

CLIMB UNTIL YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works" (Eph.2:10)

When you were in your early teens, did you ever daydream about the future and wonder what it held for you? Did you ever think about what you would be when you grew up?

Did you dream of being a nurse, a teacher, a secretary? Or were your dreams centered around romance, marriage, a home and children with a story-book ending-- and they all lived happy ever after?

Did you dream of becoming a career woman, or a person with outstanding talents and abilities that would win the admiration and acclaim of all who knew you? Or did you dream of making some credible contribution to the world and to your generation?

MISSIONARY
Adult life, with its multiplicity of responsibilities, its everyday sameness, and the constant confrontation of difficulties, of unsolvable problems tends to block out the brightness of our dreams and dull our feelings of expectancy and anticipation.

Disappointments often destroy our feelings of self-worth and we wonder if we have missed God's best for our lives. As we ponder on our broken dreams we can say with the poet, John Greenleaf Whittier, "For of all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these, 'it might have been.'" We resign ourselves to the fate of being less than what God intended us to be.

To allow Satan to steal or to destroy our ambitions to achieve for Christ by reminding and accusing us of our short-comings is to reject God's provision of redemption and abundant life. For in Christ, we have "laid aside the old self, and have put on the new self who is being renewed according to the image of One who created us. Like Paul, we can forget the past and "press forward toward the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus.

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Low self-esteem is the number one weapon Satan uses to hinder a woman from finding real meaning in her Christian life and in becoming the person God intended her to be. Feelings of inferiority and lack of self-worth will undermine her commitment to Christ and will limit her involvement in Christian service.

In addition to self-esteem, a woman needs to have self-acceptance. All of us have a combination of strengths and weaknesses. Self-acceptance does not mean that we are to lapse into laziness or carelessness. Instead, we should try to make the most of what we possess. As long as we live, we have the privilege of growing.

You
We can enrich life by learning new skills, by widening knowledge, by building a good vocabulary, by improving appearance, by building the body physically, and by deepening our spiritual lives. *You* can grow in dependability, generosity, kindness, and understanding. This happens as *you* take the time to evaluate the total *you* in the light of God's Word which declares that you are special to God--you are precious in His sight.

Thurs Nite
Preparation
in Ministry

If you are to reach your potential as a Christian woman, it is essential that you accept yourself as a person of worth. You need to realize that God is intimately involved in the creative process of making you what you are and what you will become.

The infinitely creative God made you one-of-a-kind. You are an original. No one else has the particular potential for development and service that God has placed in you. Isn't it a tremendous thought to realize that no one else in all the world has the same combination of abilities, talents, skills, and physical features you have? You are uniquely and wonderfully different from anyone else on earth.

You are not here by chance. You are a child of destiny. He knew you when you were still in your mother's womb. When He made you He threw away the mold. You were made for a particular purpose. Your individual characteristics, your personality, your talents, your abilities were all formed for a particular task, and there is a niche into which you can fit better than anyone else in the world.

You are God's creation; therefore you must believe in yourself and in your ability to become the person God had in mind when He made you. He formed you carefully, lovingly, exactly to His specification for a specific ^{purpose} ~~purpose~~. He reached out in love and drew you to Himself through circumstances He allowed to offer to you His salvation, His purity, His power to make you full and complete in Him.

Satan works overtime to hinder us from reaching our potential, ~~in Christ~~. He distracts us from our purpose in ~~becoming like Christ~~ by causing us to compare ourselves with other people.

When you compare yourself with another person with feelings of superiority, you allow criticism of others and self-pride to enter your heart which is sin. If you compare yourself unfavorably with others, you create a feeling of inadequacy and inferiority in yourself that will cause you to draw back from fulfilling God's will for you.

We must never measure ourselves by the world's value system. We are not to let other people influence our values. We are not to let what they do or say set the pattern for our actions. We do not have to swallow the world's ideas of what beauty is, or what is worthwhile. To keep the ideas of the world in proper focus, we must know what God's Word says and conform our values to its teachings.

In Romans 12:1, 2 (Phillips Version) we read, "With eyes wide open to the mercies of God, I beg you, as an act of intelligent worship, to give your bodies, as a living sacrifice, consecrated to him, and acceptable by him. Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all His demands, and moves toward the goal of true maturity!"

