



# DREAMS of CHRISTMAS

## THE BETTER DREAM

*Dreams of Christmas* | Devan Bumstead  
Matthew 1:18-25

**What do we do when our dreams don't come true?**

## JOSEPH'S SHATTERED DREAM

Betrothal In the 1st Century

Honor-Shame In the 1st Century

## DOES GOD STILL SPEAK IN DREAMS?

*Matthew 1:20*

## JOSEPH'S SURRENDER

“Often in life, things happen whose meaning we do not understand. Our first reaction is frequently one of disappointment and rebellion. Joseph set aside his own ideas in order to accept the course of events and, mysterious as they seemed, to embrace them, take responsibility for them and make them part of his own history. Unless we are reconciled with our own history, we will be unable to take a single step forward, for we will always remain hostage to our expectations and the disappointments that follow.”

**Pope Francis** *A Letter Commissioning the Year of St. Joseph*

1. He didn't give in to **EARTHLY EXPECTATIONS**

*“The way of spiritual growth is a path of descent—of letting go of the life we thought we wanted.”*  
Richard Rohr

2. He didn't **FREEZE IN FEAR**

3. He wasn't **HINDERED BY HURT**

**Psalm 44:6-8**

*“It is doubtful whether God can bless a man greatly until He has hurt him deeply.”* A.W. Tozer  
*“Hardships often prepare ordinary people for an extraordinary destiny.”* C.S. Lewis

## JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. Jesus, reveal Your dream for my life
2. Jesus, how are my dreams getting in the way of Your dreams

## SERMON SUMMARY

*Feel free to read this message summary to the group before your discussion to refresh their memory on its central themes.*

In this week's message, Pastor Devan explored how Joseph's carefully built dreams and cultural expectations were shattered when Mary was found to be pregnant. Living in a strict honor-shame culture, Joseph faced the collapse of his reputation, his plans, and his sense of security. Yet through a divine dream, God invited Joseph into a **better dream**—one that required extraordinary surrender. Joseph had to release **expectations** shaped by culture, **fears** about what obedience would cost him, and **hurts** caused by misunderstanding, rejection, and grief. The sermon reminded us that God often invites us into His greater dream for our lives not by adding comfort, but by asking for deeper trust. Like Joseph, we are called to lay down our own dreams, surrender control, and follow God with resilience, courage, and open hands—even when His path is costly. Out of surrender, God brings redemption, purpose, and unexpected new beginnings.

## LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

### **1. Looking at Joseph's story, what stood out to you most about how he responded when his dream was shattered?**

*What part of his situation (honor–shame culture, betrayal, confusion, fear) felt most relatable or most challenging to you? Why?*

### **2. Joseph laid down a “good dream” in order to receive God's better dream. Where in your own life have you recognized that God's dream for you might be different from the dream you originally imagined?**

How easy or difficult is it for you to discern the difference between the American Dream and the Kingdom Dream?

## SURRENDERING OUR EXPECTATIONS

### **3. What expectations—about your life, family, faith, or future—might you need to surrender so they don't hold you hostage?**

*Discuss one expectation that may be keeping you from experiencing God's unfolding dream for your life.*

## SURRENDERING OUR FEARS

### **4. What fear currently freezes you or causes you to hesitate when God is asking you to step forward?**

*Where do you sense Him inviting you to trust Him like Joseph did, despite not knowing the outcome?*

## SURRENDERING OUR HURTS

### **5. What hurt—whether rejection, grief, disappointment, or misunderstanding—do you sense God asking you to place in His hands?**

*How might surrendering this hurt open up space for healing, purpose, or renewed trust in God?*