reality.

We apply this same principle time and time again.

Atomic power is built on this principle.  
Making manifest the latent potential of the invisible through the  
process of exchange.

The cross is the most vivid example of the process of exchange.

Now we all know that salvation is a reality, that what Christ did for us  
was complete and real and available to all whom acknowledge Him  
as Lord and Savior.

But in the life of someone who is yet to see Him as Lord, this potential  
is not realized. This potential is latent.  
And it remains latent until the exchange is made.

God took our sinless Lord and poured Him out for us.  
In exchange He poured forgiveness and righteousness into our  
account.  
So exchange is the process by which our salvation is made manifest.

Here is another example.  
A house.

A house is made manifest through the process of exchange.  
You start with the potential stored in glass, timber, stone and  
concrete, and realize it when it comes together to meet the design of  
the architect.

## **Henry Ford:**

*Henry Ford (1863-1947) was the founder of the Ford Motor Company and is considered the father of modern assembly lines used in mass production.*

In 1893, Henry Ford received a promotion to chief engineer at Edison Illuminating Company.

He was elated, but not at the rise in status.

He knew the new job would give him more time and money to devote to his experiments.

For the next three years, Ford spent his free time clanking and thumping in his tiny workshop.

When he finally finished his creation, a gas-powered vehicle that he called a quadricycle, Ford discovered that it was too big to fit through the doors. No problem; he simply knocked down the wall.

The Edison Company offered Ford the general super-intendancy of the company, but only if he agreed to give up working on the gas engine and devote himself to something more 'useful.'

He refused and left the company to start his own business constructing gasoline-powered vehicles.

After he spent more than \$85,000 without results, his investors backed out and the company folded. He tried again, this time selling shares in his company to raise more money, but this attempt also failed.

In 1903, Ford tried again. He set about recruiting twenty people willing to invest in his company.

Horace Rackman, one of Fords potential investors was reluctant to invest knowing Fords history, so he sought out the advice of the manager of Michigan Savings Bank.

The banker advised against investing saying, "The horse is here to stay, the automobile is a novelty, a fad, a passing fancy."

Henry Ford exchanged his life for his dream.  
He took the invisible that he stored on the inside of his soul and made it manifest.

Ford achieved the results he had hoped for, and the profits of the Ford Motor Company reached more than \$1 million by 1907.

Ford said of life:

*'Think you can, think you can't; you will always be right.'*

## **2. Joseph embraced personal transformation:**

The second thing we noticed in the life of Joseph is the tremendous transformation that happened in his life on the way to his dream.

His transformation lasted from the time his brothers saw him in the pit where they left him to die to the time when they discovered he was ruler of Egypt.

They left a boy to die as a slave and found a man exalted under the hand of God.

The transformation that took place was first of all traumatic and secondly dramatic.

The change that took place in his life was all about the realization of potential within him.

If you think about the personal implications of this it is a very sobering thought.

You are not the person you need to be to do everything you always wanted to do and the processes to become that person will, in and of it self, be long and potentially challenging.

In the midst of his transformation,  
Joseph did not spend his life bemoaning his circumstances  
he spent it making the most of his circumstances.

It is not the obstacles or hardships that make a man, it is what that man does and who that man becomes as a result of those obstacles that makes a man.

Greatness is not something you buy by the pound on discount at Wal-Mart, it is the quiet decision in the darkest days of your soul to rise yet one more time and give it everything you've got.

Ask yourself this simple question....at this moment in time are you doing everything you can to live up to the potential within you?

Joseph grew, matured and became every inch the leader God intended him to be.

He was not limited in his life by how others saw him or how others regarded him.

His brothers didn't think much of him.  
Potiphar's wife thought little of him.  
His friends in prison rejected him.

Yet he allowed none of them to dictate how he saw himself and his potential.

If you allow someone else to make your world for you, they will make it too small.

Joseph never ran from his need to change and adapt in order to survive and prosper.

It is a foolish person who thinks they can become all that they can be without changing who they are.

### **3. Joseph realized that growth and change was God preparing him, not punishing him:**

No one likes to grow.  
No one likes to change.

No one looks forward to the combat,  
the struggle,  
the pursuit,  
the battle  
but all of us enjoy the reward of victory.

Tozer said:

*'It is doubtful whether God can bless a man greatly until He hurts him deeply.'*

We must all learn to grow in God,  
to grow in grace,  
to grow in stature and truth.

We must learn to see the trials that we are facing as signs of God's favor not displeasure.

We face obstacles so that we can prove to a disbelieving world the power and might of the God that we serve. So that we can show them that we love Him not based upon the comfort of our life but the impact of the cross.

You might think...well that isn't faith Brother John.  
That's a negative confession.

I don't know, is it?  
Or is it just a real world observation backed by Biblical history.

