

Dream the Dream – Catch the Vision Acts 2:1-18

Many Christians around the world today will observe Pentecost Sunday. On the first Pentecost after Easter, Jesus' small band of followers "*were all together in one place*" (Acts 2:1). Then the Holy Spirit empowered them so miraculously that they began to share the gospel in languages they had never learned.

People from at least fifteen different nationalities were gathered in Jerusalem. Shocked that they heard the message in their own languages (vv. 11–12), more than three thousand of them came to faith in Jesus Christ and were baptised that day (v. 41).

From that day on, people spanning the spectrum of ethnicities and cultures have chosen to follow Jesus. In heaven, we will gather with believers "*from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages*" (Revelation 7:9). That's because for Christians "*there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus*" (Galatians 3:28).

This truth combined with our bible reading I hope will encourage each one of us, in the light of God's eternal vision for his children and Christ's church, to catch a hold of what the LORD might be saying to us as a body of believers gathered here today in this place.

I am inspired to share what I believe are my God given dreams for this place, to catch the vision of who we are to be which I will do later. But first, I want to make the point that God has always spoken to His children in dreams and visions. Did you know that 1/3rd of the Bible relates to visions or dreams being mentioned at least 224 times?

The ancients understood that the world of dreams opens a channel of communication between humankind and the spiritual realm. Our culture has lost the significance and value of visions and dreams, even in the church, that desire to dream God's dream - catching the vision for the life in Christ that He has for us to follow as his body. Among the early Patriarchs of the Old Testament it was Abraham, Jacob and one of his son's, Joseph, who were the ones to receive the dreams and catch the vision for their lives which were never just for themselves. Their dreams were quite prophetic in nature being about their family, their own people, nations of other peoples, and even the

future impact on the world. As they each dreamed their God given dreams, catching the vision, living, thinking, and acting in such a way that showed they believed, whether it was to come to fruition in their lifetime, or was meant for fulfillment in a future generation.

After these early patriarchs came Moses. Now he wasn't much of a dreamer but he certainly had the vision of the burning bush before his very own eyes. Encountering 'I am' there, he developed a prayer life living in the presence of 'I AM' or *Yahweh*. He followed Yahweh's direction and brought the Israelites out of Egypt. In spite of his and the Israelites disobedience resulting in 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, God never removed his presence or stopped communicating, for he gave the blueprints for the Tabernacle, and the Holy of Holy Tent inside it along with all its fixtures, fittings and furnishings to Moses. But this was not all Yahweh had this to say to his children.

Numbers 12:6 *'Listen to my words:*

'When there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, reveal myself to them in visions, I speak to them in dreams. (Meaning I make myself known with prophetic meaning. Visions being the mode of revelation.)

And so it was throughout the history of God's people. There were the dreamers including King Solomon, the prophet Ezekiel and of course Daniel. With 600 years passing from God's Word to Israel in the wilderness there came in the 6th Century BC God's Word through the prophet **Joel 2: 28**

'And afterwards, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy,

your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.

29 *Even on my servants, both men and women*

I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

And these are the words that were quoted by the apostle Peter approximately 600 years later, 50 Days after Christ's resurrection, 10 post Christ's Ascension when he said his goodbyes to the disciples, issuing them with the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) as he departed this world, to the heavenly realm to be at the Father's Right hand.

Peter began the work of the Great Commission on the Day of Pentecost explaining the events of that day. He also answered the mockers as he preaching to the crowd of Jews from different nations, including converts to Judaism, that had hastily gathered in the thousands as the Holy Spirit arrived with the sound like the rushing of a violent wind, and the tongues of fire came to rest on the 12 twelve apostles. Who then as the Spirit filled them began speaking in tongues of languages not known by them declaring the wonders of God to all the different people groups and nations who were there. These people were in Jerusalem at the time to celebrate the Festival of the Harvest also known as the festival of Weeks and the day of first fruits on the 50th day after the Sabbath of Passover week. It was traditionally the day that Moses had received the Law. Now it would be seen as the day the spirit came to fulfill God's promise as given in the law and the Prophets.

