

**“Dare to Dream” - Genesis 28:10-19 – Rev. Jeff Childs**

Over the years I have said to my wife Robin, “We are living the dream!” When I say it, she knows what I mean. I don’t mean a personal dream we have, or a financial dream or the American Dream. I mean something much bigger. Rev. Mike Slaughter in his book *Dare to Dream* calls it a God-purpose. He wrote that God has created each one of us with a particular plan or purpose to play in God’s overall creative plan for the universe. And when we are doing that, “We are living the dream!”

Rev. Slaughter lifts up the Wright Brothers as a great, example. Their dream was not their day job which was running a bicycle shop, it was building and flying an airplane. Mike called his congregation and readers of his book to dream such dreams. He quotes, “*I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.*” (Jeremiah 29:11) That’s more than a day job; it’s something bigger. It’s the purpose God uniquely created for you; the piece you will add to God’s mission on Earth. Jesus said the same thing, “*As the Father has sent me, so have I sent you.*” We’re going to be working on our dreams or God purpose – God’s plan for our life.

**Here is how you can always tell if a God dream is from God: it will always 1) honor God 2) bless other people and 3) bring you joy.** Success, in and of itself, does not mean it’s a God dream. If it doesn’t honor God, bless other people, and bring you joy; it’s not the success that we’re after. Over the next six weeks we are going to be working on identifying God’s dream for us.

**We have a three-fold purpose.** The first is to **wake up to God’s dream** inside of us. The second is to **develop a life mission statement.** A life mission statement is different from life goals or a bucket list. A life mission statement never changes; it stays the same. It is your Big Hairy Audacious God-purpose. Life goals and resolutions change continually or are adjusted continually to support your life mission. The third, is to **commit to fully invest in your God-directed Life Mission.** Over these six weeks, we are going to be studying people’s dreams and visions. We’re going to begin with Jacob in Genesis 28 this morning. In Genesis 28 we read that Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Haran, which was about a 750-mile journey. When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. This was just an ordinary place; it wasn’t what he had in mind for his destination, and we are not even given the name of the place at this point. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. What an image; do you get any sense of a restless night of sleep? Do you ever have restless nights of sleep? God uses restlessness in our life to get our attention to create change, especially when you find yourself between a rock and a hard place. There Jacob had a dream. Did you hear it? In his dream the Lord said, “*I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the Earth, you will spread out to the West and to the East, to the North, to the South. All the peoples on Earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you will go. I will bring you back to this place. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.*” (Genesis 28:13-15)

God has created each of us with a unique part to play in God's creative plan and is trying to get our attention so we can live that plan. God will not leave us until that plan is fulfilled in our life. Mike Slaughter calls that "living the dream". I'm living the dream. You don't want to miss the dream. Life is too short. When Jacob woke from his sleep, he thought, *"Surely the Lord is in this place, and I wasn't aware of it."* He was afraid and said, *"How awesome is this place, this is none other than the house of God, this is the gate of Heaven."* (Genesis 28:16-17)

Throughout scripture, God uses dreams to get our attention. In this particular dream, a shift begins to take place in Jacob's focus. Jacob begins to shift from this self-selected life path to a God-directed life purpose. Jacob has this crazy dream, and there are ladders and angels, but there is a point to every dream. In the Celtic tradition of Christianity, they call these the **thin places**, the closest places to Heaven and Earth. Right here, in this Biblical text, it is called the gate of Heaven. I believe Mt. Carmel can become one such place.

In early Christian and Hebrew tradition, they didn't believe that Heaven was far away, but that Heaven and Earth existed right next to each other. In your subconscious, you can begin to see into the other side through your dreams and hear God's word to guide you. In Matthew we read that the wisemen had a dream about not reporting back to Herod but to return home by a different way, which they did.

Over the next 6 weeks, my hope is that you will be able to write your life mission statement. Here is the first step, what we are doing this week...identify 3 people that you admire and what about them do you admire. What is their dream? I think of Danny Thomas and his passion to promote and support helping to heal children through the St. Jude Children's hospital, and Mother Theresa caring for the poorest people in the slums in India, and Jimmy Carter and his support and involvement in Habitat for Humanity. They used their gifts and abilities as well as their relationships and connections to make a difference in a need that they felt strongly about. What do you feel strongly about and how are you gifted to make a difference? Dare to Dream! Alleluia and Amen.

### **We Dare to Dream the Dream of God**

Rev. Jeffrey B. Childs 12/27/22

We dare to dream the dream of God,  
To guide us on our way.  
We may serve here or serve abroad.  
Be ready come what may.  
Uniquely, God has gifted us.  
And serving is our theme.  
As we follow the Lord Jesus.  
We are living the dream.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
For we have been so blessed.  
If we but go, where God says, "Go!"  
Then God will do the rest.  
At the right time, at the right place,  
We'll be there for someone,  
To offer God's mercy and grace,  
Until our task is done.