

2nd Opinion: Personal fantasy vs. God's vision

June 25, 2009

“The one who works his land will have plenty of food, but whoever chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty” (Proverbs 28:19).

What is the difference between a “fantasy” and a God-given “vision”? How do you distinguish between chasing a foolish dream and committing yourself to a task that fulfills God’s purpose for your life? How can you know if you are pursuing a daydream or your destiny?

Think of Noah. Many who saw him building an ark on dry land surely assumed he was chasing fantasies. Instead, he fulfilled God’s purpose while achieving his own destiny.

Nehemiah left his cushy position as the king’s cupbearer to rebuild the wall around long-destroyed Jerusalem. It was an impossible task ridiculed by many. The wall had been reduced to rubble decades earlier. Still, Nehemiah’s God-inspired vision led him to challenge his people to work. They were mocked. The wall became a regional joke. But they rebuilt the wall.

A fantasy is a dream or personal goal of self-achievement. It is an inspiring, self-motivating and self-satisfying ambition. It can bring much glory to oneself. Some people pursue personal fantasies their entire lives without success. Others, despite incredible odds, achieve their dreams and receive accolades and even wealth. Regardless, they are spiritually impoverished. They’ve pursued empty dreams. They are celebrities to the world but dead to God. Unfortunately, they have failed to fulfill God’s purpose for their lives; they have not achieved their God-given destiny. And they are at extreme risk in spending eternity apart from their Creator.

Scripture says God has a purpose for every life. Before birth, God knew each of us and endowed us with unique gifts and talents. He has equipped every human being for success. He has given us all we need to fulfill his purpose for us. We've received skills, ingenuity and creativity that align perfectly. They enable us to achieve our purpose, and doing so advances God's kingdom. No one else can do precisely what you were put here on earth to do; failing to get 'er done means another must step in and do your part. If Noah hadn't built the ark, God would have found someone else, possibly less able, to do it. If Nehemiah hadn't rebuilt the wall, God would have sent someone else, no doubt less capable. But God's will is not thwarted; the wall would have been built, with or without Nehemiah. Nehemiah succeeded because he pursued his God-inspired vision.

So, please accomplish the vision God has granted you. It will involve your skills, dreams and ambitions—but possibly in ways you haven't anticipated. Since they are God-centered, they will bring glory and honor to Jesus Christ. They will require self-sacrifice, longsuffering commitment and total dependence upon God for success. You will be asked to do things outside your comfort zone or experience, or even beyond your natural abilities. You may have no idea how to begin and, at times, how to take the next step. Just begin. You may make several false starts or wrong decisions. You may go down wrong paths as you misinterpret God's direction. That's OK. You may feel you are "marching blind," but know that you always have God's lamp at your feet. The Lord will be there to direct and redirect you, guiding you along the correct path to achieve his purpose and your destiny.

As you pursue your godly vision, you will experience great joy. You never will have needs God fails to meet. He supplies you because you are faithfully "working the land" he has given you. You are doing his will and will not go hungry because God himself has said, "A laborer is worthy his hire." His blessings will surprise you.

As you fulfill your destiny, you may receive glory and financial success, but

as you do, you will know it is God's way of blessing you. Doing your part in constructing God's kingdom is a blessing to the rest of us; it wouldn't be done as well if someone else did it. And you will be quick to praise him and transfer all the glory to Jesus, to whom it truly belongs.

Worldly praise will seem unimportant to you because achieving a God-given vision—your destiny—is reward in itself.

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