Acts 2: 17 *“In the last days, God says,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.*

*Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.*

18 *Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.*

These were the beginning of the last days as prophesied by Joel, the moving from the OT Covenant to the New with the Messiah having come and gone but who would return again. In these times Peter and then Saul who became Paul received dreams and visions, but these were not limited to just the apostles, ordinary Christians such as Ananias received them (Acts 9:10-11). Even a devout Gentile Roman Centurion named Cornelius was given a vision by God (Acts 10:3). He along with others through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that was for all people to dream dreams, received their salvation and caught the vision for the spread of the Gospel, starting with their own friends and family, and continuing throughout the Roman Empire. But it didn't stop there! The early church after the apostles also continued to experience dreams and visions. Polycarp, a disciple of John, was a 2nd-century Christian bishop of Smyrna (West Coast of Turkey)

where the church had spread too. He died a martyr, bound and burned at the stake. Before this happened Polycarp was given a vision that indicated he was going to be burned alive, so his end came as no surprise to him and he met it as an old man full of Life and faith. Since this time, in these the last days, God has never stopped this flow of dreams and seeing visions from Him to his children.

God promised that he would pour out His Spirit until Jesus' return. Do you know what? You and I can expect to dream God given Dreams and receive Visions. If you are a Christian believer who remains open to the Holy Spirit then you are in a position to never let anyone tell you that you are too small, too young or too old to do anything in life. If you can dream God's dream for your life then you can surely live it. It may not be easy to achieve it, but always remember if it was so easy to achieve it, it might not be worth having it. When we dream the dream - catch the vision, what it is that we are doing is merely Visioning the dream inside of us. To help us in the process we are to pray to God in order to receive from Him the directions to achieve the dream. As we dream dreams it is very important to move along in the process in order to catch the associated Vision. This is because there is the difference between a "dreamer" and a "visionary"? Motivational speaker Larry Hendricks summed it up this way, "I think the difference comes down to a word, ACTION. A visionary acts, and a dreamer dreams..."

So, time for action then! Since before my arrival here I have been dreaming dreams about what Drury and God's church in Drury was to transform and become like as a bearer and giver of life, forgiveness, provision, healing, and standing out as a beacon of hope. My Dream received is the vision of 'Drury – God Lives Here!' Anyone travelling through on Great South Road or the motorway from the moment they pass the Papakura off ramp, the overwhelming sense of unconditional Love, peace that surpasses understanding, joy and hope replaces any other opposing thoughts and feelings, even to the point of suppressing evil itself. Lasting until the traveller disappears out of our sight over the Bombay Hills. Whether you believe in God, or a god, or not, everyone senses the Drury Blessing, whether they live here or not. A blessing which in no way can be associated with 'Dreary' and is certainly progression from merely being 'jolly'.

Charles Ma remains a kindred Spirit in desiring as a Christian that the Drury West development that began as an impossible dream, after a lot of hard work to pursue the Vision, is finally becoming a reality now with the physical process of building a healthy community based on God's prophetic Word. My personal dream since before I came here, and the Vision that has served to keep me here, was to be the minister of what our church was to transform into and become as we respond to the changing needs and makeup of our community. On the Day of Pentecost there were at least 15 nations present. Drury has at least 15 different nationalities living here. And our church is slowly changing to reflect the ethnic makeup of our local residents. I was surprised to recently learn that one of us has an Indian grandparent. We are already more ethnically diverse than we know. And with the great commandment at the heart of our life and ministry we have the firm direction of Jesus Christ's Commission to Go and make disciples of all nations. The thing being, we do not have to go far presently or in the future as our local population is predicted to swell by thousands with a good portion of Indian people, followed by Chinese, coming to live here. These people, along with other cultures are fast becoming our new local mission field. And we need to be ready to reach out and declare God's wonders with a plan that connects us to new residents, including new immigrants, and a larger facility to welcome them into, perhaps with English classes offered among other things...

A Vision which the elders truly believe is destined to be on our current site, but remains to be tested as we employ professionals to carry out the comparative study. A word which we sense has been confirmed by others, just like at least three different people having a picture of a man standing up the front of the church playing the guitar long before Werner applied for his position here. He was the one we were to expect just as we are to plan for a new facility which some have already dreamed dreams and caught the vision for. Please do add your dreams to ours as we seek to bring the Vision to a reality to the glory of God and the extension of his kingdom. When God's vision becomes our vision, He can accomplish more than we can imagine. So let's join God. I say Dream the Dream – Catch the Vision!

In response we will have a brief moment of silence to consider what God might be saying to us now, time to even dream a dream or catch a vision after which our response will be to sing...

'Be Thou my Vision O LORD of my heart...'