

## ***Dreaming in Christian!***

*Isaiah 25<sup>1-9</sup>; Psalm 23; Philippians 4<sup>1-9</sup>; Matthew 22<sup>1-14</sup>*

*If there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. [Philippians 4<sup>8</sup>]*

In conversation one of my teaching colleagues, a teacher of French, was asked when he knew he was proficient in that language. His response was, 'When I first dreamt in French!'

How many of us 'dream in Christian?' That, surely, is something that we should aspire to.

Before we go any further, we deal with the verse that causes so many Christians difficulty, **for many are called and few are chosen**, who seem to worry that somehow they are more powerful than God and can *deselect* themselves or be *deselected* as Christians. In the context of this parable, the man **who was not wearing a wedding robe** wasn't being rejected because of his poor dress sense, he was rejected because he thought that he was somehow exempt from the rules that applied to others. At a wedding feast the tradition was that the clothing was provided and not to wear it was to set yourself apart from the party and to insult the host. That is why he was sent into the **darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth**. The point being made is that none of us get into God's presence by our own rules or thinking that we are exempt from repentance and discipleship. The message is that consistency and perseverance in faith is vital as it is the end, not the beginning, that matters.

Don't lose sleep worrying if you are 'in' or 'out' of God's plan and kingdom – assurance comes through living our faith – instead we dream as Christians. What is that like? Two things:

### ✘ **Feasting:**

Those familiar words from Psalm 23, **you spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; you have anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full**, echoes the promise in Isaiah, **on this mountain the Lord of Hosts will make for all people a feast of rich food, a feast of well-matured wines, or rich food filled with marrow, of well-matured wines strained clear**, also marries up with the metaphor of heaven in the Parable in the Gospel, **the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son**.

Dreaming in Christian means dreaming of partying with God – sharing in the best of everything and doing so together and with God: for those of us who exchange our rags for the wedding robe when Christ marries his bride the Church, we can be assured that the rule of 6 won't apply in heaven as we feast together!

### ✘ **Rejoicing:**

Paul tells us to **Rejoice in the Lord** and makes sure we get the point – **again I will say, rejoice!** It isn't a frivolous happiness as we know that Paul is, at the point of writing, in prison awaiting execution – a life-changing event: even so, he says we have to rejoice.

Whatever may be happening to us in life, whatever we fear, or whatever threatens us, **rejoicing** is possible.

- We get there when we allow the **peace of God** into our lives when we let go of all those things that won't be part of our life in heaven: **do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God**.
- We get there when we get control of our thinking – because if there is one thing that we can sort out it is our thinking. By consciously focusing on the things that we want to, we can reprogramme our minds: **whatever is honourable; just; pure; pleasing; commendable; if there is any excellence; if anything is worthy of praise; think about these things**.

Christian joy is independent of anything on earth – it is dependent entirely on God: when we get to that point, where peace and positivity are natural to us, we dream in Christian!

The purpose of dreams, according to some psychologists, is to bring repressed wishes and deepest desires to the surface so that the dreamer can confront and reconcile them. In "The Interpretation of Dreams," Freud wrote that dreams are "disguised fulfillments of repressed wishes."

If we could train ourselves to *Dream In Christian* then we learn how to live constantly in God's presence – and (in the words of Luther's *Away in a manger*) it will *fit us for heaven to live with Thee there!* Not where dreams become reality, but where reality is beyond our dreams, however Christian they are!