

It's Time to Dream Again

So many people today have lost their motivation because of pandemic stress and overwhelming loss. Don't let go of God's promises. It's time to rediscover and reclaim your life purpose.

The Bible records the devastating loss that Samuel felt during the demise of King Saul. Prior to his downfall, Samuel anointed Saul to be king of Israel by God's direction. Saul was God's choice, but Saul rebelled against God and did his own thing. In the portion of the story that I wish to highlight, God has moved on, but Samuel is still stuck in the loss.

The following are the words of the Lord to Samuel, "The Lord said to Samuel, 'How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king'" (1 Sam. 16:1, NIV).

God is clearly saying to Samuel, "It's time to move on; it's time to dream again. Quit grieving and start going." I believe this is the word of the Lord for many of us today.

Like Samuel, we all struggle to find our way during the disorientation that accompanies overwhelming loss. As everything shifts, teeters and our world is turned upside down, we can find our minds spinning out of control, unsure of what to do next.

Beloved, there is but one thing we must do to right the ship. We must drop the anchor and secure our bearings. We must find our compass—the Word of God—and remind ourselves of His promises and purposes for our lives. This alone will steady the ship and pick us up from the depths. It will renew our hope and propel us forward. Please allow me to remind you of God's purposes and plans for you. It's time to dream again.

Embracing a Grand Adventure

The Bible says, “From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth: and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands” (Acts 17:26, NIV). This means that we exist on planet Earth during *this time* on God’s schedule and not our own, and not by mere accident. God places each person in their specific generation where their unique gifts and talents can make the greatest impact. We are not random DNA, nor are we randomly placed in time. We weren’t born at the wrong time, but right on God’s time! And the age in which we are born is immutably bound to our destiny.

Israel’s King David is an example of this truth. The Bible states that, “When David had served God’s purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep” (Acts 13:36a). He was placed in his generation by God’s design. King David’s highest potential was tailor-fitted for the generation in which he lived, and so is ours.

King David served God’s purpose in his generation, and then he died. The real challenge of life is to make David’s eulogy our own. These few words are a precise description of God’s desire for every person in their respective generations. Whether we realize it or not, this is our true purpose in life. Deep within every child of God is a profound desire to fulfill this destiny.

Standing in the way is the foreboding obstacle of self-doubt. It whispers that we don’t have what it takes or we are not qualified. One of the great ironies of life is that we coexist with both a deep desire to do something extraordinary with our lives while feeling underqualified to do exceptional things. While the flames of passion roar within to make a lasting footprint, many inwardly struggle to understand their role, puzzled by what greatness could even look like for them. It is quite common to feel inadequate for the extraordinary things

God wants to accomplish through us.

The struggle is real, but God's plan for our lives is never mediocre. His plan for every person is greatness! I believe God is speaking right now to many of you as you read this. He is saying "My daughter, My son, there is so much more that I have for you." "'For I know the plans I have for you,' says the Lord. 'They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope'" (Jer. 29:11, NLT).

Fulfilling God's destiny and purpose will require that we leave what is comfortable. I have experienced this personally. When my wife and I left America to be missionaries in China, it required us to leave behind our jobs, our possessions and everyone we knew. In so doing we received back the marvelous blessing of seeing many come to Christ who would have otherwise never heard about Jesus.

When our son was three months old, we left again for Czechoslovakia to live in a bus and preach on the streets. Communism had just fallen, and the nation was wide open to the gospel. The journey required we leave what was comfortable, but we gained an amazing harvest of souls.

God has planned a grand adventure for each of us, provided we are willing to leave the safety of the shore. If we will but launch out into the deep and fully pursue the vision God has given us, He will do exceedingly above all we ask or can imagine. While the entirety of our destiny may remain unclear, one thing is certain: Unless we are willing to press in and push past our comfort zone, we will never achieve it. Significant risk is required to do significant things for God.

Living a Great Story

The leaving that God requires of us is not always a geographical one. For some, God wants you to leave just attending a church and move into serving in it. Some need to leave the pain of the past and let go of bitterness,

unforgiveness and regrets. Some need to leave relationships that are holding you back. Some need to abandon a lifestyle that is above your means and receive the freedom to give and do what God wants you to do in the future. And we all need to leave the dinner table more often to fast and pray.

Every good farmer knows that hard plowing always precedes the harvest. The Word instructs us to “Break up your fallow ground, for it is the time to seek the Lord, that he may come and rain righteousness upon you” (Hos. 10:12b, ESV). But our natural desire is to follow the path of least resistance. I assure you that if you follow that path, you will fall far short of God’s best for you.