Did David lack faith as he faced the mountain of a man in goliath?  
Did Moses lack faith when he led his people up to the red sea and stood while the enemy approached waiting for a miracle?

Why did Jesus tell us to develop a faith that would speak to mountains and toss them into the sea, if we would never face large obstacles beyond our comprehension?

These men never lacked faith; they were just given circumstances in which they could prove the awesome power of God to their generation and to ours.

Heroes are ordinary people in whom courage has become visible.

They are people who never got their eyes off where they were going to, while they were going through it.

We marvel at the life of Joseph and of other successful people and we say 'that is great. I want that.'

But are you prepared to pay the price that Joseph paid?

Now think about Joseph being dragged before Pharaoh.  
Straight from jail, straight to the place and told to interpret or die.  
No one else had been able to.  
Everyone else was in fear for their lives.

When Joseph stood before Pharaoh the only reason he was able to perform when it was required of him was because everyday of his life in isolation, hidden from the world of men he prepared.

He did the best he could, with what he had,  
waiting for his time to come.

Don't wait for the big opportunity, because if you do you will miss the small ones that surround you everyday. The small ones that are put there by God to prepare you for the days ahead.

Don't limit God.  
Let God develop your potential.

Begin with what you have, being faithful with what you have been given, and trust in God's desire and ability to do a work in you so He can so a work through you.

#### **4. Character is the building blocks of success:**

Joseph started off with a God-given gift.

But God had to build God-given character into his life in order to sustain it and make it useable.

2 Timothy 2:2

*and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*

The principal here is that we are always to reward character in our leadership not go looking for talent.

We can develop talent.

We can learn a skill,

But being a faithful person is an issue of character not of gifting.

Again the person that God needed Joseph to be was the man he was not yet.

God had to build character in his life so that he could sustain and contain the future he was called to live.

We see across the landscape of sports, politics, business and the church people whose talent has taken them places that their character could not sustain them.

Faithfulness is the cornerstone for building character, family, business, church, and life.

Parents are you teaching your children lessons of faithfulness or catering to their whims?

Everytime you tell them to be quite, or sit still and they don't...and you let them get away with it, you are model long to them that rebellion is acceptable in your household.

If you don't deal with it between 2 and 5, you will have to confront it from 12-15.

We never had terrible twos and I don't plan to do horrid teenage years.

Why would I want to spend most of my life disliking my children instead of enjoying my children.

Joseph had an overriding quality of faithfulness that he learned from his family.

It was said of his grandfather, Abraham, that everywhere God led him he built his altar and pitched his tent.

Today we have a generation of Christian leaders both working in the secular and sacred who have pitched their altars and are building their tents.

They have thrown away the eternal.  
And are exchanging their life for the temporal.

They have disregarded the most important things  
and are spending all their time,  
talent  
and treasure  
on a flimsy structure that will be blown over  
in the first major storm of their life and their nakedness exposed.

An altar is supposed to last for generations.  
It was something that was erected as a memorial to the faithfulness  
and miraculous nature of God.  
It is the evidence of your love for God in the hearts of your family.

A tent is a temporary, movable, convenient, a comfortable dwelling.

You don't move altars, you and your children's children travel back to them.

Altars of finances.

Altars of personal discipline.

Altars of marital faithfulness.

Altars of a love for church.

Altars of a passion for Word and worship.

These are the things that our nation was once built on.

And when we as a nation threw away our altars to God and embraced the tents of comfort and convenience we started down the path of national moral destruction.

## **Bill Clinton:**

When the most powerful man in the world at the time looked into the camera and told the world he did not have sex with white house intern in Jan 26, 1998 and then 7 months later admits he lied and then was not held accountable for his actions he modeled to the generation of people coming through that it doesn't really matter what you do you, can talk your way out of anything, it is all about talent and personality.

If you ask your child to do a task, do a chore around the home and they do not do it, and they are not corrected for it and excused, because of that you have allowed them to be unfaithful. You have modeled to them that it doesn't really matter what you commit to, they can talk their way out of anything.

His unfaithfulness was not something he came to naturally, but something he learned as a means of survival.

Bill Clinton as a young man of 7 and 8 would take himself to church on Sunday. But this was something that he enjoyed, not something his parents encouraged, it was something that they tolerated.

His family life was a disaster and his models of manhood and faithfulness non-existent or poor at best.

The scripted account of Bill Clinton's eral life says that his biological father was supposed to have been killed in a car wreck the day he was born and he was raised by his step father. The problem with that story is his mother's first husband was stationed in Italy for the 9 months prior to his birth.

Roger Clinton was the man who married Bill Clinton's mother and raised Bill. Bills mother Victoria would be married a total of 4 times.

Now Roger Clinton was a man with character issues. He was an alcoholic.

An abusive man. A violent man. A beater and abuser of women. A well known philander and maritally unfaithful.