We need to accept the Biblical value system which says that every individual is worthwhile and lovable and is important to God.

God has affirmed a woman's worth in at least three ways:

1. Women are created by God the Father
2. Women are redeemed by God the Son
3. Women are indwelt by God, the Holy Spirit.

Women are created by God. Genesis 1 states that when God looked at His creation of man and woman, He declared that it was very good. Woman has been called the crown of God's creation--He made the best last! He endowed woman with special qualities that determine to some extent the feminine roles we are to play.

In Genesis 1:27 we read: "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created He them; male and female created He them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it."

We see here a beautiful partnership between Adam and Eve and both were commissioned by God to continue His work of creation.

What is your worth as an individual? Remember that Christ died for you as an individual. You are doubly His, for He both created you and paid the purchase price for you on Calvary. Yet, He so graciously extends to you the precious gift of choice. You may choose to go your own way, or you may choose to belong to God.

Yet, how wonderful to belong to God--the Lord of all creation! How great to realize that you are His--heart, soul, body, and mind! How wonderful to know that you can be a vessel in the Potter's hands to be molded and shaped after His will--a vessel suitable for the Master's use.

None of us have yet reached perfection or our full potential in Christ, for He is still in the process of working on us and helping us to become. Ephesians 2:10 reads, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."

In Philippians 1:6 we read that "He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ." The God who made you will continue to shape and mold you until you become perfectly like Jesus. Nothing about you or your life has been accidental up to this date. Every experience is enriching your life, molding you into that vessel He desires you to be.

You are the Temple of the Holy Spirit. God has ordained that the Third Person of the Godhead may dwell in you as your Comforter, Teacher, and Guide. How amazing it is to think that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and that He dwells within you, leading you and giving you power to live and work for Christ.

In Old Testament times, the temple was a sacred building. Only a chosen few were allowed into the Holy of Holies to represent God's people in the presence of God. It was an awesome place enclosed by a heavy curtain. The interior decoration was beautifully and carefully planned according to God's instructions.

When Jesus died on the cross, the curtain between the Holy of Holies was rent or torn from top to bottom signifying a new day and a better way for man to know God's Presence. Now our bodies may become the Holy of Holies, and God, the Holy Spirit will come in to live. We become His dwelling place.

Not only does the Holy Spirit live in us. He is also helping us to become the kind of person He wants us to be. He is developing in us the fruits of the Spirit and is equipping us with power for service.

God knows what we need in order to reach our maximum potential in His service. He knows the endowments we need to fulfill our divine role in His Body. A daily commitment to His will enables Him to equip us to function effectively in His kingdom. He desires you to be under His complete control--an instrument in His hands being used to perform His acts on earth. He wants you as a partner, a co-worker, a co-laborer with Him to do His work in His way.

Such wonderful thoughts are too wonderful to express in words--that you and I, through the transforming powers of Christ, may be found worthy to be partners with Him in the act of bringing redemption to a fallen race.

You will know you are on your way to the heights of proper self-acceptance when you can look into the face of God and say, "Father, thank You for making me the way you did. Thank You that even now you are working creatively and redemptively in my life. Thank You for what I am becoming by your grace. Thank You that You have a special ministry for me to perform, a special place you have designed for me to fill.

We can say with Paul in his letter to the Romans, "For because of our faith, he has brought us into this place of highest privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to actually becoming all that God has had in mind for us to be."

With this perspective, you will not isolate yourself from others and hide in the shadows because of feelings of inferiority. You will stop rendering God incapable of using you in ministry because of a poor self-concept.

When you see yourself from the divine viewpoint as a created, loved, redeemed, indwelt person of great value, then you will be free to love others as they desperately need to be loved. There will be no spirit of criticism or jealousy. Thus, you can recognize and relate to others as God-created persons with unlimited potential for the Kingdom of God.

This is the mountain God wills for you to climb. As you reach the summit, your whole outlook will change in perspective, and your vision of the Kingdom of God will be greatly enlarged. As you find your place in the Kingdom work, a sense of fulfillment will bring new meaning to your service and new meaning to living. Dreams that you had forgotten will come into focus, and many of them may come true.

The results are certainly worth the climb!