You must start doing the last command you heard your master give. The rest will not come until you start. Movement is the precursor to great things. It is much easier to turn the steering wheel on a moving car than on one that is stopped. Good things happen when we are moving.

Risk is inherent in this journey. It must be present to reach your God-given destiny. That is what faith is, “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1, KJV, emphasis added). God’s plans always require the unseen. The best stories of great adventurers are reserved for those who prevail against all odds, who climb mountains and scale rugged peaks. Will you live a great story, one worthy of retelling? You will do so only if you live a life that is proactive rather than waiting for everything to come to you. To reach your full potential, to realize all the plans God has for you, will require that you leave behind something or quite possibly someone. Are the people around you holding you back?

If we are to live the grand adventure God has planned for each of us, we must settle within our hearts that the greater One fights for us. Yes, we are fighting raw evil and gross spiritual darkness, but Jesus has given us His authority over the enemy of our souls. All of heaven’s host backs us up. We

have no reason to fear, for the greater One lives in us!

When God asks us to do something, there is always a measure of fear attached to it. This fear tries to immobilize us. Fear comes from the uncertainty of not knowing how things will turn out prior to our leap of faith. If we allow fear to dominate our lives, we will never walk in our God-given destiny. Take the plunge and trust God, for He is more than able to make you succeed. No fear!

Because the human soul is eternal, its burning thirst for purpose and meaning can never be quenched by the temporal. But life has a way of duping us. Like an experienced con artist, the daily grind of life does a bait and switch with things that don't really matter—a new car, a new house, a new outfit, a new relationship. But nothing stays “new” for long. We trade in cars, exchange homes for bigger and newer ones and are constantly in search of something to satisfy. Material things carry with them an unwritten quality that no matter how fast, how shiny or how many features they boast, it is never enough.

Deep within all of us lies a dissatisfaction that begins to throb as soon as something newer comes along. In the end, the enticement of material things is simply a mirage that sends us on the search for a path that can never truly satisfy.

We then spend our most valuable commodity—time—upon things that only lead to delayed regrets. The question we need to ask is not how will we *spend* our days here on earth, but rather, how will we *invest* them?

Embracing a Divine Destiny

Time will not stop while we wrestle with the correct answer. It will continue to prod along, all the while withdrawing from our account. I have often said to youngsters that they are rich and I am poor. When their puzzled expressions meet this statement, I quickly explain, “You are rich in time, and I am growing poorer by the day.” I quickly add, “Don't waste it.”

Unearthing your destiny cannot be delayed. We were born into this generation by God's design to reach our highest potential. Time is our real enemy, which we must overcome by redeeming it. Like a wild stallion, it must be tamed and brought under our control. Time will wait for no one.

Everything has a lifespan, a limited number of days. For example:

According to the United States Federal Reserve, the average lifespan of a \$100 bill is 15 years, and a \$5 bill lasts just 4.9 years.

The Antique Automobile Club of America says a car is considered a "classic" at 25 years old.

While a residential home may survive for hundreds of years, the individual components will not. A gas range has an average life span of about 15 years.

People don't last long, either. "In North America, the average lifespan for men is 76 years and 81 years for women," according to recent, post-COVID insurance study. "Life expectancy in Africa is the lowest of all continents at just 61 years and 64 years for males and females respectively."

With that sobering thought in mind, what are you going to do with your life? With the few years we have each been afforded, how will you invest yours? God had to remind Samuel to quit wasting his time grieving over his loss and get up and get going again. I don't wish in any way to minimize the depths of your loss but only to remind you that the sand in your hourglass is steadily being spent. It's time to dream again.

You and I live in the greatest era of opportunity mankind has ever known. This new season is fertile and full of possibilities for those who recognize the hour and seize the day. What could your life look like if you discovered God's will for your life and embraced the generation into which you

were born?

Let's look beyond the present and see what can be. God is looking for pioneers to blaze new trails. Those trails will not only pave the way for many to follow but will also take the pioneers who forge them to the desired destination of finding purpose, meaning and significance in their personal lives. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you creative ideas and help you think of a new way of doing things.

We cheat ourselves when we believe God has never given us any shot at doing something great for Him. We have opportunities all around us. You see, God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things in ordinary situations. Many waste their time waiting on a big splash, not realizing that there are opportunities all around them. If we are faithful with little, God promised to give us more. Dear reader, don't wish away your life; don't wait to start living your destiny tomorrow. You were placed in this generation by God's design for greatness.

"You have mourned long enough for Saul" (1 Sam. 16:1b, NLT). It's time to dream again!

(This article is adapted from Born for the Extraordinary, published by Harrison House.)

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