

Have Your Dreams Been Imprisoned by Any of These Things?

It takes courage to break ranks with religious clones and think for ourselves. But we must realize that creativity, imagination and real learning are never cultivated in crowds. We also have to recognize that there are no permanent “arrivals” or plateaus in this life.

Either we are growing, expanding and developing, or we are declining, growing stagnant and petrifying. No matter how much you have seen, experienced and learned, there is always more, always a new frontier that requires courage to explore. If you stop living on this edge of continuous growth and expansion, you risk cutting yourself off from your potential in God.

Bill Johnson says, “What you know can keep you from what you need to know.” He’s right, because as soon as you consider yourself an expert, you stop learning and growing.

The Pharisees are a great example of people who memorized the Word of God and didn’t recognize the author of the Book when He stood right in front of them explaining the Book to them. History is full of experts whose imagination was imprisoned by their education, experience or fear of rejection.

Consider some of the following examples:

- “Man will never reach the moon regardless of all future scientific advances.” (Dr. Lee DeForest, father of radio and grandfather of television)
- “The bomb will never go off. I speak as an expert in explosives.” (Admiral William Leahy, U.S. Atomic Bomb Project)
- “There is no likelihood man can ever tap the power of

the atom.” (Robert Millikan, Nobel Prize in physics, 1923)

- “Computers in the future may weigh no more than 1.5 tons.” (*Popular Mechanics*, 1949)
- “I think there is a world market for maybe five computers.” (Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, 1943)
- “I have traveled the length and breadth of this country and talked with the best people, and I can assure you that data processing is a fad that won’t last out the year.” (Editor in charge of business books for Prentice Hall, 1957)
- “But what is it good for?” (Engineer at the Advanced Computing Systems Division of IBM, commenting on the microchip, 1968)
- “640K ought to be enough for anybody.” (Bill Gates, 1981)
- “This ‘telephone’ has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us.” (Western Union internal memo, 1876)
- “The wireless music box has no imaginable commercial value. Who would pay for a message sent to nobody in particular?” (David Sarnoff Associates, response to urgings for investment in radio, 1920s)
- “The concept is interesting and well formed, but in order to earn better than a ‘C’, the idea must be feasible.” (Yale University management professor, in response to Fred Smith’s paper proposing reliable overnight delivery service. Smith went on to found the Federal Express Corporation.)
- “I’m just glad it’ll be Clark Gable who falls on his face, not Gary Cooper.” (Gary Cooper, on his decision not to take the leading role in *Gone with the Wind*)
- “A cookie store is a bad idea. Besides, the market research reports say America likes crispy cookies, not soft and chewy cookies like you make.” (Response to Debbi Fields’ idea of starting Mrs. Field’s Cookies)

- “We don’t like their sound, and guitar music is on the way out.” (Decca Recording Company, rejecting the Beatles, 1962)
- “Heavier-than-air flying machines are impossible.” (Lord Kelvin, president of the Royal Society, 1895)
- “Drill for oil? You mean drill into the ground to try and find oil? You’re crazy!” (Drillers that Edwin L. Drake tried to enlist to his project to drill for oil, 1859)
- “Airplanes are interesting toys but of no military value.” (Marechal Ferdinand Foch, Professor of Strategy, École Supérieure de Guerre, France)
- “Everything that can be invented has been invented.” (Charles H. Duell, Commissioner, U.S. Office of Patents, 1899)
- “The super computer is technologically impossible. It would take all of the water that flows over Niagara Falls to cool the heat generated by the number of vacuum tubes required.” (Professor of Electrical Engineering, New York University)
- “I don’t know what use anyone could find for a machine that would make copies of documents. It certainly couldn’t be a feasible business by itself.” (Head of IBM, refusing to back the idea, forcing the inventor to found Xerox)
- “Louis Pasteur’s theory of germs is ridiculous fiction.” (Pierre Packet, Professor of Physiology at Toulouse, France, 1872)
- “The abdomen, the chest, and the brain will forever be shut from the intrusion of the wise and humane surgeon.” (Sir John Eric Ericksen, British surgeon, appointed Surgeon-Extraordinary to Queen Victoria, 1873)
- “There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home.” (Ken Olson, president, chairman, founder of Digital Equipment Corp., 1977)

Where would we be today if people always let the “experts”

dictate the boundaries of their imagination? How different would society be if these history makers had followed the crowd or allowed their ideas to be judged in the courtroom of popular opinion? It takes a deep thinker to realize there are eggs that were meant to fly!

Have your dreams been imprisoned by education, experience or fear of rejection? Tell me about it in the comments below.

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