There is a story that Bill as a young man pulled a gun on Roger Clinton and threatened to kill him if he harmed his mother again.

Now think about what was modeled to Bill.

Think about who Bill had to become in order to survive.

He was the son of an alcoholic, a violent man so he learned to do whatever he could to keep the peace.

That is what the children of alcoholics do.

Bill would have learned to say whatever needed to be said to not rock the boat and cause his father to go into a flying rage.

He learned that it didn't matter what he had done good or bad, he would have learned to talk his way around the truth in order to survive.

He was modeled that sexual unfaithfulness was a standard part of married life.

That lying and cheating was just an everyday part of life and marriage.

State trooper, L.D. Brown who worked for Governor Clinton said Clinton cheated on his wife countless times.

In fact he said he Brown solicited new sexual partners for Clinton on over 100 occasions.

What you deal with or do not deal with gets magnified in the life of our children.

Let me say that again.....

What you deal with or do not deal with gets magnified in the life of our children.

Look at your kids,  
imagine the sort of people you want them to be  
and the sort of character you want them to have.

And then let's give our lives to being the sort of people that would make us proud.

I don't want my daughters to grow up and marry me.  
I want them to grow up and marry someone better than me.  
I don't want my son to be like me, I am desperate for him to be better than me.  
I want to be the shoulders on which my natural and spiritual children stand so the world can be won for Christ.  
The fruit of my life will not be seen in the great things that I do, but in the great things that they do.

### **5. Joseph continually converted the negatives of today into the positives of tomorrow:**

God never ends on a negative; he always ends on a positive.

We see that time and again in the life of Joseph.  
We were created then and now for God's pleasure.  
The chief aim of man has always been to worship God and enjoy Him forever.

When Adam sinned everything changed.  
What was created and formed in the perfection was now corrupted.  
All human nature changed from positive to negative.  
Everything in life now must go through the process of conversion.

Because we are negative by nature,  
we are conditioned for failure and sin,  
we must be converted in every area of our lives.

Even our attitudes  
our habits,  
thought patterns,  
emotions,  
relationships  
and human appetites  
must all go through this process of turning from a negative to a positive.

For 13 years Joseph went from one negative circumstance to another.  
He went from one opportunity and would give in and give up to another.

Yet at every turn he made the decision to face his dragons and believe God to turn his mess into a miracle.

*Expectancy is the atmosphere for the miraculous.*

*And preparedness is the visible fruit of expectancy.*

If you expect God to minister to you during worship,  
you come with a heart prepared.

If you expect God to speak to you from the Word,  
you come with a heart prepared, notebook in hand, Bible ready, on  
the front row.

### **Alfred Mosher Butts:**

Alfred Butts worked as an architect until the Great Depression hit the United States and he found himself unemployed.  
For four years, he struggled to find a job.

During that period, Butts spent most of his free time expanding a game he had played as a child that combined anagrams and crossword puzzles.

He used the expanded version to create a game board by gluing architectural graph paper onto a chessboard.

Desperate to generate income, Butts tried to sell the game.  
He sold a few sets, but he could not find a manufacturer.  
After Butts found a new job as architect, but still had the game in his home and his heart.

Ten years later, James Brunot, Butts' friend, urged him to manufacture and distribute the game.

Butts agreed, and the two men redesigned the game slightly and gave it a new name: Scrabble.

In the beginning, Brunot manufactured thousands of games in his house with the help of his wife.

Unfortunately, they did not sell enough to make a profit.

For the first four years, the company lost money and was on the verge of bankruptcy.

Then, in 1952, a Macy's executive discovered the game and agreed to stock it in all the stores in the chain.

Sales boomed and, within two years, more than one million games had been sold.

Today, more than 100 million Scrabble games have been sold worldwide; it is found in approximately one-third of all American homes.

Alfred butts prepared, dreamed and built when he could do nothing else.

Not having a job didn't stop him from being employed.

Not having a job didn't stop him from being expectant.

Constant failure didn't make him a failure

Constant rejection did make him a loser.

*Sumner Redstone said  
'Success isn't built on success.  
It is built on failure and frustration,  
sometimes catastrophe,  
and learning to turn it around.'*

## **The secret to Joseph's success:**

The secret, if there is such a thing to Joseph's success, is that for 13 years he stared down his dragons.

For 13 years in silence and solitude he committed himself to slaying his personal dragons.

Facing his personal demons of rejection,  
fear,  
abandonment,  
self-pity,  
and self-doubt.

And every morning got up and did his best with what he had to prepare, because everyday he was expecting that this is the day when his dreams will be fulfilled.

The biggest dragons,  
the biggest demons we shall ever fight are internal.  
The biggest victories we will ever experience are internal.  
Because the biggest need for conversion from a negative to a positive is the area of our own soul.