

We are off to an incredible year! Be blessed and build your dream.

Love you guys!

## **Part 3: Build Your Dream:** ***Live the Life You've Always Wanted!***

- A. We have been talking about taking steps that will make your dream a reality.
1. To fulfill your dream, you must: See it! Say it! Pray it! Pay it! Stay it! Play it! and then Sanctify it!
  2. To live the life you've always wanted, the dream is more about the quality of your life than anything else.
  3. People who have had so little of this world's goods do not always think of themselves as 'poor.' Because of their lack of possessions, they believe that obtaining 'things' will somehow make them happy.
  4. But, people who have **had** things and a measure of prosperity realize that's not what made them happy. 'Things' may make your dream easier to obtain, but the dream itself involves living a satisfying, fulfilled life.

### **See It!**

#### **Texts:**

**James 4:14 (NKJV)** - "For what is your life?"

**Matthew 14:23-33 (NKJV)** - "And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there. [24] But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. [25] Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. [26] And when the disciples saw Him

walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. [27] But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." [28] And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." [29] So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. [30] But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" [31] And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" [32] And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. [33] Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God."

B. You must **see** it!

1. Webster's definition of *vision*: the faculty of sight; unusual foresight; a mental image produced by the imagination; the experience of the supernatural as if with the eyes.
2. John Maxwell's definition of *vision*:
  - a. The ability to see – Awareness
  - b. The faith to believe – Attitude
  - c. The courage to do - Action
3. George Barna: Vision for ministry is a reflection of what God wants to accomplish through you to build His kingdom.
4. Vision focuses on making dreams become realities. I believe there are some really good days ahead, not only for the city of Houston, but the incredible future of this congregation!
5. **Joke:** The Golden Phone  
A man in Detroit, Michigan decided to write a book about American churches. Beginning in San Francisco, he began to work his way eastward, zigzagging across the states. While taking pictures in a very

large church, he spotted a golden telephone attached to the wall with this intriguing sign: "Calls - \$5,000 a minute."

After seeking out the pastor, he asked about the sign above the phone. The pastor answered that this golden phone was indeed a direct line to Heaven and if the visitor was willing to pay the price, he could personally talk to God. He thanked the pastor and continued on his way.

While visiting churches in Seattle, Boise, Denver, Minneapolis, Chicago, Milwaukee, New York, and other large cities, he found more of those phones with the identical sign and the same answer from the pastor. Finally, he arrived here in Houston. Upon entering Christian Tabernacle, he saw the same type golden telephone, but the sign above it read: "Calls - 35 cents a minute."

Fascinated, he asked me, "Reverend, in churches all across the country I've found the very same golden telephone and a sign assuring me it was a direct line to Heaven. In the other churches, the cost was \$5,000 a minute; but your sign reads "35 cents per call." Why is that?"

I just smiled and replied, "Son, you're in Houston now. It's a local call."

We've been told that the city of Houston has a great future, but more importantly, God has some wonderful things for our church family!

- C. People who have vision often lose it when hit by some huge challenge that takes their breath away.
  - 1. Last week we learned that dreams often come disguised as a challenge. For that reason, you must not panic when a difficult situation arises.
  - 2. Your vision must be strong enough to survive the dilemma.
    - a. Challenges help refine your dream by giving it greater clarity and focus.

- b. Trials will help you jettison the unimportant and focus with laser intensity on what really matters. However, for most people, the opposite is true.
  - 3. Israel had vision until they came to the Red Sea.
    - a. In the wilderness, they lost vision when they needed food and again when their water supply was depleted.
    - b. It happened again when they encountered the enemy.
    - c. While each challenge was meant to help them focus and clarify their dream, instead, they lost their vision.
  - 4. Loss of vision is quite common. While the problem can clearly be seen, only a few can detect the promise.
  - 5. What **should** have happened when Israel encountered these tragic situations? God's intention was to reveal His total commitment and care for them.
  - 6. How is a person taught to trust someone else? It won't happen when things are going well. Only when you're facing an irresolvable challenge can another person demonstrate their ability, faithfulness and trustworthiness.
- D. Every challenge that Israel encountered should have resulted in a miracle.
- 1. Obviously, they couldn't fix their problems. How could a road be built through the Red Sea in a single night or food be provided for 3.5 million people in a desert?
    - a. It was impossible. They needed God's help! And all He asked in return was for them to believe and trust Him.
    - b. Because they never fully trusted Him, a three-week journey lasted 40 years.
    - c. You don't ever fail God's tests; you just take them over and over until you're ready to pass!

2. **Hosea 2:14-16 (NKJV)** -"Therefore, behold, I will allure her, Will bring her into the wilderness, And speak comfort to her. [15] I will give her her vineyards from there, And the Valley of Achor as a door of hope; She shall sing there, As in the days of her youth, As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt. [16] "And it shall be, in that day," Says the Lord," That you will call Me 'My Husband,' And no longer call Me 'My Master.'"
3. God intended for Israel's challenges to prove something. He wanted them to understand His commitment to them!
4. Valley of Achor – in the Hebrew, Achor means 'troubled.' It describes churning or roiled water, such as the violent waves of a storm.
5. Achan was buried in this valley after his disobedience brought a curse upon Israel and defeat by their enemy.
6. Achan's sin proves my point that those who have never had 'things' believe that's what produces fulfillment and reward. Reared as a slave, Achan thought, "If I can get my hands on that silver, that glittering wedge of gold and the fancy suit, I'll be happy."
7. To make matters worse, notice that Achor was a *valley*, or to paraphrase, Achor was the Valley of Trouble, or the Valley of the Storm.
8. What I really want you to observe is what was ***in*** the valley. There was a door....a door of hope!
  - a. A door is an entrance to another place.
  - b. Like Israel, most people only see the trouble, or the storm. But God said the storm was—a door!
9. If the 'promise' is in the problem, ***what do you see?*** Look for the door in every valley!

E. Your 'storm' or 'challenge' is a door that leads to another place.

1. Only when you are challenged can God prove Himself by bringing you to another dimension.

2. When the disciples saw Jesus walking toward them,....one whitecap to another, all they could say was, "Who is this?" It was Jesus, who had referred to Himself as 'the door.' In the midst of their storm, a door appeared! That's just the way God intends it to happen!
3. So, the question is, "What do **you** see?" The Bible says that Peter **saw** the wind. Imagine that! Can you see the wind? Of course not. His imagination was at work.
4. So, your greatest challenge may not be the situation itself, but the challenge of your imagination! As long as Peter kept his eyes on Jesus, he could walk on water; but when he focused on the wind and the waves, all he could see was the problem.
5. ***What do you see!***

F. How can you spot that 'door' in the valley?

1. When facing a challenge, you must constantly believe what God has declared in His Word about Himself.
2. **Psalm 27:12-14 (NKJV)** - "Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; For false witnesses have risen against me, And such as breathe out violence. [13] I would have lost heart, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the LORD In the land of the living. [14] Wait on the Lord; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord."
3. In Psalm 27, David's enemies had lied about him and tried to do him harm. He felt as if people were out to 'get' him.
4. As someone has aptly said, you aren't paranoid for believing that people are out to get you; they really are!
5. While in his valley, David would have certainly lost heart except for this one thing: he knew there was a door in that valley! He believed that God wanted to show him the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living!

G. What should you believe about God and your future?

1. **Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)** - "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
2. And you must keep believing that, even when facing a challenge.
3. Look for the door! And what's really cool is when the door comes looking for you!

H. What should you **see** when you find the door?

1. **See** the goodness of God.
2. **See** the faithfulness of God.
3. **See** the love of God.
4. **See** the grace of God. If Peter had correctly looked at the water beneath his feet, he would have realized that God's grace was at work in a **big** way!
5. **See** the power of God. That's what happened with every challenge Israel faced—and it will happen for you, too!